

A-Level Preparation into the Sixth Form 2026

History

A Level History at St Michael's

We study the Edexcel A Level History syllabus. [Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in History](#)

Pupils study two subjects in Y12 and two subjects in Y13. 'Route C' Britain 1625-1701, Conflict, Revolution and Settlement (30%) and France in Revolution 1774-1799 (20%). The Y13 topics are Option 35.1 Britain: losing and gaining an empire 1763-1914 (30%). The Coursework Unit is based on interpretations of the Holocaust (20%).

Paper 1C Conflict, Revolution and Settlement Britain 1625-1701 One Exam. 2 Hours 15 Minutes. Students answer two essay questions and one question based on a critical evaluation of an extract from a historian's interpretation of the Glorious Revolution.

Paper 2C.1 France in Revolution. 1774-1799 One Exam. One hour 30 Minutes. Students answer two questions. One question based on a critical evaluation of two historical documents. One question, an essay, based on an aspect of the period in depth.

Paper 35.1 Britain: losing and gaining an Empire 1763-1914. Three Questions in the Exam is Two hours and 15 minutes. One question is source based. Two essay questions focus on a 'Depth Topic' and also a 'Breadth' topic.

Coursework (Non-Examined Assessment) Students answer a single question based on a taught topic and their own independent research. The topic is the Holocaust. Answers must show an understanding of Historians' interpretations of the Holocaust. A critical evaluation of historians' interpretations and an understanding of the historical context must form part of the answer.

Preparatory Work

As preparation for A Level History you are asked to complete an essay during the summer. Choose a topic you have not studied before. DO NOT spend hours of work on this topic. Do some internet and documentary research and assemble some analytical judgements. If you use AI then you should supplement what is generated with your own research to produce an authentic response with your own thinking in it. Shape these analytical judgements into a series of linked judgements which answer the question. Choose a title from the list of questions on the next page. You have twenty titles to choose from.

Please note that answers should be predominantly analytical. Your answer should be c.800 words long, typed. The idea is to get thinking, look things up, think about shaping an argument and writing it convincingly. It is a warm up for A Level History. It will be handed in and marked but it doesn't count towards anything. It is a 'loosener' to get your history ideas flowing after the summer break.

Essays must be no more than 800 words in length

Assessment

The assessors will be looking for essays that:

- provide a broad historical context
- show awareness of the changes in historiography
- use a range of sources (primary and/or secondary)
- are analytical, not descriptive
- are written in clear, continuous prose, correctly spelled and punctuated
- demonstrate an understanding of differing interpretations of history and reach a substantiated conclusion.

Questions

1. How 'Roman' was the Roman Empire?
2. Was Alfred the Great great?
3. How complete was the Norman Conquest?
4. How religious was politics in the Middle Ages?
5. How central were religious imperatives in the Spanish Conquest?
6. How important is it to reframe the English Civil War as a war of three kingdoms?
7. Was the French Revolution a world historical event?
8. What was the impact of the British Empire on British society?
9. Was the Industrial Revolution a turning point in world history?
10. 'Lions led by donkeys'. Why has this interpretation of the First World War been so popular?
11. How significant was the First World War?
12. Did women have a political voice in Britain before 1918?
13. Has German history followed a 'special path' (sonderweg)?
14. Is it fair to call Stalin a 'new tsar'?
15. Should historians extend the chronological boundaries of the American Civil Rights Movement beyond the 1950s and the 60s?
16. Did Mao Zedong lay the foundation for China's rapid development?
17. What changed in Britain in the 1960s?
18. 'South African apartheid was ended not by the decisions of a few great men, but by the actions of ordinary people'; Do you agree with this interpretation?
19. 'All revolutions are in some respects civil wars'. Discuss with reference to at least three revolutions.
20. Why are the centenaries of historical events of interest to the historian?