

Paper 1, Option 1H: Britain transformed, 1918–97

Overview

This option comprises a study in breadth, in which students will learn about the extent to which Britain was transformed politically, socially, economically and culturally in the years 1918–79. They will consider responses to the challenges of war, fluctuations in the economy, technological advancement and the desire for greater social equality.

The focus of study is on developments and changes over a broad timescale and so the content is presented as themes spanning a significant duration: 1918–79. This option also contains a study in depth of historical interpretations on a broad question, which is contextualised by, and runs on from, the themes: what impact Thatcher’s governments had on Britain, 1979–97.

Themes	Content
1 A changing political and economic environment, 1918–79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A changing political landscape: changing party fortunes, 1918–31; the National government, 1931–45; Labour government, the rise of consensus politics and political challenge, 1945–79. • Economic challenges in 1918 and post-war boom, crisis and recovery, 1918–39; creating a managed economy, 1939–51; the response to economic challenges, 1951–79. • Change and challenge in the workplace: the reasons for, and consequences of, industrial change and changing industrial relations, 1918–39; changing working opportunities and conditions, 1939–79; industrial relations, 1939–1979, and the reason for their breakdown in the 1960s and 70s.
2 Creating a welfare state, 1918–79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing social welfare: the extent, and nature of, social welfare provision, 1918–39; the impact of the Second World War, the Labour government and consensus, 1939–64; the reasons for increasing challenges to state welfare provision, 1964–79. • Public health: health provision, 1918–45; the creation and impact of the National Health Service (NHS), 1945–79, and the challenge of medical advances. • Education and widening opportunities: education policy, 1918–43; the significance of the ‘Butler Act’ 1944, and the development of comprehensive education to 1979; the growth and social impact of university education, 1918–79.

Themes	Content
3 Society in transition, 1918–79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class and social values: class, social change and the impact of wars, 1918–51; the emergence of the 'liberal society', and its opponents, 1951–79. • The changing role and status of women: the right to vote and political advancement, 1918–79; changes in family life and the quest for personal freedoms, 1918–79. • Race and immigration: immigration policies and attitudes towards ethnic minorities, 1918–39; the impact of the Second World War and new Commonwealth immigration; racial controversy and the impact of government policies on race relations and immigration, 1958–79.
4 The changing quality of life, 1918–79	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing living standards: the impact of boom, crisis and recovery, and the significance of regional differences, 1918–39; the effects of 'total war' and austerity, 1939–51; the growth of a consumer society, 1951–79. • Popular culture and entertainment: the impact of mass popular culture, including cinema, radio and music, 1918–79; the influence of television from the 1950s and youth culture, 1955–79. • Leisure and travel: the growth of spectator sports from the 1920s; increased leisure time and the development of mass tourism from the 1930s; the impact of car ownership and travel developments, 1918–79.

Historical interpretations	Content
What impact did Thatcher's governments (1979–90) have on Britain, 1979–97?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect of Thatcher's economic policies. • The extent to which state intervention and the public sector were 'rolled-back'. • The extent of political and social division within Britain. • The effect of Thatcherism on politics and party development.