

The Queen's University of Belfast

School of Education

History Methods

History

1 MODULE RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

The overall aim of the course is to produce teachers who are professional, thoughtful, confident and competent. This aim should be given prominence in all aspects of your work. Throughout the course you are encouraged to be:

- Professional in your approach to your work (punctuality, preparation, organization, presentation, and so on).
- Thoughtful about all aspects of your work. You should be prepared to evaluate the curriculum you teach, the methods of teaching you use, and the research you read. You should not take things for granted nor accept the status quo, particularly where learning is deemed inadequate.
- Confident about your subject and its associated misconceptions literature.
- Competent in a range of teaching techniques.

2 MODULE AIMS

The aims of the module are to enable you to develop your:

- Competence and confidence in teaching history.
- Understanding of the professional role of the teacher.
- Teaching methodologies, lesson planning, and strategies for managing teaching and learning effectively at the classroom level.
- Subject knowledge and its application in the classroom.
- Skills in assessing pupils' learning.

3 LEARNING OUTCOMES

The following are the learning outcomes expected on successful completion of the module:

Knowledge and Understanding of:

- History teaching methodologies.
- History throughout the secondary school.
- History in the classroom – lesson preparation and teaching.
- The use of ICT in teaching and learning.
- Methods of assessing pupils.
- The specific needs of particular pupils, particularly those with special educational needs.

Professional/Personal Development – experience and skill development in relation to:

- Understanding and evaluating various approaches to learning and teaching history.
- Identifying and evaluating contextual factors which may influence the quality of teaching and learning.
- Assessing pupils using a variety of strategies.

Subject-specific skills – developing expertise through your school placements in relation to:

- Using a variety of teaching skills.

- Gaining experience in managing a class and maintaining a positive learning environment.
- Using a range of assessment techniques including formative and summative methods.
- Designing resources to suit the age and ability of your pupils.
- Managing group work and practical work.

Cognitive skills – opportunities to:

- Reflect on your classroom practice through lesson evaluations.
- Evaluate broader educational issues raised in the Educational Studies lectures in the context of teaching history.
- Develop your reasoning and creative thinking skills.

Transferable skills – opportunities to develop competence in relation to:

- Written and oral communication.
- Learning with others – team work.
- Managing personal/independent learning.
- Further developing ICT-related skills.

4 MODULE CONTENT

The long sessions are primarily focused on establishing the core ideas which underpin the field of history education, and which should inform your learning intentions and subsequent planning and teaching. The short sessions are more sharply focused on teaching strategies and practical classroom activities – the kinds of activities that will help you bring the learning to life and enable your students to meet those learning intentions.

Long Sessions

Long Session 1: Thinking about history, history teaching and learning history.

In this session we will consider the relationship between the academic discipline of history and the school subject, with a view to clarifying the nature and purpose of history education. We will consider some of the traditions within educational research, focusing on how children learn, what history is for and how history teachers work. We will also touch upon the nature of knowledge for teaching history and consider some of the various types of knowledge with which you are expected to be familiar. The purpose of the first session is to introduce you to some of the key ideas and debates which endure within the history education community and which combine to provide history education with a distinctive role in the curriculum.

Long Session 2: Chronology, causation and significance

In this session we will start to look at some important concepts which are distinctive about the subject of history. We start with the most fundamental one, and consider how history teachers engage with the concept of time, the idea of the past, and the various ways in which we conceptualize time. We will then think about how things change (or not) over time and consider the nature of historical causation, reflecting on the nature of causation and on some of the research into how children perceive historical causation. We will consider some of the practical teaching activities which enable children to focus on causation. Finally, we will consider the idea of significance in history education and discuss some of the ways in which this useful idea has been operationalized by history teachers.

Long Session 3: Evidence and enquiry

In this session we will consider the raw material of the historian and think about what constitutes evidence, how historians use evidence and how it can be used in the classroom. We will examine some of the ideas from the literature about how to use evidence and link this to the broader challenge of how to construct a meaningful historical enquiry.

Long Session 4: Empathy and imagination

In this session we will focus on the challenge of historical empathy. In the context of the history classroom, empathy is more than merely appreciating that other people have a different point of view from oneself. Historical empathy implies that children can begin to understand the perceptions and actions of people in past, in relation to their historical context and frame of experience. This is about moving beyond the idea that people in the past are simply weird or stupid, because they had odd beliefs, and starting to appreciate why such belief system developed, persisted and influenced people.

Long Session 5: Interpretation and narrative

In this session we will consider our final conceptual theme and think about how historians construct accounts of the topic they have been investigating. We will consider the value in perceiving such accounts as interpretations and relate this to the classroom. This will enable us to think about how history teachers can teach about interpretation to enable children to develop a fuller appreciation of history's claim to construct knowledge. Such interpretations can aim to provide an account of causation, a justification of a new approach to periodization, or an attempt to re-evaluate an historical figure, and as such this final concept allows us to re-visit some of the earlier ideas.

Short Sessions

Short Session 1: Assessing the learning

You have covered assessment in a general way in the first half of the course. Here we will look at some examples of how to devise assessment tasks which are sharply focused on historical learning. We will consider an example of a teacher's 'assessment plan' for a scheme of work and discuss the variety of activities and tasks which can inform an assessment judgment. We will also discuss effective classroom questioning as a key strategy for assessing learning and providing instant feedback.

Short Session 2: Games and simulations

In this session we will re-visit some of the generic active learning strategies and consider a variety of approaches to active learning in history. We will look at a range of activities, which are designed to be fun and inclusive and consider the serious learning intentions they are designed to meet. We will also look at the rationale developed by one educator for using games and simulations in the history classroom.

Short Session 3: Teaching to secure impact

In this session we will build on the ideas for assessment and put this into the context of action research. This is an established academic model frequently used by teachers to improve their practice and their students' outcomes. We will consider one example of history teaching action research and distil some principles which will inform your third assignment for this module.

Short Session 4: Sites and objects

One of the distinctive features of history pedagogy is the potential for handling artefacts or visiting historical sites. We will consider some of the ideas being developed by museum educators, and how these complement the task of the history teacher. We will also think about some of the practicalities of planning trips as part of the history curriculum.

Short Session 5: Debating history

In this session we will look at the role of debate in history teaching and consider some practical strategies for ensuring that your debates are successful – both as motivational activities and as serious opportunities to engage in historical thinking.

Short Session 6: Textbooks

In this final session we will consider some of the international research on text books and also discuss some strategies for using text books which make them more engaging, more critical, and more interesting than their authors may have intended. We will consider the role of the teacher in engaging critically with such resources and using them in turn to promote criticality in students.

Short Session 7: Teaching sensitive and controversial issues

In this session we will consider recent guidance on how history teachers can engage productively with controversial and sensitive subjects. Whilst there may be a temptation to avoid such issues, or an invitation to teach them from a single perspective, we will consider how such issues can be dealt with so that they both enhance children's understanding of the value of history, and so that children benefit from an historical perspective being taken in relation to these issues.

5 ASSIGNMENTS

The History coursework consists of assignments which address the subject knowledge competences required to be an effective teacher and map on to a number of the learning outcomes specified earlier in this handbook.

Assignment 1: Active learning essay

Write an essay entitled 'The role of active learning strategies in teaching secondary history'.

Assignment 2: Active learning activity

Devise and teach an activity which promotes active learning (e.g. a game, simulation, role-play or debate).

You should submit:

- The activity itself with a brief explanation of how the teacher would use it and any resources.
- An explanation of the historical learning intentions underpinning the activity.
- An evaluation of the activity, which focuses on the extent to which the learners achieved your learning intentions.

Assignment 3: Impact study

Write an impact study in which you demonstrate how your teaching has enabled one learner to make progress. This can be in relation to their conceptual understanding or skill development (but you must refer to history-specific learning rather than generic outcomes). You must relate your account to at least two examples of the learner's work (one chosen as a starting point, the other as the end point).

You should submit:

- A description of each piece of work (in relation to the history learning intentions) and an account of the progression that is evident between them.
- You should also provide a brief account of what actions you undertook to secure this improvement.

6 READING LIST

Arthur, J. and Phillips, R. (eds.) (2000) *Issues in History Teaching*. London: Routledge.

Davies, P., Lynch, D. and Davies, R. (2003) *Enlivening Secondary History: 40 Classroom Activities for Teachers and Pupils*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Fisher, P. with Wilkinson, I. and Leat, D. (2002) *Thinking Through History*. Cambridge: Chris Kington Publishing.

Haydn, T., Arthur, J. and Hunt, M. (2001) *Learning to Teach History in the Secondary School*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge Falmer. [4th edition now available from 2014]

Husbands, C. (1996) *What Is History Teaching? Language, Ideas and Meaning in Learning about the Past*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Husbands, C., Kitson, A. and Pendry, A. (2003) *Understanding History Teaching*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Donovan, D. S. and Bransford, J. D. (eds.) *How Students Learn: History in the Classroom*. Washington DC: National Academies Press.

Phillips, R. (2002) *Reflective Teaching of History 11-18*. London: Continuum.

Stearns, P. N., Seixas, P. and Wineburg, S. (eds.) (2000) *Knowing, Teaching and Learning in History*. New York: New York University.

Wineburg, S. (2001) *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

7 COURSE SCHEDULE

Long Sessions

Session	Week commencing	Focus of session	Pre-reading	Study Question/Activity
Long 1	02/02/15	Thinking about history, history teaching and learning history.	Seixas, P. (2000) 'Schweigen! Die Kinder! Or Does Post Modern History Have a Place in the Schools?' in Stearns et al. (eds.)	(1) What does your school / department say about the <u>purpose</u> of history education? (2) What are your views? (3) Ask a group of students in their first and final years at the school.
Long 2	09/02/15	Chronology, causation and significance	Lee, P. and Shemilt, D. (2009) 'Is any explanation better than none?' <i>Teaching History</i> , 137, 42-49.	Identify a lesson you have taught on causation: (1) Outline the topic you were exploring. (2) Describe how you approached the idea of causation. (3) Describe an alternative strategy you could use in a similar lesson (from the reading and / or on-line lectures).
Long 3	16/02/15	Evidence and enquiry	Ch.7 'A certain subject? Evidence and interpretation in history teaching' in Phillips (2002). LeCocq, H. (2000) 'Beyond Bias: making source evaluation meaningful to year 7' <i>Teaching History</i> , 99, 50-55.	Try out one of the strategies in one of the readings from this week (if possible try something new for you). Write an evaluation of how it went – from your perspective as a teacher, and for the children in terms of their learning.
Long 4	23/02/15	Empathy and imagination	Endacott, J. and Brooks, S. (2013) 'An Updated Theoretical and Practical Model for Promoting Historical Empathy' <i>Social Studies Research and Practice</i> , 8 (1), 41-58 [CLICK HERE] Cunningham, D. (2004) 'Empathy without Illusions' <i>Teaching History</i> , 114, 24-29.	Select some of the teaching suggestions in the Endacott and Brooks article and try them out with one or two classes. Using their suggestions about empathy, write a brief evaluation of your students' responses.

Session	Week commencing	Focus of session	Pre-reading	Study Question/Activity
Long 5	02/03/15	Interpretation and narrative	Ch.6 'Developing historical understanding (2): Interpretation and enquiry' in Haydn et al. (2001). Foster, R. (2011) 'Passive Receivers or Constructive Readers?' <i>Teaching History</i> , 142, 4-13.	Identify a scheme of work where a focus on the construction of narrative and / or the analysis of an interpretation is planned or would be appropriate. Outline how you would do this, using ideas from the reading and lectures. Specify what resources you would use.

Short Sessions

Session	Week commencing	Focus of session	Study Question/Activity
Short 1	16/03/15	Assessing the learning	Devise an assessment plan for a group you are teaching which would provide you with the data you need for assignment 3. Post the plan with a brief description of the historical learning you want to focus on.
Short 2	30/03/15	Games and simulations	Use the lecture and resources for this week to complete assignment 2.
Short 3	13/04/15	Teaching to secure impact	After feedback from the task from short session 1, and in light of the lecture on impact and action research this week, confirm your teaching and assessment plans for assignment 3.
Short 4	27/04/15	Sites and objects	Read: Foreman-Peck, L. & Travers, K. (2013) 'What is distinctive about museum pedagogy and how can museums best support learning in schools? An action research inquiry into the practice of three regional museums, <i>Educational Action Research</i> , 21 (1), 28-41 [CLICK HERE] Either (a) identify a scheme of work where you already incorporate a trip, or (b) identify one where you could plan a trip; and explain the learning benefits.

Session	Week commencing	Focus of session	Study Question/Activity
Short 5	11/05/15	Debating history	Identify a lesson where you can use debate as a strategy. Identify your history-specific learning intentions and plan an activity to meet these intentions. Evaluate the extent to which these were met, and how you felt the process went.
Short 6	25/05/15	Textbooks	Identify a section of a textbook which you think is problematic in some way, it could present an impartial, inaccurate, over-simplified or simply dull account of material which should be dealt with more critically. Devise an activity for students which makes critical use of the textbook, but which results in a better learning activity.
Short 7	08/06/15	Teaching sensitive and controversial issues	Post your response to the lecture in the discussion forum. Include some comments about the extent to which your personal teaching, and your departmental / school culture, conforms to the guidance we have discussed in the lecture.