

Year 10

We think that the Edexcel GCSE course offers a dynamic and engaging specification with a number of really interesting, diverse and complementary units of study. We start year 10 with the broader, thematic study so that students gain an understanding of societal, political and cultural developments on a national and global scale. Finishing year 10 with the early medieval unit on Norman England allows us to specialise on the closely connected 20th Century history units in year 11.

Thematic study and the historic environment – Medicine in Britain, c1250-present

The genuine philosophical underpinning of the medicine course, from superstition to religious dominance to the scientific revolution and Enlightenment to scientific reasoning and modernity, allows students to place medical advances in the context of the dominant cultural discourse and wider exploration of the history of ideas. We adopt a chronological approach to delivering this unit as it enables students to make comparisons of medical knowledge and progress across time periods. We do emphasise the need for students to know which individuals and case studies link to each time period and our revisiting strategies such as key words sheets, short answer tests and knowledge retrieval reinforce this. Accurate application of core subject knowledge by students is a key requirement in reaching the higher levels of the exam questions.

British depth study – Anglo-Saxon and Norman England c1060-88

We felt that this unit is the most accessible of the compulsory British history units. There is some coverage of the 'basics' of this topic in the year 7 'medieval England' unit when we study the Norman invasion and conquest of Anglo-Saxon England so we hope that all students can recall some existing knowledge as a foundation for this unit. It makes logical and chronological sense to cover this unit in year 10 after the 'Medicine in Britain' unit as studying the medieval era allows reference points, such as the dominance of the king and the power of the Catholic Church, to be reinforced.

In addition to the coverage of subject knowledge of the late Anglo-Saxon and early Norman eras this unit also examines the eternal theme of the nature of obtaining and retaining political power. The study of the different methods used by William the Conqueror allow comparisons with C21st politics, whether that be coercion, use of force or implementing popular and/or populist policies to win political support. An example could be William I's 'Harrying of the North' in response to an attempted rebellion there compared with a more conciliatory approach in dealing with dissent and opposition elsewhere.