

History A Level

Exam Board: Edexcel

Entry Requirements: GCSE Grade 5 in History or 6 in English Language or Literature

Subject Content

Democracies in Change: Britain and the USA in the 20th century

Paper 1: Britain transformed, 1918-97

Paper 2: The USA, 1955-92: Conformity & Challenge

Paper 3: Protest, agitation and Parliamentary reform in Britain, 1780-1928

Coursework: Enquiry on historical interpretations: The origins of WW1 (3,000 - 4,000 word essay)

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations (30% A level/60% AS).

This option comprises a study in breadth, in which students will learn about the extent to which Britain was transformed politically, socially, economically and culturally in the years 1918–79. They will consider responses to the challenges of war, fluctuations in the economy, technological advancement and the desire for greater social equality.

Paper 2: Depth study (20% A level | 40% AS).

This option comprises a study in depth of the USA in the years 1955–92, from post-1945 affluence, through racial and political protests in the 1960s, to the rise of right-wing groups in the 1980s and the development of bitter divisions between Democrats and Republicans.

Paper 3: Themes in breadth with aspects in depth (30% A level). This option comprises two parts: the aspects in breadth focus on long-term changes and contextualise the aspects in depth, which focus in detail on key episodes. Together, the breadth and depth topics explore the relationship between authority and mass agitation in England, the struggle for greater representation in England, and the ways in which the interests and concerns of individuals in society could make themselves known.

Coursework (20% A level). The purpose of this coursework is to enable students to develop skills in the analysis and evaluation of interpretations of history in a chosen question as part of an independently researched assignment. The focus is on understanding the nature and purpose of the work of the historian. Students will be specifically required to analyse, explain and evaluate the interpretations of three historians.

Assessments

Paper 1: Breadth study with interpretations

30% A level | 60% AS 2 hours 15 minutes:

Section A: One breadth essay

Section B: One breadth essay

Section C: One interpretations question

Paper 2: Depth study 20% A level | 40% AS

1 hour 30 minutes;

Section A: One source question

Section B: One depth essay

Paper 3: Themes in breadth with aspects in depth

30% A level 2 hours 15 minutes:

Section A: One source question

Section B: One depth essay

Section C: One breadth essay

Coursework 20% A level: 3000-4000 word essay

Skills gained and enrichment opportunities:

Students can progress from this qualification to higher education courses, such as degrees in history or in related subjects such as politics, English literature, law, philosophy, Cambridge, economics or geography. Past students have taken degree courses at the LSE, Exeter University and SOAS, University of London.

Progression/career opportunities:

A wide range of careers in areas such as journalism and media, education, libraries, national and local government and the civil service.

Further information:

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