



## Watford Grammar School for Girls

### History Department

At present there are seven Historians in the Department, four of whom also teach Politics. History is taught as a separate subject throughout the school.

### Curriculum and Examinations

**In Year 7** We start by developing historical skills, then focus on *The Middle Ages: A Tale of two civilizations*. We focus mainly on British history, with comparative elements of the Islamic world. Topics include the Norman Conquest, the First Crusade, Medieval life (farming, women, religion), a thematic study of water, the response to the Black Death in both regions and looking at wider scientific and cultural achievements.

**In Year 8** In Year 8, we cover the theme *Ignorance to Enlightenment? The early modern world*. Our topics start with how new ideas about religion changed society (Reformation, Tudor religious changes, global and black Tudors) before conducting a comparative study between the Tudors and Mughal dynasty. We examine the causes and consequences of the English Civil War then conduct a thematic study on how a love of sugar led to the oppression of millions (covering African society before slavery, impact of slave trade and US civil rights movement).

**In Year 9** We study modern history from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century on the theme of *Was the Twentieth century an age of progress?* We focus on the Industrial Revolution, the British Empire, First and Second World Wars (including Hiroshima and the Holocaust). We examine the impact of war and how it is relevant to today's society through a thematic study on migration. We also study how the position of women has changed and conduct a year wide debate into who was the most significant woman of the modern era, which is always a highlight of the school year. The department runs a WW1 activity day in November, after which students research and write a project on how WW1 affected people's lives.

Students complete assessments roughly every term during these three years.

**At KS4:** over 100 students regularly choose History. We are consistently one of the most popular option subjects. We teach the AQA GCSE specification. The topics we study are Conflict and Tension 1918-1939, Germany 1890-1945, Health and the People and Elizabethan England. The main textbooks for this are the Oxford and Hodder AQA GCSE History series.



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**In the Lower and Upper Sixth** (Years 12 and 13), we normally have two to three groups in each year for History and between one and two for Government & Politics, usually of 13-18 girls. For History, we study the AQA syllabus. This consists of:

### *Component 1*

- 1C The Tudors: 1485-1603 (AS up to 1547)

### *Component 2*

- 2N Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917-1953 (up to 1929 Yr12)  
**OR**
- 2Q The American Dream: Reality & Illusion 1945-1980 (up to 1963 Yr12)

*Component 3* is a personal investigation of up to 4500 words. Students are given some choice of topics based on their teacher's specialisms.

**Government & Politics:** this is also taught by members of the History Department and is a popular option at A2. We follow the Edexcel Syllabus. This consists of;

- Unit 1 UK Politics and Core Political Ideas (Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism)
- Unit 2 UK Government and Non-core Political Ideas (Feminism)
- Unit 3 Comparative Politics- Government and Politics of the USA

In the Sixth Form a wide range of books is available for students to use. Almost all of our students go to university, some to Oxbridge. Many of our students choose to read History and/or Politics at university.

<b>Timetable:</b>	Lessons are one hour long
Years 7:	One lesson per week
Years 8-9:	Two lessons per week
Years 10-11:	Two lesson per week
Lower Sixth:	Five lessons per week
Upper Sixth:	Five lessons per week

### **Resources**

The department has a dedicated History Room, but also uses other teaching rooms in the main school building. All teaching rooms have either inter-Active whiteboards or LCD projectors. The department office is well stocked with the most recent textbooks and resources for all key stages, in addition to an extensive DVD collection.



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Students have their own devices which can be used in lesson with teacher approval. The Library is well stocked with journals, newspapers and books at all levels from Key Stage 3 up to A Level.

### **Teaching Methods**

The members of the Department work as a team, regularly sharing good practice and exchanging resources. As a Department, we are very interested in exploring new strategies to develop all aspects of teaching. Departmental discussion about policies and new developments is continual. We are committed to supporting students of all abilities and extending our many gifted and talented students. The department also develops the thinking skills and independent learning skills of all. All pupils are able to take their textbooks home and homework is set regularly. We also encourage independent research, both by tasks set for all and as extension work.

### **Enrichment Activities**

We run a Year 7 'History Netflix' Club once a week. Year 9 take part in an annual WW2 remembrance activity day, creating personalised memorials on a key theme. We have our own school archive collection, some items dating back to the school's foundation over 300 years ago. There is also a well-established Government & Politics Society, run by an elected committee, with visiting speakers several times a term. The department runs a weekly Debate Club for both the senior and junior school. In addition, the department has run trips to St Albans Abbey, the Museum of London and the World War One Battlefields in France and Belgium. A-Level students attend lectures and revision seminars. Politics students have visited Westminster and participated in debating competitions there. We provide extensive support for our Oxbridge candidates, having a successful track record in recent years of students gaining places on History and Politics related courses.



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### 2022 exam results

GCSE History Results 2022		
Grade	Number of students	Percentage
9-7	71	68.3%
9-5	92	88.5%
9-4	98	94.3%
9-1	104	100%

  

A Level History Results 2022		
Grade	Number of students	Percentage
A*	14	35%
A*-A	23	57.5%
A*-B	34	85%
A*-C	39	97.5%

  

A Level Government & Politics Results 2022		
Grade	Number of students	Percentage
A*	7	36.8%
A*-A	10	51.8%
A*-B	14	72.9%
A*-C	18	94.7%