

LEAVING CERT HISTORY

Subject Content:

The Leaving Cert History course is divided into two distinct *fields of study*; Early Modern (1492-1915) and Late Modern (1815-1993). Each field is further divided into six Irish sections and six European / World sections. One section is compulsory and this is changed every two years. The compulsory section for the Leaving Cert 2016 has not been chosen yet. If one of the six Irish sections becomes compulsory then you study only one more Irish Section. If one of the six European / World section becomes compulsory then you study only one more Irish Section.

In St Fintina's we study the Late Modern Section.

Sections covered in St Fintina's have included from the Irish section: Politics and Society in Northern Ireland 1949 – 1989, the Pursuit of Sovereignty and the Impact of Partition 1912 – 1949 etc. From the European / World Section: Dictatorship and Democracy 1920 – 1945, The United States and the World 1945 – 1990 etc.

Assessment consists of two components: A written examination paper (80%) and a research study report (20%). Students can pick any topic of historic importance for their study report. The range of topics covered in the past by Students in St Fintinas have ranged from the building of Auschwitz Concentration Camp to the Rise of Fidel Castro in Cuba.

The written exam is the Second Week on the Wednesday afternoon and lasts from 2.00 pm – 4.50 pm. The Higher Level Paper is based on writing 3 very long structured essays and shorter answers on 2 documents. The Ordinary Paper is based on writing paragraphs, short answers and answers to documents.

Recommendation: When considering history as a Leaving Certificate subject students should note the following:

- * A real interest in the subject is vital. If history is a subject that you like and you have the ability, interest, discipline and work ethic you can do well in it but if you don't possess these traits you will struggle.
- * If you have an interest in human behaviour you can enjoy it. Would you like to understand what drove the likes of Hitler and Stalin to be so ruthless. History is very relevant in today's society with many ongoing Geopolitical conflicts rooted in History and if the heads of States involved only realised "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it" History is what moulds every individual and state today and learning from it enhances the now and the future.
- * A good knowledge of English, an ability to write and an interest in current affairs is important.
- * Self discipline is an essential ingredient as students must show initiative in researching material, not merely for the research topic, but also to augment their knowledge of the course in general.
- * Choosing it on the basis of the Junior Certificate can prove deceiving as it is quite a demanding course that needs dedication but if you have that it can be a rewarding interesting subject.

Note that Leaving Cert History is *completely different* from the Junior Cert course! All leaving Cert Subjects will say you can't afford to be work shy but in History it is very true. It can be a rewarding subject and as the great Aristotle said "History is what makes us"