

Course title: History A-Level AQA

Academic year:	2025
Course Venue:	The Weston Road Academy
Course Type:	A-level
Duration:	2 years

Course Description:

Our A-Level History course centres on two exciting units which have been carefully selected to combine together an array of different themes, including domestic problems, foreign policy relations, and economic developments. In two ostensibly different epochs, we analyse similar themes concerning the leadership of influential figures, evaluating their successes and failures to gain a holistic understanding of important historical concepts, such as change and continuity, significance, and cause and consequence. In studying both components, you will learn to work with primary evidence and form coherent and persuasive arguments. In Year 13 you will undertake a personal investigation which will also develop your research skills.

Course Content:

Year 12 topics

Consolidation of the Tudor Dynasty: England, 1485–1547

This unit focuses on the 2 monarchs Henry VII and Henry VIII and the following themes:

Henry VII, 1485–1509

- Henry Tudor’s consolidation of power: character and aims; establishing the Tudor dynasty
- Government: councils, parliament, justice, royal finance, domestic policies
- Relationships with Scotland and other foreign powers; securing the succession; marriage alliances
- Social discontent and rebellions
- Economic development: trade, exploration, prosperity and depression
- Religion; humanism; arts and learning

Henry VIII, 1509–1547

- Henry VIII: character and aims; addressing Henry VII’s legacy
- Government: Crown and Parliament, ministers, domestic policies including the establishment of Royal Supremacy
- Relationships with Scotland and other foreign powers; securing the succession
- Society: elites and commoners; regional issues and the social impact of religious upheaval; rebellion
- Economic development: trade, exploration, prosperity and depression
- Religion: renaissance ideas; reform of the Church; continuity and change by 1547

2L Italy and Fascism, c1900–1945

Part one: the crisis of Liberal Italy and the Rise of Mussolini, c1900–1926

In year 12, this unit focuses upon the shift from Italian democracy and how it gave way to the rise of fascism. We will explore an array of political concepts, such as liberalism, extremism, nationalism, socialism and authority. We begin with the crisis of liberal Italy, included deep-rooted issues such as the north-south divide, church and state divisions, and the challenged of monarchy/ ruling elites. Leading into Italy's decision to enter World War One, and the 'mutilated victory', the course continues to explore the collapse of Liberal Italy and Mussolini's rise to power – due to economic, social and extremist unrest. This concludes with the establishment of Fascist Italy, particularly following the role of Mussolini as prime minister, the role of the King, Fascist propaganda and terror, Mussolini's consolidation of power and finally Mussolini's control and the extent of opposition by 1926.

- The political, economic and social condition of Italy c1900
- The political system and Giolittianism
- Challenges to the ruling elites
- Italian foreign policies
- Italy's war effort
- Italy and the Mutilated Victory
- The post-war economic and social crisis
- Political breakdown and rise of extremism
- The appointment of Mussolini as prime minister
- The Fascist movement
- Mussolini's consolidation of power
- The Fascist state by 1926

Year 13 topics

NEA Coursework:

For this section you will be studying Rome in the 1st Century BC- 1st Century AD.

You will then devise your own question based on an area which has evoked your interest, and write an essay (approximately 4500 words).

Common themes/questions include:

- Greatest threat to Rome (Spartacus, Arminius, Boadicea)
- Most significant emperor (Julius Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero)
- Most influential Roman religion (paganism, eastern cults)
- Most influential woman (Cleopatra, Livia, Agrippina)
- Most psychologically disturbed emperor (Tiberius, Caligula, Nero)
- Greatest military general (Marius, Sulla, Julius Caesar, Pompey, Agrippa)



Part two: England: turmoil and triumph, 1547–1603

This unit initially focuses on a period of rebellion under the young monarch Edward VI and ‘bloody’ Queen Mary! Then emerges into the triumphal reign of Queen Elizabeth I

Instability and consolidation: 'the Mid-Tudor Crisis', 1547–1563

- Edward VI, Somerset and Northumberland; royal authority; problems of succession; relations with foreign powers
- The social impact of religious and economic changes under Edward VI; rebellion; intellectual developments; humanist and religious thought
- Mary I and her ministers; royal authority; problems of succession; relations with foreign powers
- The social impact of religious and economic changes under Mary I; rebellion; intellectual developments; humanist and religious thought
- Elizabeth I: character and aims; consolidation of power, including the Act of Settlement and relations with foreign powers
- The impact of economic, social and religious developments in the early years of Elizabeth's rule

The triumph of Elizabeth, 1563–1603

- Elizabethan government: court, ministers and parliament; factional rivalries
- Foreign affairs: issues of succession; Mary, Queen of Scots; relations with Spain
- Society: continuity and change; problems in the regions; social discontent and rebellions
- Economic development: trade, exploration and colonisation; prosperity and depression
- Religious developments, change and continuity; the English renaissance and ‘the Golden Age’ of art, literature and music
- The last years of Elizabeth: the state of England politically, economically, religiously and socially by 1603

Part two: Fascist Italy, 1926–1945 (A-level only)

In year 13, we continue to explore the concept of fascism and fascist society in more depth. Beginning with the concept of the cult of Il Duce, alongside fascist policies and control of the state, we explore different groups such as women, youth, peasants and workers and how fascist Italy impacted their lives. In addition, Mussolini’s foreign policy ambitions leading to the slide towards war becomes imperative throughout the course; including his expansion of empire in Africa, relations with Britain and France, the Spanish Civil War, Hitler’s influence and ultimately how prepared Italy’s military were by 1940. Finally, year 13 will conclude with fascist Italy and World War 2 between 1940-45; the decision to enter the war, Italy’s war effort including their relationship with Nazi Germany, the fall of Mussolini and finally the collapse of fascism, evaluating the death and legacy of Mussolini.

- Propaganda and the Cult of Il Duce
- The police state

- Fascist economic policies
- Fascist society
- Mussolini's foreign policy ambitions
- Mussolini the statesman
- Mussolini and Empire
- The slide towards war
- The decision to enter the war
- Italy's war effort
- The fall of Mussolini in 1943
- The final collapse of Fascism

Entry requirements:

The standard entry criteria to study in the sixth form are a 9-4 in at least seven different subjects, including English and mathematics, which would usually be at grade 4 or above.

To study other subjects already taken at GCSE you must achieve at least a grade 5 or above in that subject.

Assessment Objectives:

AO1 Demonstrate, organise and communicate knowledge and understanding to analyse and evaluate the key features related to the periods studied, making substantiated judgements and exploring concepts, as relevant, of cause, consequence, change, continuity, similarity, difference and significance.

AO2 Analyse and evaluate appropriate source material, primary and/or contemporary to the period, within its historical context.

AO3 Analyse and evaluate, in relation to the historical context, different ways in which aspects of the past have been interpreted.

Future opportunities:

- Progress to degree level History (or other degrees with related skills, e.g. law, classical studies).
- 'The Top 20 Universities in Britain recommend it' (source: *The Times*).
- Skills that History students develop:
The ability to analyse; make informed criticisms; gain fluent oral & written skills; listen and work with others; self-reliance; organisation; develop and justify your own opinion.
- More than ever before, employers are keen to meet school leavers who have analytical and evaluative minds. These qualities, combined with good literacy skills, cannot fail to impress on application forms and at interview whether applying for jobs as lawyers, managers, journalists or many other occupations

Further information:

See Mr S. Brown the Subject Leader for History

