

HISTORY

EXAM BOARD: OCR

Why study History?

Here at Stratford upon Avon School the History modules were chosen to play to our strengths and passions as a department. The topics were selected by staff who have a real interest in that time period or topic and wish to impart that to the students. The exam board we selected allows us the flexibility of modules that both gives us a wide breadth of study and a range of topics that offer something really different to the 'traditional' A-Level. At Stratford School the topic based essay, which is the independently researched component in year 13, is entirely chosen and directed by students in consultation with staff.

The students are able to select any topic in history that is of interest to them. Previously, essays have ranged from the causes of the fall of the Roman Empire, to whether the Germans were active supporters of the Holocaust.

Subject Specification Outline:

This specification consists of four main topics:

Topic-based essay which is an independently researched essay (20%).

Alfred and the Making of England 871–1016 (25%).

The Cold War in Asia 1945–1993 (15%).

Popular Culture and the Witchcraze of the 16th and 17th centuries (40%).

Progress Assessment:

Structured essays and individual question responses set and returned on rotation. Ongoing ½ termly assessment.

Final Exam Format:

3 Exams		
Alfred & the Making of England 871 - 1016	The Cold War in Asia 1945 - 1993	Popular Culture & the Witchcraze of the 16th & 17th centuries
1hr 30 mins written, 25%	60 mins written, 15%	150 mins, 40%

Self Study Requirements:

Reading around the subject, in particular academic articles and university level books and a thorough use of other A-Level texts and alternative research opinions. Participation in extracurricular trips to Birmingham University library for research. Very careful and thorough planning for the coursework section.

Progression Pathways:

A-Level History challenges students' minds and develops independent learners, critical thinkers and decision-makers. These are all personal qualities that can make them stand out as they progress to higher education and/or the workplace.

History develops:

Communication - the ability to discuss and evaluate key issues in writing is vital to any future success. Historians use this skill daily and so universities and employers will value someone who can articulate their evidenced thoughts in a clear and professional way.

Time management - the skill of prioritising work is very important. By working through questions and completing coursework, an A level History student will have effectively developed this skill.

Problem solving - History is full of problems that need solving. The skills used to solve historical conundrums are the same as those used to solve issues in the commercial and legal world. Planning and organising. History teaches students how to plan effectively to complete any tasks, essential for any leadership career.

Drive and determination - any successful History A-Level student will have shown the drive and determination to succeed, exactly what an employer or university will be looking for!

