

History is the practice of understanding and making meaning of the past. Students learn about their historical past, their shared history and the people, ideas and events that have created present societies and cultures. VCE History is relevant to students with a wide range of expectations, including those who wish to pursue formal study at tertiary level, as well as providing valuable knowledge and skills for an understanding of the underpinnings of contemporary society.

Unit 1 Twentieth Century History 1918-1939

In Unit 1 students explore the events, ideologies and movements of the period after World War One. Students gain an understanding of new ideologies at the end of the WWI including socialism, communism and fascism. They will investigate the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany in 1933, the persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust. Students also focus on the social life and cultural expression in the 1920s and 1930s and their relation to the technological, political and economic changes of the period. Students explore particular forms of cultural expression from the period in the context of Germany. They will explore the ways in which particular forms of cultural expression such as art, literature, architecture, film and music both influenced and reflected social, economic and political change. Economic instability, territorial aggression and totalitarianism combined to draw the world into a second major conflict in 1939.

Topics covered are:

- Political Ideologies: Socialism, Communism, Fascism
- Nazi Germany
- Holocaust
- Cultural Expression

Unit 2 Twentieth Century History 1945-2000

The focus of Unit 2 is on the causes of the Cold War in the aftermath of World War Two. In this area of study students focus on causes and consequences of the Cold War in the period 1945-1991. Students will have the opportunity to investigate the competing ideologies of Communism in the USSR, and Democracy in the United States that underpinned the tensions of the Cold War. We look at significant features of the Cold War with a focus on the:

- Vietnam War
- Building of the Berlin Wall
- Cuban Missile Crisis
- Space race
- Propaganda

Students will also investigate the significant causes of challenge to, and change in, existing political and social orders in the second half of the twentieth century, including conflicts such as the anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa and social and political movements such as Civil Rights campaigns in the USA.

Unit 3 Australian History: Making a people and a nation 1834-1920

The initial focus of Unit 3 is on the period 1834-1860. We explore how the Aboriginal and British arrival's understanding of land management and land ownership differed. An understanding of the demographic and political consequences of the gold rushes will be gained as well as the responses of and outcomes for Aboriginal people following the arrival of the pastoral and gold rush colonists. The second component comprises of the period 1890-1920. Visions that drove the formation of the Australian nation will be examined and the laws that were introduced between Federation and 1914 to implement these visions, including Immigration Restriction laws, the White Australia Policy, the Maternity Act and Old Age and Invalid pensions. We also focus on how participation in World War One affected Australians' visions for the new nation. Topics covered include:

- Impact of settlement on Aborigines and the Gold Rush
- White Australia Policy
- World War One

Unit 4 Australian History: Old Certainties, New Visions and Voices for Change 1929- 2000

Unit 4 examines a crisis that tested the nation between 1929-1945. The focus here is on World War Two and the causes of Australia's involvement, including loyalty to Britain and the threat of Japanese invasion. It covers the social, economic and political consequences this crisis had on the nation, including a shift towards closer ties with the United States. Students will be asked to critically examine and evaluate the extent to which this crisis affected the cohesion of the nation. The second component of this Unit covers the period 1965-2000 and examines the changes that were sought in Australian society and the debates which were generated about change. Students will evaluate to what extent significant change was achieved. Three of the following topics are explored:

- World War Two
- The Vietnam War
- Aboriginal Land Rights
- Equality for Women
- New Patterns of Immigration