Hello! I am delighted to join you in a chat about the Warwick University History Department and our undergraduate programmes.

Greetings. What would you like to discuss?

Hello Rebecca

I’d be pleased to discuss our programme, or talk about history, or explore any thoughts you might have.

Thanks for offering this chat today. I hope it will be really helpful for me

What sorts of things are you interesting in exploring?

I particularly enjoy studying History from c.1600

What sorts of things have you been studying so far?

Hi Rebecca! Thank you for conducting this chat. I was interested in knowing how the under grad programme is structured between work shops, lectures, etc

So it might be useful for me to say a little about the programme overall?

I haven't really touched at that at my school. This is something that I'm interested in learning more about, as i've not had the opportunity so far

Yes please. Thanks

The department is very global its scope—we teach the history of the English Reformation in the 1500s, but we also teach the politics of modern Africa, the history of the Latin American drug trade, the Russian Revolution, the history of modern China...
I'm interested in focusing on British history, but with how different countries had an influence on this

That is to say, we see history as important in part because of its connections to the present. The programme is flexible, so that in the first year 50% of your modules are fixed, and the other 50% are optional choices that you select. In the 2nd and 3rd years, it's 70% modules of your choice, and 30% fixed.

That is very much how we see British history—something that best makes sense when viewed in a more global, or comparative context.

As regards the balance of seminars, workshops, etc., that is a good question. Most modules are taught as a combination of lectures—one hour sessions of a tutor explaining and speaking to a class—and seminars, which are small groups (12-16 students) led by the tutor, where you discuss some assigned readings, or other sources, and answer questions, etc.

There are often some group workshops, etc., that take place alongside the lectures and seminars, as well as field trips, etc. And our programme in Venice in the final year is taught mostly through site visits to historical places in the city of Venice.

Sorry that was a lot from me!

Ooh Venice. That sounds like an amazing opportunity. Do you spend the entire year there for our final year?

No problem. As an IB student I do look forward to a multi dimensional teaching format. This sounds interesting!

You spend the first term in Venice, taught by a team of Venetianists (a great word!) from our department—so you study in a small group—this year I think there are about 25 students there—and live in the city for one term. You don’t need to study Italian for this but if you want to you can also take Italian in the first or second year.

What topics are you taking at IB right now?

Currently studying the Second World War with a focus study on Germany.

We will also be covering China and Africa.

Ah—a very classical topic.

WWII, I mean.
We did an in-depth study of the Russian Revolution for IGCSE.

Interesting—one of my colleagues here at Warwick teaches the history of 20C Russia, and her particular research is on people with disabilities in the USSR. She teaches an advanced module on ‘Soviet bodies’.

That’s interesting!

Given what the Russian people underwent

I’d never thought about this before at all before I met her. It seems, for instance, that deaf people were looked on as imperfect, and so were discriminated against in various ways, but at the same time there was a lot of interest in artificial limbs, etc., as a way of creating ‘futuristic’ bodies that in some ways were thought of as even more perfect that the usual human bodies... so there were contradictory opinions, we could say, towards disability.

I also want to go back to Jake’s comment about viewing British history in terms of the inter-actions between the UK and other countries.

It’s a universal phenomenon. People view disabilities with a different mind set and the attitudes are not always encouraging. Something that needs to change.

It would be interesting to see how Warwick views this

I agree that this is very illuminating as an approach—and helps us see things differently. So for instance the ‘industrial revolution’ can be seen not just as being about the development of steam power, etc., in the 18C, but also about the influx of Chinese consumer goods such as silk from the east, and the desire of manufactures in the UK to emulate these and learn to make them.

I find it fascinating to see how our history timeline overlaps with other countries, and how this influences each others

Well, that is very true about disabilities, and it’s illuminating to realise that these attitudes have a history themselves.

Changing the perspective from which you look at things usually lets you see different things.

True.

What are the other subjects I can take alongside History? Are international Studies and Politics an option?
We offer various joint degrees, including one in History and Politics.

What if I haven't studied Politics in IB? Would it matter?

You can also take outside options in your second year (also first year I think). Other joint degrees are with Sociology, with Philosophy, with English, with modern languages, and with Global Sustainable Development.

It does not matter.

All right. Thanks

What else would you like to ask?

Welcome to the new participants in the chat!

draft course structures.docx

I've just posted the course structures for the various joint degrees, in case that's useful. (We're in the final phases of approving these revised structures, but we can keep you posted about this if you're interested.) These give a sense of the different things you can study.

What language options are there? I study French at the moment and I'm keen to continue this

You can continue to study French or other languages while at Warwick. It's something we strongly encourage.

That's good to hear. Although I'm hoping to make new friends, and hopefully learn a new language while I'm at university.

Certainly those are reasonable expectations! There is a lot to do beyond sitting in lectures, to be sure, as well. There are—at last count—something like 300 student societies at the Student Union, for instance.

Wow! Something for everyone
There really is a lot, as regards life outside of the classroom. In terms of an academic community, as well, there is really a lot. The Warwick History Department, and the university in general, is very, very research-active, so virtually every day there are additional seminars, lectures, conferences, workshops etc that are open to everyone, from first year undergraduates to the professors.

There are also a variety of ways in which you can conduct your own research alongside the work you do as a formal part of your studies—various programmes that will fund you to do your own research into a topic of interest to you.

300 .... wow

I know—I think you can see the full list here: https://www.warwicksu.com/societies-sports/societies/

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Research interests me. So typically how

any hours a week can a student devote to it

Well, as long as you like—or are you asking specifically about the schemes that I was just mentioning that fund you to do your own research outside class?

All right. That answers my question. Thanks

It’s a pleasure. I am at your disposal to answer any other questions as well.

Does anyone have any other questions they would like to ask?

Perhaps we are done? It was a great pleasure to chat with you. Please don’t hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions at all. You can email me on r.earle@warwick.ac.uk.

Thank you for your time, Rebecca.
I don’t think I have any more questions. It’s been really helpful.

Very best to you all—and a lovely remainder of your day.

It cleared my head around some of the things I had in mind!

I’m so pleased—and do get in touch if you have other questions.