

# History A Level



## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Peter Wellby

## EMAIL ADDRESS

info@gch.org.uk

## EXAM BOARD

OCR

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

A level History at GCH covers a broad range of study, encompassing medieval, early modern and modern history. It takes students through the momentous changes in England and Europe in the early modern period, right up to the global impact on the modern world of the events and consequences of the Russian Revolution. A full overview of the content and assessment of the course is provided overleaf. If you enjoy studying the past and building convincing arguments, then you will very much enjoy this course. A level History is a highly respected course and can open doors to a huge range of different university courses and future careers.



## SKILLS REQUIRED

- Ability to write fluently and persuasively.
- Critical thinking and close reading of written information;
- Ability to see things from different points of view;
- Analysis of the causes of major events and the changes brought about by them;
- Evaluation of source material and historians' interpretations;
- Ability to undertake independent research;
- Participation in discussions and debates, and delivering of presentations;
- Ability to identify important evidence, see the bigger picture and make connections.

## PROGRAMME OF STUDY

British period study and enquiry:

England 1445–1509:  
Lancastrians, Yorkists  
and Henry VII

25% of total A Level

Exam paper

1 hour 30 minutes

Non-British period  
study:

Apartheid and  
Reconciliation:  
South African Politics  
1948–1999

15% of total A Level

Exam paper

1 hour

Thematic study  
and historical  
interpretations:

Russia and its Rulers  
1855–1964

40% of total A Level

Exam paper

2 hours 40 minutes

Topic based essay:

Elizabeth I

3000–4000 word  
coursework essay

20% of total A Level

## EXAMINATION RESULTS

The last time public exams were sat, in 2019, 47% of students at GCH achieved A\*-A grades in History A Level, 86% A\*-B and 98% A\*-C. In 2021, 13 students achieved A\*s and 11 achieved As, 90% of students achieved A\* - B grades and 100% A\*-C. These figures are far above national averages. Many students went on to study History at university, including 2 to Oxford.



## ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

We offer the opportunity for all history students to go on an annual Sixth Form trip to Berlin or Florence. On these trips, students have the opportunity to visit, in Berlin, the Berlin Wall, the Jewish Museum, the Reichstag, and Wittenberg; and, in Florence, the museums and galleries, the Duomo, and the Medici Palaces. We run a weekly History Society that organises projects, has guest speakers and gives opportunities for students to learn about aspects of history outside of the curriculum. Trips to support the curriculum are also organised to the National Gallery and National Archives and there is an opportunity to attend a conference on Russia and its Rulers with talks by eminent historians. Sixth form students support younger students by helping with KS3 History Club and mentoring GCSE students.

## FUTURE CAREERS

The Guardian newspaper recently reported on the fact that “History graduates are found in disproportionate numbers on the boards of the UK’s top 100 companies.” The report found that “The most frequently mentioned advantages history graduates displayed were the ability to read quickly and effectively and process large amounts of information, think deeply about a subject, develop cogent arguments and communicate clearly.”

Studying History A level opens doors to a huge range of future courses and careers. Students go on to study Law, Politics, Economics, International Relations, Journalism, History of Art, Engineering, English Literature, Medicine, Languages, Classics, and a host of other courses at university.



At The Grey Coat Hospital we regularly advertise and promote a range of university taster days, lectures, open days and summer schools. We take students interested in studying history at university on a trip to Oxford University to visit two colleges and attend seminars run by history tutors, including on the Oxford application process. We give in depth support to students preparing to apply to university by providing reading lists and help with writing personal statements. We also run specific Oxbridge preparation sessions and mock interviews.