

History Teacher

Introduction

Secondary school history teachers aim to inspire their students with a love of history and an understanding of its importance. They enable students to ask questions about the past, evaluate historical sources and form their own opinions. History teachers plan varied, interesting lessons, including field trips and resources such as text, film, photos, websites and music.

Also known as

- Teacher, History

Work Activities

History teachers develop their students' understanding of the past. However, they don't just teach 'what happened', in the form of key dates. Instead, they aim to develop in students a fascination with history and the skills to ask questions, form opinions and argue their point of view. This is all about enabling students to think and learn independently.

For example, history teachers help students to develop skills in questioning primary and secondary sources. This includes studying differing accounts of the same event, and identifying bias. History teachers enable students to gain important skills not just in historical research but in understanding the information they encounter in daily life, such as why newspapers report the same event differently.

History teachers use a wide variety of resources to 'bring history to life' and make lessons interesting and varied. Depending on the historical period, these could include propaganda posters, film clips, paintings, photos and eye-witness accounts in the form of diaries and letters. Teachers can also use interactive whiteboards for games and quizzes. Teachers encourage students to take part in role plays, discussions and debates.

They also plan, arrange and lead field trips to places of historical interest, including museums, castles, battlefields and reconstructed houses and factories. This could include trips to other countries, such as the battlefield sites of World War One.

A history teacher's work will include:

- planning lessons and preparing resources
- marking students' work
- going to staff meetings and parents' evenings.

Some history teachers are also form tutors, which involves duties such as taking a register and keeping attendance records, providing general information and giving guidance.

History teachers might supervise one or more teaching assistants.

Personal Qualities and Skills

To be a history teacher, you'll need:

- passion, and the ability to inspire, encourage and motivate
- excellent communication skills
- imagination, to prepare interesting resources
- the ability to maintain discipline and deal with challenging behaviour
- willingness to keep your subject knowledge up to date
- organisational and planning skills.



Pay and Opportunities

Pay

Teachers in the state education sector are paid on a scale according to their qualifications, experience and responsibilities. The highest salaries are available in inner London schools.

The pay rates (per year) given below are approximate.

- Unqualified teachers [who have not yet received Qualified Teacher Status] earn in the range of £16,000 - £25,000.
- Qualified teachers earn in the range of £21,500 - £31,500.
- 'Advanced skills teachers' earn in the range of £37,500 - £57,000.
- 'Excellent teachers' earn in the range of £39,500 - £52,000.

In the private sector, salaries are generally higher, though they are sometimes linked to state sector pay scales.

Hours of work

Teachers normally work from 8:30 am or 9 am to 3:30 pm or 4 pm, Monday to Friday. However, most teachers work extra hours - marking work, preparing lessons and going to meetings. They often have to work in the evenings and at weekends to prepare lessons and mark work.

Where could I work?

Employers are state and private schools.

There are also opportunities to teach in other countries.

Some teachers supplement their income by teaching privately, marking national exams or writing textbooks.

Where are vacancies advertised?

Vacancies are advertised by local authorities and in the local and national press, including The Guardian and The Times Educational Supplement (TES). There are also job boards, such as eTeach.

Entry Routes and Training

Entry routes

Most people enter through a postgraduate teaching qualification leading to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Most graduates take a PGCE in history. Courses are usually one-year full-time and two years part-time.

There is also the employment-based School Direct scheme: you'll train while working in a school. The expectation is that you'd go on to work in the school or group of schools where you trained, although there's no guarantee of employment at the end of your training.

You can also train in a school after your degree through school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT). These programmes are delivered by groups of neighbouring schools and colleges and often aim to meet local teaching needs.

Teach First is a charity that recruits and supports graduates to teach in challenging schools in a number of UK regions. The programme takes two years to complete.

To enter teacher training courses, you'll usually need to have at least observed classes in a mainstream secondary school. For some courses, you'll need paid or voluntary work experience in a secondary classroom, or other relevant experience with young people.

To achieve QTS, student teachers need to pass tests in English and maths.

Training

Once employed, newly qualified teachers (NQTs) must complete a three-term induction period, usually within a single school year, in order to continue teaching in maintained schools and non-maintained special schools in England. It

can be possible for the induction period to be reduced to one term, if you can demonstrate significant teaching experience.

Progression

There are opportunities for teachers to move into teacher training, advisory work, educational research or schools inspection. Teachers can become heads of department, heads of year, or co-ordinators of special needs or careers education.

Rehabilitation of Offenders

This career is an exception to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that you must supply information to an employer about any spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings, if they ask you to.

This is different from other careers, where you only have to reveal information on unspent convictions if you are asked to.

Qualifications

All candidates for teacher training need GCSEs (or recognised equivalent qualifications) at grade C or above in English Language and Mathematics.

If you want to teach at Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14), you must also have a GCSE (or recognised equivalent qualification) at grade C or above in a science subject.

If you don't have the GCSEs that are usually needed, you might be able to sit a pre-entry equivalency test; you should contact individual course providers to discuss your situation before making your application.

For entry to postgraduate teacher training, you'll usually need a degree in history. Some universities accept first degrees with 50% history content, joint honours degrees or related degree subjects such as politics, archaeology and country-specific courses such as American studies.

For entry to a degree in history, the usual requirements are:

- 2/3 A levels, including History
- GCSEs at grades A*-C in your A level subjects
- A further 2/3 GCSEs including English and Maths.

Alternatives to A levels include:

- Edexcel (BTEC) level 3 Nationals
- The International Baccalaureate Diploma.

However, course requirements vary, so please check prospectuses carefully.

Some universities accept the Welsh Baccalaureate as equivalent to 1 A-level.

Adult Opportunities

Skills/experience

To enter teacher training courses, you'll usually need to have at least observed some classes in a mainstream secondary school. For some courses, you'll need paid or voluntary work experience in a secondary classroom, or other relevant experience with young people.

Courses

If you don't have the qualifications you need to enter a degree course, you might be able to start one after

completing a college or university Access course, such as Access to Humanities. You don't usually need any qualifications to start an Access course, although you should check this with the course provider.

Distance learning

Some PGCE courses are available on a flexible learning basis. For example, you might be able to train by distance learning in combination with classroom-based teaching practice and campus study.

Employment-based training

Instead of going to university to do a PGCE, graduates can follow an employment-based route. This is where you train in a school. Employment-based routes include School Direct, school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) and the scheme offered by Teach First. For more information, please see 'Entry Routes and Training'.

Funding

For funding information see the GOV.UK website

Further Information

Contacts

- **UCAS Teacher Training**
Website: www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/teacher-training
- **Teach First**
Website: www.teachfirst.org.uk
- **Department of Education Northern Ireland**
Northern Ireland Enquiries
Email: DE.DEWebMail@education-ni.gov.uk
Website: www.deni.gov.uk
- **General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland)**
Scottish enquiries
Email: gtcs@gtcs.org.uk
Website: www.gtcs.org.uk
- **GOV.UK**
UK government services and information
Website: www.gov.uk

Related Careers

- Nursery Nurse
- NVQ Assessor
- School Lunchtime Supervisor
- Geography Teacher
- Modern Foreign Languages Teacher
- Teaching Assistant
- Music Teacher
- English Teacher
- Maths Teacher
- Science Teacher
- Education Welfare Officer
- Playworker
- Special Educational Needs Teacher
- Art and Design Teacher
- Design and Technology Teacher
- Early Years Teacher
- Physical Education Teacher
- Primary Teacher

- Secondary Teacher
- Training Manager
- Higher Education (HE) Lecturer
- School Business Manager
- Teacher of English as a Foreign Language
- Lecturer
- Teacher
- Welsh Teacher
- Nursery Assistant
- Headteacher