



HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL
HISTORY DEPARTMENT

Able, Gifted and Talented
Guidance

Key Stages 3, 4 and 5

INTRODUCTION

This guidance is designed to ensure that the most able history students at Hinchingsbrooke School receive a challenging and engaging history education throughout their school career. Considerable work in recent years has been done on what constitutes high ability in history and how this can be catered for, and this policy draws on this wider work while explicitly considering how this is implemented in Hinchingsbrooke School.

Overall Aims

1. The most able students should enjoy work that is part of the scheme of work but is different, challenging and stimulating and not 'more of the same' extension tasks.
2. Their work should be celebrated and act as role models in creating a positive learning ethos within the school.
3. They should be set regular targets to stretch their learning and provide opportunities for students to review their own progress.
4. Extra curricular activities should be organised in order to provide for the development and fostering of the most able students.

IDENTIFICATION

Criteria

A NAGTY think tank in 2005 put together a list of characteristics that teachers should expect to find in the most able history students, though it is important to note that this list is not exhaustive:

1. An appreciation of the intrinsic value of historical learning and the enjoyment of the process
2. An unwillingness to be satisfied with "obvious" answers
3. The ability to engage in open-ended historical research and enquiry
4. An awareness of the complexity of the past
5. The ability to use historical imagination to cope with unfamiliar contexts, periods and cultures.
6. The ability to see links between diverse elements and areas of historical knowledge
7. An informed awareness of the importance of historical context and the ability to create and challenge periodisations of the past.
8. The ability to deploy critically historical evidence to test historical arguments.
9. The ability to make and break generalisations.
10. A willingness to construct historical hypotheses
11. A secure grasp of the nature of historical interpretation
12. An awareness of the inevitable human tendency to see the past in terms of the present.

Teacher assessment

Through the usual process of continual teacher assessment, students who display these characteristics can be identified. This assessment is based on a range of evidence:

- Discussions with students in lessons
- Assessment of students' written work
- Formal assessment each term (both through written, and Speaking and Listening assessment)
- Teachers make use of a range of data in tailoring lessons to individual students.

- *Key Stage 3 – KS2 levels, especially in English, MidYis.*
- *Key Stage 4 – KS3 level in history, FFT predictions, MidYis.*
- *Sixth Form – GCSE result in history, predictions based on FFT and ALIS data.*

Parental recommendation

Teachers in the history department have regular contact with parents by telephone and in writing. The department sends home postcards to students who are working beyond expectations. Parents are welcome to recommend that their children are placed on the AGT register for history; for those who are placed on the AGT register, parents will be contacted via letters home with regards to opportunities for their children to partake in AGT-specific events.

Student self-identification

Students at Hinchingsbrooke enjoy history, and often the most able students will request extra work or bring in additional artefacts / research to show to their teacher. Often this enthusiasm will be recognised in continual teacher assessment, though students can always request that they be given additional extension work or that they participate in enrichment activities.

TEACHING

Including the most able in the classroom

Several key principles underlie the teaching of the most able students in the history classroom.

- *Differentiation by teacher questioning.* One of the most powerful techniques employed across the Key Stages in history is targeted teacher questioning. The most able students are encouraged to move their thinking from the concrete to the abstract, and indeed the converse. The idea of “wait time”, essential to recent educational developments including Assessment for Learning and Dialogic Teaching, is employed by teachers to encourage the most able students to develop the implications of their ideas.
- *Differentiation by outcome through flexible and open-ended enquiry questions.* All history schemes of work are based around an enquiry question which is flexible enough to be approached by students of different abilities in different ways. By way of example, the history department asks both Year 9 and Year 13 students the question “Why did war break out in 1939?” – as a question it is flexible enough to allow both year groups to answer it on some level. At present, we are developing a Year 9 homework scheme which will allow all students to develop their own enquiry questions which will be answered through independent research; class teachers will advise AGT students to create an enquiry question which is suited to their ability.
- *Differentiation by task.* Though it is not always beneficial for students to be working on different tasks in lessons, where the teacher deems it appropriate students can be set an alternative, more challenging, activity in the lesson.
- *Differentiation by class groupings.* When appropriate, class teachers will endeavour to ensure that group-work allows AGT students to excel: this will be managed through them taking a leading role, or being grouped with ‘like’ students.
- *Reflection as extension.* Rather than rushing students on to a new topic or area of study, the most able history students benefit from reflection on the nature of the question they are being asked. Thus extension lessons in history often tend to get students to revisit their earlier work with a different frame of reference of perspective. This process allows the most

able students to move from simple to complex understandings of historical concepts and contexts.

- *Increasing independence in the classroom.* The most able students in the history classroom are encouraged to become more independent in their approaches to the past. For instance, students may decide to approach a question in a different way, or to consider it in comparison with an earlier piece of work. Where appropriate teachers encourage this independence.

ENRICHMENT

While provision for the most able history students is usually achieved within the classroom, the history department offers a number of chances for these students to develop as historians beyond the classroom. It is worth noting that several of the enrichment activities below are not exclusively for the most able students.

Cross-Curricular AGT Day

In the summer term the most able history students are taken off their usual timetable to participate in one day of enrichment activities that combines history with another school discipline; each year a different year group is selected for this purpose. This year there are plans to run two cross-curricular AGT days, one with the Religious Education department, and the second with the Design and Technology department.

Cromwell Day

Students in Year 8 all participate in a day that looks at different aspects of Oliver Cromwell. Although this day is aimed across the ability spectrum, the most able history students are able to use this opportunity to link together different historical themes, and will be provided with the opportunity to attend one alternative session which is run by a local historian who specialises in the period of the Civil War and Interregnum.

Battlefields Trip

In Year 9 students have the opportunity to attend a trip to the First World War battlefields of France and Belgium. The most able students who attend this trip are encouraged to think about interpretations of the past, and why humans create monuments to people and events.

Local History Day

In collaboration with the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge students will have the opportunity to benefit from one full day of history teaching (their timetables will be collapsed for that day in order to facilitate this). Each session has a focus on local history, and by the end of the day students will have completed a sequence of lessons which will allow them to formulate an opinion in answer to a rigorous historical enquiry question. This year the most able students will be grouped together so as to provide adequate opportunities for them to be stretched and developed.

Essay Competitions

Local and national essay competitions occur annually, and students have the opportunity to enter these. Students have done well in these, especially in the Sixth Form.

Lectures and use of outside expertise

The history department is fortunate in having a number of academic contacts, particularly at Cambridge University. Academics are often invited to speak to students, and a number of talks are held in Hinchingsbrooke House. Most Sixth Form students also get the opportunity to travel to hear a range of lectures from leading academics on their A-Level topics. The most able students will be able to use these interpretations critically in their work.

A-Level podcasts

For the most able A-level students the department provides a series of podcasts that involve teachers discussing controversial issues surrounding their areas of study. These can be accessed from home via the school website.

A-Level Extension

The history department is currently piloting a scheme of work that pushes the most able history A-Level students beyond the expectations and requirements of the A-Level course to a standard that would be expected of undergraduates. If successful this scheme of work will form the basis for the introduction of the Advanced Extension Award in September 2008.

Parliament Trip

Year 13 'World' students are given the opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament as a guest of Lord Sandwich. This involves a tour of the palace of Westminster, and a small group discussion in Black Rod's office, occasionally with a well-known political figure. The rest of the trip is a Civil War trek around London visiting the banqueting house, Putney Church, and the National Portrait Gallery. The trip caters for AGT students through enrichment, and an opportunity to reflect upon what they have learnt in the classroom in its broader context.

Russia Trip

In Year 13 students have the option to attend a trip to Moscow and St Petersburg in line with their coursework unit. Through teacher intervention on this trip the most able students are pushed to discuss and debate historical issues and context relevant to the geography of the trip.

AGT Enrichment Days

In collaboration with local organisations which cater for the development of AGT, AGT-specific enrichment days and events have been offered to the most able pupils. Last year the most able Year 12 students participated in a day organised and run by the University of Cambridge which provided students with an insight to the study of History at university. This year, students have already attended an evening run by the Drama and History departments on Samuel Pepys; forthcoming events will include an archaeology course for Year 9 Ancient History students at the University of Cambridge, and a Year 8 event examining royal visits to Hinchingsbrooke House which will be run in collaboration with another local school.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Key Stage 3

All students are monitored and assessed throughout the key stage. Formal teacher assessment of a range of pupil work occurs at the end of each half-term, and from this assessment students will be given a National Curriculum level. These National Curriculum levels should not necessarily be used as a sign of progression as they are only designed to be used at the end of Key Stage 3. However, such assessment, used alongside continual teacher assessment, allows regular monitoring of the most able students.

At departmental meetings, teachers have the opportunity to discuss individual student progression, and appropriate rewards such as postcards home.

GCSE

Students receive regular assessment of their work which is compared against predicted grades based on FFT data. This allows the monitoring of the most able students in GCSE classes. This monitoring is discussed regularly and formally in departmental meetings where underperforming students can be targeted, and extra challenge set for students "coasting".

Sixth Form

Much of what applies to GCSE is found in departmental practice in monitoring sixth form students. In addition to this, sixth form students are encouraged to monitor their progress, taking greater independence for their own work and development.

Departmental Evaluation

Some departmental time is given over to discussing AG&T. In particular, considerable planning and evaluation goes into the Cromwell Day, the Enrichment Day and co-ordinated attempts to stretch the most able sixth formers through our podcasts. Throughout this process members of the department evaluate how effective current practice is, and how this can be improved in the future. This evaluative element receives formal focus once a year when the department considers its AG&T guidance.

HINCHINGBROOKE SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT – ABLE, GIFTED AND TALENTED POLICY – OVERVIEW

	IDENTIFICATION	TEACHING	ENRICHMENT	MONITORING AND EVALUATION
KEY STAGE 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual teacher assessment using external, history-specific criteria (see main policy) • Parental recommendation • KS2 level, especially English • Student work over KS3 • MidYis data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on breadth <i>and</i> depth. Students encouraged to make links between wider themes and particular examples. • Confident use of historical concepts encouraged. • Extension activities in lessons focus on reflection on the problems of historical concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-curricular AGT day – students given the opportunity to consider ways in which history can be understood in a cross-curricula context. • AGT Enrichment Days – such as the forthcoming archaeology day and royal visits day. • Battlefields Trip – many Year 9 students have the opportunity to visit First World War battlefields. • Cromwell Day – students look at Oliver Cromwell from a variety of perspectives. • Local History Day – students engage in an historical enquiry in a collapsed-timetable day; the most able students are grouped together. 	<p>All students are monitored by regular formal and informal assessment that allows tracking of students over time. The extent to which AG&T students are being stretched, or underachieving, can be monitored through this assessment.</p> <p>The departmental policy is evaluated through teacher appraisal in departmental time. Students are encouraged to complete evaluations of enrichment activities, and the departmental policy is discussed in comparison with other policies in AG&T meetings.</p>

KEY STAGE 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual teacher assessment using external, history-specific criteria (see main policy) • Parental recommendation • Student self-identification • KS3 level in history • FFT predicted GCSE grades • Regular assessment across the GCSE course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those on the Schools History Project GCSE option, Year 10 coursework on Wimpole Hall and Hinchingsbrooke House is specifically designed to allow the most able students to write at a level beyond that required of the GCSE. • Students on the Modern World GCSE course will complete controlled assessment on modern warfare in Year 11; similarly, the level of analysis required for this piece of work is advanced enough to stretch the most able students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGT Enrichment Days. • Trip to Wimpole Hall and Hinchingsbrooke House. 	
SIXTH FORM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual teacher assessment using external, history-specific criteria (see main policy) • Parental recommendation • Student self-identification • GCSE grade in history • ALIS and FFT predictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 13 coursework on Russia 1855 – 1964 is designed with the flexibility for the most able students to complete a piece of historical composition beyond that required by the A-level course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGT Enrichment Days – such as that organised to the University of Cambridge in the previous academic year. • Students have opportunity to assist in KS3 classes. • A-Level podcasts. • Essay competitions. • History Extension – department piloting scheme with possibility of introducing AEA in 2008. • Parliament Trip. • Russia Trip. 	