

History International Baccalaureate

Requirements

The Department sets no GCSE requirements, but hopes that pupils will take IB because they have a genuine interest in the subject. Pupils will be expected to read widely, research material independently and be able to write with increasing accuracy and fluency. The ability of argue will also be an advantage. The Department will, of course, aim to foster all these skills and has over recent years produced some extremely gifted historians who have gone on to study the subject at university.

How the course is structured

Pupils can opt to take Higher or Standard Level. Higher Level consists of three papers, plus a piece of coursework; Standard Level consists of two papers and a piece of coursework (ie, omitting Paper Three).

Paper One (SL and HL)

Paper One is a source paper. The topic is 'Peacemaking, peacekeeping – international relations 1918-1936'. It looks at how the First World War affected international relations, the peace treaties, the League of Nations, the onset of the Depression and major crises to 1936 (including Manchuria and Abyssinia). In the examination pupils will be expected to answer five source-based questions on a particular aspect of the period studied. Comprehensive source practice in class will be given so that if pupils have never answered source-based questions before they will become very familiar with the techniques involved.

Paper Two (SL and HL)

Paper two is an essay paper which consists of two parts. Part one looks at the 'Causes, practice and effects of war in the 20th century'. Both the First and Second World War will be studied, as well as civil wars, and conflicts such as Vietnam and Korea. Pupils will be able to compare weaponry, tactics, causes and effects across the whole period. Part two will investigate the rise and rule of leaders of single party states in the 20th Century. Pupils will study Mussolini and Mao, and will again be able to compare their rise and the way in which they maintain themselves in power.

In the examination pupils will be expected to answer two essay questions, one on Part one and one on Part two.

Coursework: Historical Investigation (SL and HL)

Pupils will in addition be expected to produce a piece of coursework of 2,000 words on a topic of their choice. They will research a narrow topic area and produce a research paper which looks very much like a dissertation planning document. It ensures that pupils understand the process of working as a historian, and allows them some independence to pursue a topic which they enjoy.

Paper Three (HL only)

Paper three consists of three topics: Russia 1855-1924, International Relations 1870-1923 and Conflict and Cooperation 1923-39. Pupils will answer three questions in the examination, one from

each topic area. It is hoped that the Higher Paper reinforces and deepens the understanding of the Standard Level topic areas.

Why study the subject?

Pupils will acquire both breadth and depth of historical knowledge and develop their skills of communicating this knowledge in a clear and effective manner. They will further their understanding of historical explanations and develop the ability to reach substantiated judgements. In particular they will continue to advance their skills of handling and evaluating source material. These skills are much in demand in today's changing world and the choice of History is a gateway to a wide range of careers. In recent years many pupils have decided to study the subject at university, or have used their A level in history to enter a law course, where the skills are interchangeable.

The Department

The Department is staffed with highly qualified, experienced and committed teachers who are devoted to their subject. The Department is well stocked with books (it has its own library), has all courses on Moodle, including teaching notes, and has a bank of additional materials, including revision materials, articles and a growing DVD collection.