

History

SYLLABUS OVERVIEW
16-18 YEARS OLDS

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EDUCATION

About Immerse

Immerse Education is an award-winning academic summer school provider offering programmes for 16-18 year olds in centres of academic prestige.

The aim of these programmes is to provide participants with academically challenging content that develops their understanding of and passion for their chosen discipline. Through 40 hours of academic sessions, the programmes also offer young students unique and valuable insights into what it would be like to study their chosen subject at university.



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This Syllabus Overview provides a summary of the topics and subject areas that participants can encounter during their studies with Immerse. It has been carefully created by our expert tutors who are current members of world-leading universities, and who have experience in teaching undergraduate students.

Academic Sessions

The academic sessions at Immerse are arranged into modules to enable participants to explore a broad range of topics over the course of two weeks. The modules included in this syllabus overview are indicative but not prescriptive.

Tutors are encouraged to include their own specialisms and also focus on any particular areas of interest expressed by participants within the class. They may choose to provide further detail on a specific topic, or they may include new material and information that builds on the knowledge already developed during the programme.

Personal Project

Each programme includes an element of individual work, generally termed the 'Personal Project'. This can take many forms but is commonly an essay or presentation delivered on the final day of the programme. Participants will receive feedback on this work which may also be mentioned in the participant evaluation which is provided in writing by the tutor once the programmes have ended.



Preparatory work

Some tutors may ask participants to complete some preparatory work, such as reading or a series of exercises in advance of the programme. Participants are strongly encouraged to complete this work since it will be included in the opening sessions of the programme. Any preparatory tasks will be provided in advance of the programme directly to the participant.

Academic Difficulty

As all of our programmes are designed to provide a unique introduction to advanced material, the syllabus will be academically challenging at times.

This is something to be excited about and all of our tutors will encourage and support participants throughout the programme. Immerse Education aims to develop every participant regardless of ability, and our tutors will adapt their teaching to individual needs.

Aim of the History Programme

The Immerse Education History programme is designed to build upon the foundation of skills that participants have already gained in a traditional classroom environment and highlight how this can be used to inspire further study at university. Participants are encouraged to explore new material in-depth and to form independent and considered opinions and ideas based on sound research and analysis of the facts. By the end of the programme, participants will have a good understanding, not only of university-level content, but also the variety of degree programmes available in subjects related to history. Beyond this, participants also explore the career opportunities available to graduates in this field.



TOPICS LIST

Renaissance

This module addresses the intellectual, artistic, and cultural developments referred to as the Renaissance. It will acknowledge the flourishing of new ideas associated with humanism, developments in artistic styles, and changing forms of artistic production, but it will complicate older narratives of an emergence from the intellectual darkness of the medieval period, of a Renaissance emanating solely from Italy, and of the rise of the self. It will necessarily involve an engagement with history of art, including close examination of a range of images and objects. It will also delve into the history of political thought by addressing civic humanism and famous political thinkers of the Renaissance era.

Science and Discovery

The early modern period was one of discovery. Famously, in 1492, Christopher Columbus encountered the Americas. This led to encounters with, and the collection of, new cultures, new plants, and new objects. This period saw the works of figures such as Galileo, Descartes, and Newton, as well as the foundation of royal societies. Some historians have gone so far as to proclaim this as a 'Scientific Revolution'. While we shall see that any simplistic narratives of the birth of modern science have been convincingly undermined, the study of the natural world did find new settings and took on a new significance in this period.

The Reformations

In 1517, Luther's Ninety-Five Theses, supposedly dramatically pinned to the church door in Wittenberg, in which he attacked what he saw as the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church and proclaimed the principle of justification by faith alone, sparked a period of religious upheaval with considerable social, cultural, and political consequences. Luther was far from the only reformer, and his ideas were themselves soon challenged by others such as Calvin. This module of the course will explore the context and impact of these ideas, incorporating a wide range of visual and material sources and considering some of the main scholarly debates.

Gender and Witch-hunting

A lively area of research and debate among historians of the early modern period in recent decades, and among historians more broadly, has been that of gender – how gendered identities were constructed, whether there were masculine and feminine spaces and how space could structure gendered power relations, how gendered roles were expressed, defined, or blurred, and how these roles might change under different circumstances. This topic will involve discussion of theory, specific examples, and various aspects of material culture including clothing and domestic objects. In this module of the course we will also look at an often closely related aspect of the period, that of witch-hunting.

TOPICS LIST

Global Encounters

The discovery of the New World clearly opened up new global encounters with non-European, non-Christian peoples. Yet these were not the only 'others' encountered by Europeans in this period. The religious missions of the Counter-Reformation brought interactions with far-flung places such as China. In Spain, in particular, Christians came into contact with the Moors and their culture. There was also the expansion of the Ottoman Empire, which captured Constantinople in 1453 and continued to advance westwards, even laying siege to Vienna. Yet encounters with the Ottomans were not all hostile in nature; there were diplomatic exchanges and Ottoman goods were treated as luxuries.

State Formation, Revolts and Courts

Some older historiography has seen the early modern period as witnessing the 'rise of the nation state' – the beginnings of centralised governments, aligned with national units, and under the control of 'absolutist' rulers. While this has been rightly challenged, with historians particularly highlighting the continued importance of patronage networks and localised authority, this period did see an increase in the bureaucracy of governance, the development of more permanent and more lavish courts, and an accompanying rhetoric of absolute rule by figures such as Louis XIV – the 'Sun King' at Versailles.



Unique Academic Enrichment Programmes



Court Festivals

Court festivals involving lavish, highly choreographed, highly symbolic combinations of entertainments were a prominent feature of the early modern period in Europe. Triumphal entries, processions, tournaments, banquets, firework displays, and so on were held to mark significant occasions such as a ruler's christening, wedding, or funeral, the coming of peace or the forging of an alliance. They were recorded in a number of ways ranging from material culture, such as elaborate suits of armour, through pamphlet literature to magnificent and often costly festival books, and experienced and participated in on a multi-sensory level, albeit perhaps differently so, by their entire audience: the common people, nobility, and ambassadors alike.

Working with Source and Asking Questions

With the benefit of several topics explored in detail and in a university-style environment, participants will return to consider their approach to historical sources. Each student will receive individual feedback on the source-based essays which they have written. The tutor will also give a brief insight into the process of high level academic research, focusing on how historians ask new questions of the past and draw on the range of approaches to history which you have learned. Approaching the practice of history in this manner is reflective of the style of thinking that participants could expect to encounter during an undergraduate degree in history.

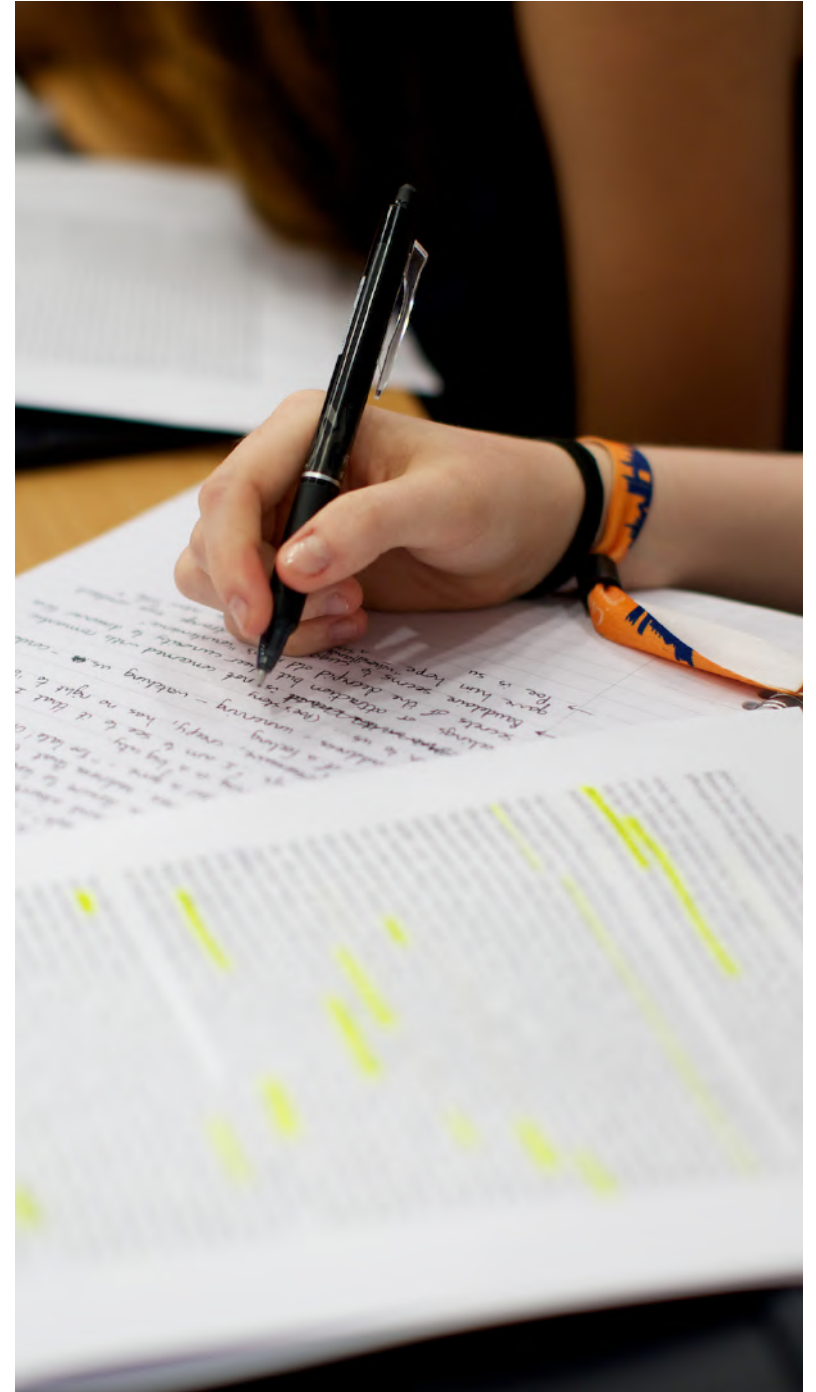
TOPICS LIST

Magnificence and The Mirror Of Princes Literature

The early literature on the role of the prince at court will be the focus of this session. To start, we will engage with the contemporary writing for and about princes and how the activities of the prince were to mirror the magnificence of the court. Participants will consider the motivation of the creation of this literature and the extent to which they were disseminated. We will consider what we as historians can learn about the role of royalty and the influence that external parties may have had on the elite of society.

Cultures of Collecting

Although other elements of the programme may address the rhetoric and power of the early modern court, assessments of the philosophical and epistemological interests at court will also form large portions of each of the sessions. The present session will provide an overview of the culture of collecting and intellectual exchange at court, focusing on the role of material culture in the rise of systematic investigations of Nature and the human condition. Participants will explore how science and knowledge came to prominence in this period and consider the implications of this in the longer term of European development.





Personal Project

Throughout the fortnight, participants will be working on their own personal project. Having been provided with a brief, participants should research and prepare a presentation for their peers, or a source-based essay. This will build upon the theory that they have learnt over the course of the programme and is also an opportunity to showcase their ability to apply this to a specific historical theme or event. Presentations are followed by questions from the audience and wider class discussion of particular points of interest. The tutor may also include feedback about the essay or presentation in the written evaluation which is sent to participants after the programme has ended.

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