

# GCE HISTORY

## Why Choose GCE History?

History is the study of interpretations of the past. Historians explore events that have occurred and try to contextualise those events with the people who were, and the environment that was, contemporaneous to those events. When others try to use or misuse “facts” to promote political or ideological beliefs, Historians can critically evaluate the evidence and try to advance a more reliable account. However, every account is likely to be different because it is shaped by individuals’ experience and beliefs. This is why the study of history is so important: everyone should be able to critically evaluate evidence that they find, or that is presented to them, and make an informed judgement that can affect how we view the past – and how we try to shape the future.

## What will I study?

### Period studies

In this AS-level component, you will learn about a period of history that is chosen by your centre. Each period study focuses on events that occurred over a period of approximately 100 years and you will be required to study a range of material that enables you to judge similarities and differences, and continuity and change across that period. Assessed by two examination essays, one of which will require you to focus on a narrow timeframe of approximately 15 to 40 years’ duration, and another that will require you to contextualise your understanding over a broader period of approximately 50 to 100 years’ duration.

### Depth studies

Studied across AS and A-level, you will focus on a much shorter period of history in greater depth. Again, the study will be chosen by your centre. In this study, you will be required to develop the skills of evaluation and analysis and apply these skills to a series of primary and/or contemporary sources, as well as to interpretations of history as presented by various historians. This will be assessed by an examination at the end of the AS year and, should you choose to proceed, another examination at the end of the A-level year.



# GCE HISTORY



## Breadth studies

In this A-level component, you will study two themes – chosen by your centre – that cover at least 100 years of historical change and development. You will be required to analyse and evaluate the pace and extent of historical change across the duration of the breadth study taught, drawing connections between different aspects of history, and focusing on issues such as cause and significance. In the examination, you will be required to complete two essays that draw upon specific elements of the themes outlined.

## Historical interpretations

In this A-level component, you are encouraged to demonstrate and refine your skills of research and analysis as you complete a research-based activity to explain how and why different interpretations are formed. Your centre may choose this study for you, or you may – with the centre's permission and authorisation from WJEC – explore a topic of interest to you. The work is completed independently and submitted as a 3,000–4,000-word response during the A-level year.

## What skills will I develop?

The aim for students of GCE History is that they develop their interest in and enthusiasm for history, that they acquire an understanding of different identities within society and an appreciation of social, cultural, religious and ethnic differences.

During the course, you will improve as an effective and independent learner who is able to critically reflect on knowledge that you have gained and make judgements based on the evidence available, always aware that those judgements are provisional and may change when more evidence comes to light.

## How will I be assessed?

**There are two examinations at the end of the AS year and two examinations at the end of the A-level year. In addition to this, there is a non-examination assessment during the completion of the A-level year.**

## Careers with History

Given that History is a highly regarded skills-based discipline, there are no specific careers precluded by its study. The skills it develops in its students lend themselves to a wide range of careers, including those that require research, analysis, discussion, negotiation and presentation. You could work in areas traditionally associated with the study of history, such as teaching, heritage and museums,

as well as conservation, archives, libraries and universities. However, “non-History” careers that are open to students of History include government and the civil service, law and the media/journalism among many others.