

# Course Outline

## Elizabethan England, c1568–1603

This option allows students to study in depth a specified period, the last 35 years of Elizabeth I's reign. The study will focus on major events of Elizabeth I's reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, and arising contemporary and historical controversies.

### Part one: Elizabeth's court and Parliament

- Elizabeth I and her court: background and character of Elizabeth I; court life, including patronage; key ministers.
- The difficulties of a female ruler: relations with Parliament; the problem of marriage and the succession; the strength of Elizabeth's authority at the end of her reign, including Essex's rebellion in 1601.

### Part two: Life in Elizabethan times

- A 'Golden Age': living standards and fashions; growing prosperity and the rise of the gentry; the Elizabethan theatre and its achievements; attitudes to the theatre.
- The poor: reasons for the increase in poverty; attitudes and responses to poverty; the reasons for government action and the seriousness of the problem.
- English sailors: Hawkins and Drake; circumnavigation 1577–1580, voyages and trade; the role of Raleigh.

### Part three: Troubles at home and abroad

- Religious matters: the question of religion, English Catholicism and Protestantism; the Northern Rebellion; Elizabeth's excommunication; the missionaries; Catholic plots and the threat to the Elizabethan settlement; the nature and ideas of the Puritans and Puritanism; Elizabeth and her government's responses and policies towards religious matters.
- Mary Queen of Scots: background; Elizabeth and Parliament's treatment of Mary; the challenge posed by Mary; plots; execution and its impact.
- Conflict with Spain: reasons; events; naval warfare, including tactics and technology; the defeat of the Spanish Armada.

### Part four: The historic environment of Elizabethan England

The historic environment is 10% of the overall course, which equates to approximately 12 hours out of 120 guided learning hours. Students will be examined on a specific site in depth. This could be any site from Elizabethan England. This site will be as specified and will be changed annually. The site will relate to the content of the rest of this depth study. It is intended that study of different historic environments will enrich students' understanding of Elizabethan England.

The following aspects of the site should be considered:

- location

The historic environment can be explored through the examination of Elizabethan buildings such as Tudor manor houses and their gardens, theatres and wider historic environments such as villages, towns and cities. Equally key historic developments and events such as voyages and trade, revolts, and battles were shaped by the historic environment in which they took place.