



Aylesbury High School | #AHSWalksTall

Developing uniquely talented young adults, who are independent, strong and confident

Dear Parent/Carer

As we start the A Level History journey, we thought it might be useful to give you a little more information about the course and how to navigate its requirements and demands. Please do also look at the History pages on the school website, or email me at iannat@ahs.bucks.sch.uk if you have any questions.

The Course

We will follow the Pearson/Edexcel History course. You can find it [here](#). The website has lots of guidance for students, as well as past papers, marked exemplars, and topic booklets. The units we study are:

Y12	Paper 1H: Britain Transformed 1918-97	Paper 2H.2: The USA 1955-1992: Conformity and Challenge
Y13	Paper 3 Option 33: The Witch Craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580-c1750	Non-Examined Assessment

We've chosen these units very carefully to reflect our values and vision as a department, but also because we believe that together they present a rich and challenging set of stories, worthy of study in their own right. However, we also hold that these units will empower our students as critical thinkers and allow them to go on and succeed in higher studies, employment and life more generally.

Learning to think, talk and write like a historian

As with all A Levels, there is a bit of a jump from Key Stage 3 in terms of challenge and complexity. We expect our students to make progress over the course, but they shouldn't be concerned if they find they take a little time to adjust to new standards and expectations. All of our students have made the difficult decision to drop some subjects in favour of History, so we expect them to engage, participate and reflect. A Level historians will find that they have more autonomy to make decisions about their learning, make mistakes, follow their instincts, and ultimately to take more responsibility for their learning. Students should be aware that success in History depends on developing positive attitudes and habits (of both study and mind) very early in their course.

The History team also believes that purposeful talk is one of our most powerful ways of exploring our thinking, so students must expect to use lots of small-group talk to work through the complex material and arguments we will encounter. However, quiet, focused self-study is central to A Level courses, and so we will set homework of about one hour for each one hour lesson. These homework tasks will be critical to consolidating knowledge, introducing new content or preparing for assessments, so students should take them very seriously and make sure they stay on track. However, successful A Level historians balance sleep, socialising and study, so we ask that students communicate with us if things are getting tough.

Textbooks and resources

Pearson/Edexcel has produced excellent textbooks for our course, and students will get to know these very well. They are used extensively in class alongside other materials, so students should expect to meet and engage with a variety of resources including podcasts, film, documentaries, online source collections, and many more. We will, from day one, be using the work of historians in our lessons.

In preparing our students for further study, we expect them to be familiar with the library and the extensive collections of relevant materials within the History department.

Best wishes,
Iain Annat
Head of History