

# Step up to A-Level History

## What will I study in this course?

A-Level History will allow you to explore in depth three fascinating periods with a focus on Communist states in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the Tudor monarchs. You will also complete independent research to write coursework on the origins of the First World War.



### Russia - 1917-1991

How was Russia's experience of nearly a century of communist government? How was power maintained? What were the consequences for people, culture and daily life? All of these questions are explored across a number of themes throughout this period of study.

### The German Democratic Republic 1949-1990

A look in depth at the experiences of a population under the influence of Moscow. How was the experience of East Germans so different to that of their kin in the West? What were the experiences as part of the Soviet Buffer Zone? All will be revealed in this study for Paper Two.

**The Tudor Monarchs** Perhaps the most iconic dynasty in English History, the Tudors. War, rebellion, intrigue, famine, conquest and religious changes that have shaped the foundations and traditions of our society today. Within this course you will explore the relations between and interpretations of the great Tudor monarchs.

### Who was to blame for World War One?

In this coursework you will explore the various academic debates surrounding why war broke out in 1914, and come to your own evaluative judgement regarding the most persuasive explanation.

## What skills will this course develop?

History is a robust, academic subject, and as such you will develop a number of skills across the duration of this course.

You will become a critical learner, with the ability to integrate sources from the past and interpretations of it, to understand the relative merits but also reach your own evaluative judgements.

You will gain skills in independent learning, building connections, and thinking thematically in order to develop robust argumentation. Combined with which you shall also develop your capacity to write academically, creating an enquiry and using evidence and criteria to effectively persuade, demonstrate and evaluate your position.

All of the above will place you in an excellent position for subsequent academic study at university.

## What can I go on to study?

History will open any number of doors for further academic study. You can apply your skills in any of the Social Sciences or Humanities, alongside which, having developed your academic writing you would excel in the Sciences or Engineering fields.

# Step up to A-Level History

This is a menu of tasks to help you get ready to study History at A-Level.

Each week try to choose a balance of activities to ensure variety in your learning. Complete the learning log on the final page, alongside keeping an organised folder of any transition work that you complete.



## Short video clips (less than 10 minutes)

Each of these clips offers context for the course. Write down any key details they reveal or inferences you can make from them. What questions do the clip raises that you would like to understand more about?

### Niall Ferguson on Historical Interpretation

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww\\_Li3jFHbQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww_Li3jFHbQ)

### Soviet Germany?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dQG4rNa0Hc>

### History of Russia – Simple History

<https://tinyurl.com/ycazlocs>

### British Pathe GDR Archives

<https://tinyurl.com/ya5nmnse>

### Cold War Crash Course

<https://tinyurl.com/ybkl4gnu>

### What caused the First World War?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24i4ncHuf6A>



## Longer videos

These videos will get you thinking even more deeply about historical issues. Write down key points of context or information that you found significant, alongside any subsequent questions that these videos may have spawned.

### The Lost World of Communism

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znb\\_X48WXUg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znb_X48WXUg)

### Moscow's Empire Rise and Fall

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SgzGLYpykEA>

### One Year, Two Germanies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMVq4jjlQtE>



## Radio programmes and podcasts

There are a huge array of historical radio programmes and podcasts available. If you do not have a podcast app, or cannot sign in to BBC Sounds, this would be your first thing to remedy. Below are a few stretching and informative programmes for you to enjoy and make notes from.

### Meet the Historian (USSR)

<http://www.andallthat.co.uk/meetthehistorians>

### Witness History (USSR)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p04lwmh0>

### Smart Histories - USSR (not all applicable)

<http://smarthistories.com/podcasts-3/>

### Erich Honecker – Profile (GDR)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p033k3vz>

### Intrigue Tunnel 29 (GDR)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0000nfh>

### The East German Uprising (GDR)

(All episodes in this series are brilliant!)  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b07k01bv>



## Questions to consider

The questions below are designed to get you thinking more broadly about some of the underlying issues within the countries we shall study in Year 12. Choose a question and try discussing it with somebody else. Then write 500 words exploring different possible responses and explaining your own opinion.

How can we explain the emergence of totalitarian states?

How do we know what happened in the past?

Why does the study of History matter?

How do totalitarian states ensure compliance?

Is there such a thing as 'worthless' sources from the past?

Why do competing interpretations of the past emerge?



## Different interpretations of the past

History is not fixed, but an array of interpretations about the past, formed from examination of different sources and emphasising different evidence.

**Task:** Read the linked page regarding the origins of the First World War and complete the activities below.

<https://alphahistory.com/worldwar1/world-war-i-historiography/>

Summarise each of the positions and how they explain why war broke out.

How do they differ?

Why do they differ?

What do you think is best explanation and why?



## Books & Other Longer Reads

These books are excellent introductions to the study of Communist States. They are all available to buy and download as e-books, some of them are free!

### Animal Farm

George Orwell

### The Communist Manifesto

Marx & Engels

### The Road of Bones

Anne Fine

### Revelations from Russian Archives

<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/intn.html>

### East and West Germany

<https://tinyurl.com/p4yxdv>

### Russia History: A very short introduction

Geoffrey Hosking



## TV programmes and films

Lots of TV programmes and films have been set within, or draw upon the Communist States in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century that we shall study. If you have Netflix, there are also some links to relevant series episodes. Watch them and think carefully about the context they reveal.

The Death of Stalin

Bridge of Spies

Enemy at the Gates

Goodbye Lenin

Dr Strangelove

The Lives of Others

The Russian Revolution

<https://tinyurl.com/yc6fmgpt>

The World at War – The Soviet Steamroller

<https://www.netflix.com/watch/70253351?trackId=200257859>

World War Two in Colour – Stalingrad

<https://www.netflix.com/watch/80989930?trackId=200257859>

How to Stage a Coup

<https://tinyurl.com/ycfddsni>

# Independent learning log

Use this log to keep a record of your preparation work. You can also upload your notes to the Step up to A-Level Religious Studies Google Classroom.

[illegible]