

2016 Teacher Fellowship Programme:

teaching fifteenth-century history



The Historical Association's inaugural Teacher Fellowship Programme was launched in January 2016, with the aim of providing rigorous, subject knowledge-focused professional development for teachers with a longer-term perspective than many traditional CPD courses. It was made possible through funding provided by Agincourt 600, the charity set up to commemorate the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Agincourt, which

provided the perfect opportunity to pilot such a course. Not only has historical research in this area received considerable attention and re-evaluation, but for the first time medieval history is becoming compulsory at GCSE and will be more prominent at all levels of secondary history.

The course was developed and led by experienced teacher educator and Honorary Fellow of the HA Ian Dawson, author of

numerous textbooks on the period and an expert in bringing out new and innovative ways of teaching the late Middle Ages. A highly competitive application process saw us receive three applications per available place, and eventually saw a range of teachers recruited to the programme with varying levels



The following teachers were selected to participate in the 2016 Teacher Fellowship Programme:

Emma Chester
– Astley Community High School, Northumberland

Gavin Sheffield
– The Sixth Form College, Farnborough, Hampshire

Helen Snelson
– The Mount School, York

Jack Savage
– St Bede's Catholic School & Sixth Form, County Durham

Jane Pearson
– Beaumont School, St Albans

Jonathan Cripps
– Callington Community College, Cornwall

Kirstie Murray
– Saffron Walden County High School, Essex

Louisa Dunn
– Westcliff High School for Girls, Essex

Mike Tyler
– Danelaw Centre for Living History, York

Natalie Richardson
– English Martyrs Catholic School & Sixth Form, Hartlepool

Nik Caldwell
– Polesworth School, Warwickshire

Rachel Brown
– Woodroffe School, Dorset

Robert Orr
– Tudor Grange Academy, Solihull

Tim Frankland
– William de Ferrers School, Essex

of experience, existing subject knowledge and even geographical diversity, from Cornwall to Northumberland.

The programme began with a residential weekend to engage teachers in recent research and thinking about the politics, society and culture of the fifteenth century. Professor Anne Curry, Academic Co-chair of Agincourt 600 and former President of the Historical Association, divulged her encyclopaedic knowledge of the Battle of Agincourt and the Hundred Years War, assisted by Dr Dan Spencer and his insights into medieval weaponry and battle. Michael Hicks, Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at the University of Winchester, subsequently shared his expertise on the Wars of the Roses while confronting head-on the legacies of such controversial figures as Henry VI and Richard III. As a non-medievalist looking in, the depth and breadth of historical knowledge on display was outstanding – we covered everything from battlefield tactics to village gossip!

Participants then took part in an eight-week online course facilitated by Ian Dawson, familiarising themselves with a variety of sources, underappreciated historical characters and ideas about developing a sense of this complex and often oversimplified period. This covered an enormous range of material and allowed the participants to share

their own specialist knowledge and interests, as well as the opportunity to take part in the Agincourt MOOC (massive open online course). This was followed by a one-day teaching workshop in London in April, where everyone had a chance to meet up

'The Teacher Fellowship Programme is a fantastic opportunity to deepen your own historical knowledge and understanding by working with academics and to transform this into great teaching materials by working as a team with other history teachers.'

again and discuss approaches to teaching all they had learnt over the previous months. We were also introduced to teachers' personal resource projects: the aspiring Teacher Fellows are in the process of applying their learning from the course to develop a selection of resources about the later Middle Ages for use by other teachers.

We are now in the final stage of the programme, and these resources will soon be available to download from the HA website. Look out for a special HA publication on teaching medieval history due to land on your doorstep next spring.

See below to read an account of this year's programme by one of the participants, Louisa Dunn, and to find out about applying for the 2017 Teacher Fellowship Programme: *The Cold War in the Classroom*.



HA Teacher Fellowship – analysis of impact

Louisa Dunn

I applied for the Historical Association Teacher Fellowship in the later middle ages because my department had decided in a bold, or perhaps rash, moment to teach 'Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII, 1399-1509' for A-level, even though none of us were particularly well informed about

the period. Nonetheless we saw it as a good opportunity to broaden our own knowledge and break away from the traditionally modern A-level course we have taught for many years. We were just starting to think about all the preparation and reading we would have to do, when I saw the

Teacher Fellowship advertised, which seemed like an ideal opportunity to get some expert CPD.

The fellowship programme has been invaluable in terms of my knowledge and understanding of the period and its historiography. I began with

quite a simplistic knowledge base, gained from some historical fiction and popular history, but now feel confident enough to be able to take the lead on this unit for my department. I am in the process of writing a scheme of work to begin teaching in September and I am considering applying to be an examiner for this paper in the Summer 2017 examination series, something I wouldn't have believed I would consider in January, but I now feel secure enough in my own knowledge to believe I would be capable of doing justice to the candidates' responses.

The residential in January, while intense, was very enjoyable and informative. It was nice to be learning some real history again, as so much school CPD is based on pedagogy and practice. The sessions run by Anne Curry and Michael Hicks were extremely interesting and useful; I took copious notes (33 pages) and I have been referring to these a lot in preparing my resource project and writing the scheme of work for my department. I have also scanned and shared these notes with my department in order to support their own preparation and teaching from September. Some of the ideas shared at the residential have become the basis for lessons in my scheme of work. For example, I have created a short series of lessons, based on Anne Curry's lectures about the Battle of Agincourt and its importance, a role-play based on one idea I shared at the residential. I have also made use of some of Michael Hicks's ideas on life away from court and campaigning in my introductory lessons on the later middle ages. I plan to use some of his ideas on Henry VI, Margaret of Anjou and Edward IV, although I haven't quite made it that far yet in my planning and preparation.

Not only did the residential vastly improve my own knowledge and understanding and become the basis for part of my scheme of work, but it inspired me to undertake some wider reading. Since January I have read works by Anne Curry and Michael Hicks, as well as A. J. Pollard, Charles Ross and Helen Castor. My reading is by no means complete, but I

certainly feel that the residential gave me the confidence to tackle these works and also made my reading of them much more effective as I had a better background understanding. This was put to the test recently at a local 'history network meeting' where a colleague from another local school, whose knowledge of the period far outstrips my own, asked me what I thought about recent developments in certain elements of the historiography. I was pleased to find I was able to hold my own in the discussion that followed. He has since offered to lend me his library of books on the period, so my education in the later middle ages is set to continue.

The online part of the programme was also extremely useful. The introduction to different sources through different issues was a varied and interesting way to engage with the period and evidence. I have made use of several resources in my planning for next year. For instance, I have used some of the extracts from the Paston letters and some of the visual images selected by other participants on the programme in my introduction to the period. I have downloaded and used some of the articles and video material from the Agincourt MOOC by the University of Southampton in the section of the scheme of work focusing on Henry V. I plan to use some of the resources on Richard III's northern tyranny in later lessons and it was the week focusing on later medieval people that inspired my resource project.

In working on my resource project of a 'Who's Who?' and associated activities, including a family tree card-sort/role-play, I have a much improved knowledge of the key characters of the period. I have had to work out who the key characters were, which ones could be safely discounted, the family relationships and links between them and their role in the key events of the period. In studying the key characters, I found I gained a greater understanding of the overall story and chronology. It has become quite addictive; I found once I started investigating one character I would discover a link to another and family trees became intertwined. I gained a great sense of achievement in

completing my own version of the family tree and this is something I hope my students will experience. Rather than giving them a resource I have created, I plan to get them to create their own family trees, so that they will also gain a better understanding of the characters and connections.

My work on the resource project was aided by some of the others on the fellowship programme, who very kindly shared their lists of key characters, checked my first drafts, gave me advice on the format and sent me links to background reading. I hope to maintain some of these links. Another relatively local member of the group and I hope to set up some sort of a 'Later Middle Ages network group'.

The next step for me is to make sure the other members of my department are thoroughly prepared to teach this to Year 13 in September 2016. As well as preparing the scheme of work and sharing my notes and reading lists, I plan to run some departmental INSET in June and July where I will test out some of the activities I have planned for September, putting my colleagues in the students' shoes. I will also 'teach' my colleagues about each key section of the period 1399-1509 and provide notes for teachers to accompany the scheme of work. I hope my excitement about this venture will infect the other members of my department and our students and that they will enjoy learning about the later middle ages as much as I have.

Overall the HA Teacher Fellowship Programme has had a significant impact on my knowledge and understanding, has played a large part in shaping my scheme of work for next year and will enable me to help my colleagues prepare to teach this topic for the first time. I think everyone in the department is very glad I was accepted on to the programme as they have witnessed the trajectory of my progress. One of my colleagues jokingly said recently that I was becoming 'a later middle ages bore', a label I am very happy to accept.

Become a Teaching Fellow of the Historical Association

Course leader: Ben Walsh

Academic leader:
Dr Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck)



Birgit Kinder, *Test the Best*, Paining on the East Side Gallery in Berlin, www.dreamstime.com

The Cold War in the Classroom: 2017 Programme

The Teacher Fellowship Programme for 2017 is a fully-funded course which will focus on the history and historiography of the Cold War.

How global was the Cold War? What role did Europe and countries like Britain play in the stand-off between the two superpowers? Were there parts of the globe that were untouched by the Cold War? To what extent did ideology define the conflict? How was the Cold War experienced in East and West, and how did life on both sides of the Iron Curtain compare? Why do some Cold War assumptions still shape our world in the twenty-first century?

Participants will explore the state of the field and a range of new and old historical sources, and develop ways to use them in the classroom.

What's involved?

The course structure is split into three stages, all of which are compulsory.

1. A two-day residential in London in January 2017, covering academic and teaching issues.
2. An 8-10 week online course, requiring three to four hours' reading and discussion per week.
3. The creation of a resource to be published on the HA website for use by other teachers.*

Who is eligible?

The programme is open to all Secondary history teachers with a minimum of three to four years' teaching experience. Further information about eligibility criteria will be available on the HA website.

You must be able to attend a two-day residential in early January in central London (accommodation and travel will be funded).

*Copyright in any material you produce during this programme will be assigned to the Historical Association.

How do I apply?

Easy! Just tell us the following **in no more than 800 words**:

- Why you want to join the programme
- What you and your school hope to gain from your involvement
- How this will fit with your curriculum requirements and what age range you would be considering when teaching this period.

Please include within this an indication of the areas of history you have concentrated on in your personal and professional study.

A reasonable background and working knowledge of twentieth-century history would be beneficial. More importantly, you need to demonstrate a commitment to study and enthusiasm for your history teaching.

Then, additionally, **in no more than 600 words**, outline a series of lessons or teaching activities you are particularly proud of, reflecting upon how and why this has been a success. If you are unsure about the kind of thing you might choose, you could refer to *Teaching History's* Triumphs Show articles for inspiration. Please also include an example of a scheme of work or other in-school teaching resource that you have written or worked on. This does not need to be linked to the above exercise or the Cold War.

Application forms and further information about the programme are available on the HA website at: www.history.org.uk/secondary/categories/872

Please send completed applications, along with supporting documents, to our Education Officer, Maheema Chanrai, by **Monday 7 November 2016**.

By email: maheema.chanrai@history.org.uk

By post: The Historical Association,
59a Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4JH
Please mark the envelope clearly with *2017 Teacher Fellowship*.



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