

**THE JUNIOR CERTIFICATE**

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**HISTORY SYLLABUS**

## 1. Introduction

At Junior Cycle, History should introduce young people to the job of the historian, and to the sources and techniques which historians use to find out about the past. It should also provide young people with a wide tapestry of past events, issues, people and ways of life through which they can come to perceive patterns such as cause and consequence, change and continuity. It is in the past that they will find the roots of the contemporary world.

The Junior Certificate History syllabus which follows is designed to promote and accommodate this kind of learning. It contains a number of elements which are important to the study of History at Junior Cycle, outlined below.

### **Flexibility**

The syllabus facilitates a variety of approaches to the teaching of history, e.g. use of a variety of types of historical sources, historical narrative and analysis, biographical studies, exploration of themes or issues, comparative studies and special studies. The content framework allows individual teachers to choose those areas most suitable to their students, and individual students to pursue special studies.

### **Variety of aspects**

The syllabus explores a variety of aspects of life in the past – political, social, cultural, economic and technological.

### **Chronology**

The syllabus framework is chronological in presentation, spanning prehistoric times to the present day. It also allows students to develop an understanding of a series of concepts, both procedural and substantive.

### **Developmental**

Bearing in mind the 12-15 age-group for whom it is designed, the syllabus is developmental in nature. It moves from the simple to the more complex and from the concrete to the more abstract. It is presented in three sections which reflect this progression.

### **Irish history**

Recognising the importance of education for citizenship and of developing an understanding of contemporary life in Ireland, a substantial part of the syllabus deals with Irish history. This study of Irish history is presented as an integral part of the wider themes of the syllabus.

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

### 2.1 Aims

This syllabus aims to ensure that students:

- 2.1.1 Acquire knowledge of and understanding about human activity in the past
- 2.1.2 Understand the contemporary world through the study of the past
- 2.1.3 Develop conceptual understanding and the ability to think independently
- 2.1.4 Develop a range of skills essential for the study of history
- 2.1.5 Are encouraged to develop positive attitudes such as a commitment to objectivity and fairness, and an acceptance that people and events must be judged in the context of their values and time
- 2.1.6 Are encouraged to develop an interest and enthusiasm for history and a value of their heritage from the past

### 2.2 Course objectives

The course objectives set out the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes appropriate to the study of history.

#### 2.2.1 Knowledge

Students should acquire information and develop understanding of

- (a) The principal trends, issues and events of the History course studied
- (b) The way in which individuals and institutions influence and are influenced by the sequence of events in time
- (c) How the contemporary world has been shaped by the interaction of people and events in the past
- (d) The nature and use of historical sources

#### 2.2.2 Concepts

Students should develop an understanding of and the ability to apply the procedural and substantive concepts essential to the study of history.

- (a) Procedural
  - Source
  - Evidence
  - Chronology
  - Opinion/fact
  - Bias/objectivity
  - Propaganda
- (b) Substantive
  - (i) General

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- Change and continuity
- Cause and consequence
- Comparison and contrast
- Conflict and conciliation
- Power and authority
- Culture and civilisation

(ii) Specific (i.e.) specific to the study of individual topics), e.g.

- Home and family
- Work and leisure
- Technology
- Trade
- Revolution
- Democracy
- Human Rights

### 2.2.3 Skills

Students should develop the skills essential to the research and writing of history. They should learn to:

- (a) Locate historical information from a variety of sources, e.g.
- Primary and secondary written source
  - Statistics
  - Visual material
  - Artefacts, buildings, settlements and other material sources
  - Orally transmitted information
- (b) Select relevant information to answer historical questions
- (c) Record this information, e.g. by note-taking, categorising, summarising etc.
- (d) Examine critically this information, e.g. distinguish between fact and fiction, detect deficiencies such as gaps, inconsistencies and bias
- (e) Synthesise, e.g. assemble in logical sequence, follow a line of argument, offer explanations
- (f) Present and communicate in a variety of ways, e.g. written, graphic and oral

### 2.24. **Attitudes**

The teaching/learning of History should be informed throughout by the procedural values of the historian: students should therefore develop the disposition

- (a) To be thorough in the collecting and accurate in the recording of historical information
- (b) To accept that individuals and events must be understood in their historical context
- (c) To ensure that historical narrative is consistent with the evidence while recognising that the available evidence may be open to more than one valid interpretation
- (d) To recognise that historical knowledge is tentative and incomplete and therefore subject to revision or reinterpretation in the light of new evidence and/or insights.

**3. STRUCTURE OF SYLLABUS**

**3.1 Framework**

The syllabus is divided into three sections

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Section 1                      How we find out about the past

- Introduction
- Our roots in ancient civilisation
- Castle, church and city
- Renaissance

Section II                      Studies of change

- Exploration
- Reformation
- Plantation in Ireland
- Revolutionary movements
- From farm to factory

Section III                      Understanding the modern world

Political developments in Ireland in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Social change in the 20<sup>th</sup> century  
International relations in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

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**3.2 Levels**

This syllabus may be studied at two levels, Ordinary and Higher. The framework above is common to both levels. The different requirements for Ordinary and Higher levels within this framework are indicated as footnotes in the course description which follows.

**3.3 Course description**

In the course description which follows the syllabus is presented in a three-column table.

Column 1                      lists the topics within each section

Column 2                      describes each topic and the contexts in which it is studied

Column 3                      indicates the approaches recommended for teaching each topic

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<b>SECTION 1: 1: HOW WE FIND OUT ABOUT THE PAST</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<p>A study of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The job of the historian</li> </ul>	<p>General introduction to historical methods (to be exemplified further throughout the course) Exploration of different types of sources and evidence</p>
<b>Our roots in ancient civilisation</b>	<p>A study of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houses, food and family life</li> <li>• Work, art, crafts, tools</li> <li>• Burial customs</li> </ul> <p>In pre-Christian and early Christian Ireland and in <u>one</u> ancient civilisation</p>	<p>Study based on archaeological evidence</p>
<b>Castle, church and city</b>	<p>A study of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medieval society</li> <li>• The medieval city and manor</li> <li>• The medieval castle</li> <li>• The medieval monastery and parish</li> </ul> <p>Local, national and European examples can be used as appropriate.</p>	<p>Study based on buildings, settlements and other material sources.</p>
<b>Renaissance</b>	<p>A study of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Architecture</li> <li>• Printing and learning</li> </ul> <p>In various countries across Europe.</p>	<p>Study based on visual sources and biography.</p>

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<b>SECTION II – STUDIES OF CHANGE*</b>		
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<p>Changes in European view of the world:</p> <p><b>Exploration</b></p>	<p>General study: Why people wanted new sea routes What made the voyages possible The main consequences of these voyages</p> <p><b>Special study: An account of <u>one</u> exploration</b></p>	<p>Exploring different kinds of change through:</p> <p>- understanding of cause and consequence</p> <p>- use of appropriate documentary sources</p> <p>- special studies</p>
<p>Religious change:</p> <p><b>Reformation</b></p>	<p>General Study: Why the Reformation occurred How different people went about reform The main consequences of the Reformation</p> <p><b>Special Study: Life of one reformer and the effect he had</b></p>	
<p>Changes in land owner-ship</p> <p><b>Plantation in Ireland</b></p>	<p>General Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why the land changed hands</li> <li>• How the land changed hands</li> <li>• Main consequences, immediate and long-term, of the change in land ownership – e.g. politics, culture, religion</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Study: One plantation in Ireland</b></p>	
<p>Political Change:</p> <p><b>Revolutionary movements</b></p>	<p>General Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Background; sources of discontent in pre-revolutionary America, France and Ireland.</li> <li>• Revolutionary movements in America, France and Ireland, late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries</li> <li>• Consequences of these revolutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special Study: Life of <u>one</u> revolutionary in America, France or Ireland</b></p>	
<p>Social Change:</p> <p><b>From farm to factory</b></p>	<p>General Study: Background: agricultural society in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factors which made the agricultural and industrial revolutions possible</li> <li>• Effects of changes in industry and agriculture on people's lives (e.g. living and working conditions, migration, emigration etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Special study: Contracting life styles c. 1850s:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Industrial England and</b></li> <li>- <b>Rural Ireland</b></li> </ul>	

- Students studying this syllabus at Ordinary Level may concentrate on the Special Studies, as indicated in column 2 above in **bold type**





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## 4. ASSESSMENT

### 4.1 Assessment objectives

Assessment will test the extent to which candidates can demonstrate the following:

#### 4.1.1 Knowledge and understanding of:

- The principal trends, issues and events specified in the syllabus
- The influence of and interaction between individuals and
- institutions in the historical periods specified
- The nature and use of historical sources
- The procedural concepts listed in the syllabus
- The general and specific substantive concepts listed in the syllabus

#### 4.1.2 An ability to:

- Recall historical information relating to the above in its chronological setting
- Use historical terms
- Use and interpret information from a variety of sources, including
  - Primary and secondary written sources
  - Statistics
  - Visual material
  - artefacts, buildings, settlements and other material sources
  - Orally transmitted information
  - Select relevant information to answer historical questions
  - Examine critically historical information, e.g. distinguish fact from opinion, detect such deficiencies as gaps, inconsistencies and bias
  - Synthesise information, e.g. assemble in logical sequence, follow a line of argument, offer explanations
  - Present and communicate information and ideas in a variety of ways, including written, graphic and oral
  - Apply their understanding of the historical concepts and procedures in dealing with historical issues

### 4.2 Assessment at two levels

This syllabus will be assessed at two levels, Ordinary and Higher.

### 4.3 Assessment modes

Assessment will take the form of a terminal written examination. Provision may be made for a school-based component for those schools which wish to avail themselves of this option.