

History Curriculum Overview



Introduction

This document outlines the curriculum and key considerations including:

- Aims and purpose
- Alignment with the whole school provision and curriculum intent
- A summary programme of study which includes sequencing of taught content

We use the National Curriculum as our statutory foundation and broadly share its principles and aims including:

- 'To provide students with an introduction to the essential knowledge that they need to be educated citizens. To introduce students to the best that has been thought and said and help engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement'.
- To prepare students to be confident in themselves, to have a fulfilled and successful life beyond our school – one where they contribute positively to society.
- Our statutory curriculum is just one element in the education of every child. There is time and space in the school day and in each week, term, and year to range beyond statutory specifications.
- Provision of a framework of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of students' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.
- The wider school curriculum includes an extensive range of opportunities and activities that are routinely available to students, are inclusive and reflect our diverse community.

Numeracy and literacy

Teachers should take opportunities to develop students' mathematical fluency, spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary within their specific discipline and in line with the expectations laid out in our school curriculum statement.

Purpose of study

'A high-quality history education will help students gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire students' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip students to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement. History helps students to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.' Adapted from National Curriculum, DfE, 2014.

Curriculum Aims:

The History curriculum at Winifred Holtby Academy is designed to provide students with:

- A secure chronological framework from c.1000 to the present day
- Deep substantive knowledge of British and world history
- Strong disciplinary understanding of how historians construct knowledge
- Explicit preparation for success in Edexcel GCSE History

Our curriculum is knowledge-rich, carefully sequenced and academically ambitious. Students develop confidence in explaining cause and consequence, analysing change and continuity, evaluating interpretations, analysing sources and constructing sustained judgements.

Building on prior learning

By the end of Key Stage 2, students should:

- Be secure in their chronological understanding of pre-Medieval English history, knowing that the Anglo-Saxons arrived in England after the Romans left in around 445AD and that the Viking invasion took place later in around 787AD.
- Be able to ascertain similarities and differences between Anglo-Saxons and Vikings and be able to describe what their respective settlements and lifestyles were like as well as beginning to explain the relative significance of each civilisation on shaping England. Students may also be able to compare and contrast both the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings with the Romans and may also be able to give a reasoned judgement about which of the three civilisations had the biggest impact on shaping pre-Medieval England.
- Be able to interpret the content of historical sources to help them to determine the message that sources are trying to get across and should be able to speculate the reason/motive why historical sources were produced and have an awareness of bias and its impact.
- Be able to confidently identify Primary and Secondary sources and begin to formulate ideas about their relative utility.

Baseline expectations:

Students should be able to:

- Arrange historical civilisations and historical events in chronological order.
- Identify key words and meanings associated with Anglo-Saxons and Vikings and to provide a basic narrative of the key characteristics and lifestyles of each civilisation.
- Differentiate between Primary and Secondary sources and to have the ability to extract basic information from historical sources to understand what they are showing or saying.

What are the skills gaps?

- Some students struggle to have a sense of chronological understanding and have difficulty arranging time periods into the correct order.
- Students' ability to adopt "writing stamina" and provide convincing and varied explanations to open-ended questions.
- Fear of going against conventional viewpoints even if students can support challenge to accepted conventional viewpoints. This can really impede creativity and originality.
- Students' ability to be able to make a clear decision in support of one aspect or viewpoint when faced with choosing the most significant contributing factor to a given issue.
- Lack of exposure to different types of source materials. Source analysis is a difficult skill, and some students are unable to make an inference from a historical source. Others have difficulty recognising differences in viewpoints in historical sources and forming their own judgment.
- Students can discuss and describe different historical periods but lack explanation skills.

Curriculum Structure & Progression

The Winifred Holtby history curriculum is heavily knowledge based, and the sequencing of our teaching is designed to allow students to develop disciplinary knowledge through key concepts that thread through the programme of study, alongside the substantive knowledge acquired in each topic.

- Year 7 – Foundations of medieval Britain and global history
- Year 8 – Power, revolution, empire and industrial change
- Year 9 – Democracy, ideology, conflict, civil rights and genocide
- Year 10 – Elizabethan England & Medicine Through Time
- Year 11 – Weimar & Nazi Germany and American West

Disciplinary Concepts

Cause and Consequence - Understanding the interconnectivity of events, their causes, and their impacts.

Similarity and Difference - Understanding the complexity of events, differing perspectives and relationships between different people and groups.

Continuity and Change - Comparison between different points of time and consideration of what has changed (and why) and what has remained the same.

Significance / Importance - Identifying significant events, make connections, draw contrasts, and analyse trends within and between periods of time.

Interpretation - Understanding how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations have been constructed.

Historical Evidence - Understanding how different types of historical sources are used rigorously to support historical claims.

KEY STAGE 3 Curriculum Overview

Year 7 – United Learning Units (7.01–7.05)

- Empires East and West c.1000
- The Normans
- Medieval Church and Life
- Challenges to Medieval Monarchs
- Mali

Focus: Medieval power, religion, monarchy, trade and global connections. Disciplinary concepts include cause and consequence, similarity and difference and significance.

Year 8 – WHA Scheme of Work (2023)

- The English Civil War
- Changing Ideas (Restoration & Enlightenment)
- The Transatlantic Slave Trade
- The British Empire
- The Industrial Revolution

Focus: Political change, empire, industrialisation and early democracy. Explicit GCSE links to Elizabethan England, Medicine Through Time, American West and Weimar & Nazi Germany.

Year 9 – WHA Scheme of Work (2023)

- Unit 1: Democracy
- Unit 2: World War One
- Unit 3: Conflict in the 20th Century
- Unit 4: Black Civil Rights Movement
- Unit 5: The Holocaust

Year 9 acts as a GCSE bridge year, embedding democracy, ideology, conflict, persecution and resistance. Strong disciplinary focus on causation, change and continuity, interpretation and source analysis.

KEY STAGE 4 – EDEXCEL GCSE HISTORY

Year 10

- Autumn: Elizabethan England (Paper 2 – British Depth Study)
- Spring & Summer: Medicine in Britain c.1250–Present (Paper 1 – Thematic Study)

Elizabethan England builds on Year 8 political power and democracy. Medicine Through Time builds on Year 7 medieval medicine, Year 8 Industrial Revolution and Year 9 war impacts.

Year 11

- Autumn: Weimar and Nazi Germany (Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study)
- Spring: American West c.1835–1895 (Paper 2 – Period Study)
- Summer: Revision and Examination Preparation

Weimar and Nazi Germany builds directly on Year 9 Democracy, WW1, Conflict and Holocaust units. American West builds on Year 8 Empire and Year 9 Civil Rights.

Assessment Overview

- Regular knowledge recall tests at KS3
- Formal extended writing assessments
- Embedded source and interpretation practice
- End of unit assessments at KS4
- PPE examinations Summer Term (Y10) Autumn Term (Y11) Spring term (Y11).

Vocabulary

Having a rich, ambitious, broad vocabulary is vital for learners to succeed, both in school and throughout their lives. Tier 1 vocabulary is the simplest. These are the words we use in everyday conversation, such as “put”, “get”, “walk”, etc. Tier 2 vocabulary are challenging, ambitious words that don’t usually crop up in day-to-day conversation. These are the words that allow learners to access academic texts, such as high-level literature, newspaper articles and exam papers. At Winifred Holtby Academy, these form part of our tutor program.

Tier 3 vocabulary is the subject-specific vocabulary of a particular discipline. These are words that are uncommon outside of the context of a specific subject and enable learners to communicate effectively within the subject. At Winifred Holtby Academy, tier 3 vocabulary is explicitly taught across our school curriculum and is mapped within the schemes of learning.

Key Stage 3: Year 7 – Long Term Planning

	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Knowledge Sequence	<p>7.01: Empires East and West c.1000</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How do historians know about the past Interpretations of history How do Historians measure time What was China like c.1000? What does a study of the Islamic Empire tell us about how the world was connected c.1000? How similar was the Byzantine Empire to the Chinese and Islamic Empires c.1000? What was the Holy Roman Empire like c.1000? <p>7.02: The Normans</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Migration and Diversity in Medieval England Anglo-Saxon England Death of Edward the Confessor Norman Conquest: 1066 Norman Control: Castles and Terror Norman Control: Peaceful Methods Answering the Enquiry Social Change under the Normans Political and Economic Change under the Normans How far did England change after the Norman Conquest? 	<p>7.03: Medieval Church and Life</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Power and Hierarchy of the Church Medieval Places of worship Life after Death Monasteries and Medicine The Crusades Jews in Medieval England Answering the Enquiry - Why was the Church significant in Medieval England? <p>7.04: Challenges to Medieval Monarchs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges to Medieval Monarchs Stephen and Matilda Henry II and Thomas Becket Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine King John and the Church King John and Magna Carta 	<p>7.04: Challenges to Medieval Monarchs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Henry III and parliament The Black Death The Peasants Revolt The Wars of the Roses The biggest challenge medieval monarchs faced was the Church. How far do you agree? <p>7.05: Mali</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Mansa Musa The Hajj to Makkah The Mali Empire 1325-1337 What does the life of Mansa Musa reveal about the Mali Empire?
Substantive concepts	<p>Pupils develop secure knowledge of medieval global civilisations and how trade, religion and governance shaped connections c.1000. They study conquest and control through Anglo-Saxon England and the Norman Conquest, and examine the power of the medieval Church, including its influence on belief, medicine and minority groups. Pupils analyse challenges to monarchy—civil war, Church–state conflict, Magna Carta, Parliament, plague and revolt—to understand power, legitimacy and resistance. The study of Mali and Mansa Musa broadens understanding of non-European power and wealth. Throughout, pupils develop disciplinary understanding of chronology, interpretations, causation, change and continuity, and significance.</p>		
Links to GCSE	<p>Developing understanding of monarchy, Church authority and religious conflict, which prepares pupils for Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88. Establishing medieval religious beliefs and medical practice that underpin Medicine in Britain c1250–1500 and the Black Death case study. Introducing migration, empire and cultural encounter, which support later study of expansion and conflict in The American West, c1835–95. Exploring political instability, persecution and challenges to authority, providing conceptual grounding for Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39</p>		

Key Stage 3: Year 8 – Long Term Planning

	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Knowledge	<p>Unit 1: English Civil War</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long & short-term causes • Features of Civil War armies • New Model Army and Naseby • Key battles (ICT research) • LOCAL HISTORY: Hull & the English Civil War • Trial and execution of Charles I <p>Unit 2: Changing Ideas (17th–18th Century)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration London and the Great Plague • Great Fire of London (1666) • The Enlightenment • Christopher Wren and rebuilding London • James II and the Glorious Revolution • Parliament, Walpole and 18th-century change 	<p>Unit 3: The Transatlantic Slave Trade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West African kingdoms (Songhai and Benin) Liverpool and Britain’s wealth • Evidence and interpretations of the trade • Impact on Africa; Trade Triangle • Middle Passage; slave auctions and control • Plantation life; resistance and rebellion • Abolition (Wilberforce/Clarkson; enslaved people’s role) • Haiti and Toussaint Louverture • 1807 Act; Royal Navy policing <p>Unit 4: The British Empire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is an empire? Where and when was Britain’s? • Causes for empire; colonisation of North America • Seven Years’ War and American War of Independence • Australia; India (rebellion and Gandhi); interpretations 	<p>Unit 5: The Industrial Revolution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural change; enclosure and protest • Canals/steam power and growth of towns • Mining, machinery and the Luddites • Dirt and disease; public health context • Crime and policing; forensic methods • Great Exhibition; education/leisure; class experience • Child labour (mills/farms/mines); Factory Act 1833
Substantive knowledge	<p>Pupils develop secure knowledge of revolution and constitutional change through the English Civil War and Glorious Revolution, understanding shifting power between monarchy and Parliament. They examine Enlightenment ideas, urban crisis and scientific change, and study the causes and consequences of the transatlantic slave trade, including resistance and abolition. Pupils explore the growth of the British Empire and the impact of industrialisation and social reform. Throughout, they strengthen their understanding of causation, consequence, change and continuity, interpretations and power.</p>		
Links to GCSE	<p>Year 8 provides essential foundations for GCSE by developing understanding of revolution, constitutional change and parliamentary authority, which underpin Early Elizabethan England and later political conflict.</p> <p>Study of the Enlightenment, public health, plague and industrial reform establishes long-term context for change in Medicine in Britain c1250–present.</p> <p>Work on empire, migration and resistance supports conceptual understanding of expansion and conflict in The American West, c1835–95.</p> <p>Study of revolution, constitutional change and the expansion of parliamentary power in the 17th and 18th centuries provides essential context for understanding democratic development and political instability in Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39.</p>		

Key Stage 3: Year 9 – Long Term Planning

	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Knowledge	<p>Unit 1: WW1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe by 1914: Alliances • What were the M.A.I.N causes of the First World War? • The assassination of Franz Ferdinand • Weapons of the First World War • What were the trenches really like? • LOCAL HISTORY- How did they recruit Soldiers • Women, War and Work • How were animals used in WW1? • The Battle of the Somme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The end of the war • War Poetry • The Treaty of Versailles. <p>Unit 2: Democracy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How democratic was Britain by 1900 • Votes for women • Terrorists or heroes? • Dealing with the Suffragettes • Women, war and the franchise • Towards Democracy • LOCAL HISTORY: Headscarf Revolutionaries 	<p>Unit 3: Conflict in the 20th Century</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems in Tsarist Russia • Russian Revolution • Communism • Fascism (Italy & Germany) • Hitler’s beliefs & causes of conflict • Atomic bombing of Japan • Korean War • Cuban Missile Crisis • Vietnam War • Causes of conflict in the 20th Century • Interpretations of warfare <p>Unit 4: Black Civil Rights Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstruction & Black Codes • Jim Crow Laws • KKK • Double V Campaign • Emmett Till • Brown vs Board of Education 	<p>Unit 4: Black Civil Rights Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown vs Board of Education • Little Rock • LOCAL HISTORY – Rosa Parks and Bristol Bus Boycotts • Martin Luther King Jr. • Malcolm X • Freedom Riders & Sit-ins • Civil Rights Acts • Developments after the 1960s <p>Unit 5: The Holocaust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LOCAL HISTORY – Tragedy at Cliffords tower. • History of Anti-Semitism • Rise of antisemitism in Nazi Germany • Nuremberg Laws • Kristallnacht • Ghettos • Einsatzgruppen • Final Solution • Concentration & extermination camps • Resistance • Liberation • Historical interpretations of responsibility
Substantive Knowledge	<p>Pupils develop secure knowledge of democracy and political reform in Britain, including the expansion of suffrage and changing roles of women. They examine the causes, experiences and consequences of the First World War and analyse the rise of ideologies such as communism and fascism in the twentieth century. Pupils explore global conflict, Cold War tensions and competing interpretations of warfare. Through study of the US Civil Rights Movement and the Holocaust, they evaluate racism, persecution and resistance, and the role of the state in shaping rights and freedoms. Throughout, pupils strengthen their understanding of causation, consequence, change and continuity, interpretations and the impact of ideology and power.</p>		
Links to GCSE	<p>Study of democratic development, reform and political authority provides contextual grounding for monarchy, governance and political challenge in Early Elizabethan England.</p> <p>Understanding trench warfare and the impact of modern conflict strengthens contextual knowledge for the Western Front historic environment within Medicine in Britain.</p> <p>Year 9 provides direct preparation for Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39, through study of the First World War, political extremism, fascism, antisemitism and the Holocaust.</p> <p>Exploration of race, expansion, conflict and resistance supports thematic understanding of power, settlement and cultural encounter relevant to The American West, c1835–95</p>		

Key Stage 4 Year 10 – Long Term Planning - Edexcel GCSE History

	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Knowledge	<p>Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England</p> <p>Elizabeth & Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession & challenges • Religious Settlement • Catholic threats & MQS • Plots & security <p>Conflict with Spain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes of war • Spanish Armada 1588 <p>Society & Exploration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty & vagabondage • Drake & Raleigh • Roanoke <p>Historic Environment (Edexcel named site study – generic)</p>	<p>Paper 1: Medicine Through Time</p> <p>Medieval Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supernatural & religion • Black Death <p>Renaissance Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vesalius • Harvey <p>Industrial Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jenner • Pasteur • Lister • Public health reforms 	<p>Medicine (continued)</p> <p>Modern Medicine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fleming • DNA • NHS <p>Western Front Historic Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trench systems • Evacuation chain <p>End of Year PPE</p>
	<p>Exam skills are explicitly taught and revisited throughout KS4. In Early Elizabethan England, pupils develop Knowledge and Understanding (AO1) and Analysis, Explanation and Judgement (AO2) skills by recalling precise knowledge of Elizabeth’s government, religious settlement, Catholic threats, conflict with Spain and Elizabethan society, and using this knowledge to construct analytical explanations. They learn to explain why events occurred, assess consequences and evaluate the relative importance of different factors. Pupils practise forming balanced, substantiated judgements in “How far do you agree?” questions, moving beyond narrative to sustained analytical argument supported by accurate evidence.</p>	<p>In Medicine Through Time, pupils develop AO1 and AO2 skills by recalling precise knowledge of key individuals, developments and case studies from c1250 to the present, and using this knowledge to analyse change, continuity, causation and significance across periods. They learn to explain why medical progress occurred when it did, assess the relative importance of factors such as individuals, science and technology, government and war, and construct sustained, balanced judgements in thematic “How far?” questions. Pupils move beyond describing developments to evaluating patterns of change and making substantiated comparisons across centuries.</p>	<p>In the historic environment section (including the Western Front), pupils develop skills to use, interpret and judge historical sources (AO3) by analysing the utility of sources in relation to a specific enquiry. They learn to assess content, provenance and context, explaining how and why a source is useful by linking it to precise contextual knowledge.</p> <p>Pupils practise evaluating strengths and limitations, considering purpose, audience and timing, and using their own knowledge to support judgements rather than relying on surface description.</p>

Key Stage 4 Year 11 – Long Term Planning - Edexcel GCSE History

	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term
Knowledge	<p>Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany</p> <p>Weimar Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treaty of Versailles • Political instability • Hyperinflation • Stresemann <p>Hitler’s Rise to power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nazi origins • Munich Putsch • Great Depression <p>Nazi Dictatorship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling Act • Police state <p>Life in Nazi Germany</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women • Workers • Persecution 	<p>Paper 2: The American West</p> <p>The Plains Indians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifestyle & beliefs • Warfare • Role of the buffalo <p>Migration & Settlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early pioneers • Oregon Trail • Homesteaders & Exodusters <p>Conflict & Conquest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railroads & ranching • Government policy • Farming development • Law & order <p>Consolidation of the West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Cloud’s War • Little Bighorn • Wounded Knee • End of resistance 	<p>Revision & Examination Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine revision • Elizabeth revision • American West revision • Weimar revision • Walking Talking Mocks • Full practice papers
Exam Skills	<p>In Weimar and Nazi Germany, pupils develop AO1 and AO2 by recalling precise knowledge of political instability, economic crisis and the rise of dictatorship, and using this to explain causation, consequence and significance. They construct analytical, balanced judgements about the collapse of Weimar and the consolidation of Nazi control. Pupils develop AO3 by evaluating the utility of sources using content, provenance and contextual knowledge, and compare different historians’ views and judge which is more convincing (AO4).</p>	<p>In The American West, pupils further develop AO1 and AO2 by recalling precise knowledge of migration, settlement, conflict and the changing lives of Plains Indigenous peoples, and using this to explain causation, consequence and significance. They construct analytical explanations of factors such as Manifest Destiny, government policy and economic change, and produce structured narrative accounts analysing key events. Pupils evaluate the importance of developments such as railroads, ranching and conflict on the Plains, forming supported judgements using accurate and relevant evidence.</p>	<p>Pupils will be guided through exam walk-throughs to model how to interpret question stems, plan structured responses and meet AO requirements.</p> <p>Practice questions and timed exam-style tasks are embedded across units, with feedback focused on improving technique as well as knowledge.</p> <p>Pupils are encouraged to complete practice papers and use approved online revision materials independently, reinforcing retrieval, exam confidence and familiarity with mark schemes across the two-year course.</p>