



Secondary History Leadership Conference

Thursday 25 June 2026

This dynamic and thought-provoking conference brings together leading voices from both national and local contexts to support the professional development of history subject leaders, classroom teachers, and senior leaders with responsibility for history.

A particular focus will be placed on improving GCSE outcomes through the application of cognitive science, high quality texts, collaborative problem solving, and effective KS3–KS4 curriculum design.

Keynote speaker: Dale Banham



Honorary Fellow of the Historical Association and Schools History Project,
Author of KS3 and GCSE history textbooks for Hodder Education

From making it stick to making an argument

How can recent research findings from cognitive science be used by history teachers to improve the outcomes of all students at GCSE?

Other speakers:

Sarah Herrity

HIAS General Inspector/Adviser and Secondary History Lead,
Former History Leader and Leading History Advanced Skills Teacher

Hampshire History Steering Committee

Neil Bates

Lead Practitioner, Harrow Way School,
Co-author of the *Making sense of history* textbook series

Stuart Farley

Head of History and ECT Induction Tutor, Upper Shirley High School,
Schools History Project Regional Adviser for the South-East

Tamsin Leyman

HA Teacher Fellow, History Leader and former Wildern SCITT History Tutor

Megan Whyte

History Lead, Swanmore College

Rachel Woodward

History Lead, The Wavell School

Location: Eastleigh area

Keyword Search: *History Leadership*

Cost: Sub £355 / SLA £170 / Full £426



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Use the key word search or course name to search for this
learning item in our catalogue

08:30	Arrival and sign in (refreshments from 8:20)
08:40	<p>Welcome and <i>View from the bridge</i> – Sarah Herrity</p> <p>This opening session will frame the professional challenge facing history leaders in 2026. As the curriculum and inspection landscape continues to evolve, leaders are required to hold steady to disciplinary principles while navigating rising levels of educational disadvantage, increased accountability and a growing evidence base around how pupils learn.</p> <p>Drawing on national and local developments, including Ofsted, the Curriculum and Assessment Review, history educational discourse and recent outcomes data, this session will set the agenda for the morning and clarify what purposeful, disciplinary led history leadership demands now.</p>
09:10	<p><i>What does it mean to lead history well in 2026?</i> Hampshire History Steering Committee – best practice examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Responding to the CAR review: leading curriculum development well on media literacy and historical diversity at KS3</i> – Sarah Herrity and Stuart Farley. • <i>Using high quality texts, stories and reading strategies at GCSE to improve learning</i> – Tamsin Leyman and Sarah Herrity. • <i>Evidence-informed implementation in history to ensure achievement for all</i> – Sarah Herrity and Neil Bates.
09:45	<p><i>So what do pupils now know? Leading effective assessment for cumulative knowledge in history at KS3</i> – Sarah Herrity, Stuart Farley and Neil Bates</p> <p>What does effective assessment look like in history when cumulative knowledge is the goal?</p> <p>This session explores assessment as a disciplinary practice closely aligned with curriculum design, rather than an exercise in data collection. It will focus on how history leaders can plan for and evaluate pupils' growing knowledge over time, ensuring that substantive knowledge, key concepts and ways of thinking are deliberately revisited, strengthened and used with increased sophistication.</p> <p>Leaders will consider how effective assessment in history checks what pupils know and understand about the past, reveals how well new learning connects to prior knowledge, and supports curriculum coherence across enquiries, year groups and key stages. Practical approaches will be explored, including low-stakes assessment, purposeful questioning and extended writing, with a focus on using assessment to inform teaching, curriculum refinement and support for pupils who struggle to retain and connect historical knowledge over time.</p>
10:30	Break
10:50	<p><i>How can we tackle educational disadvantage: evidence-informed leadership from the History GCSE TED Project</i> – Sarah Herrity, Tamsin Leyman, Rachel Woodward, Megan Whyte</p> <p>Educational disadvantage remains one of the most pressing challenges facing history leaders. Drawing on findings from the History GCSE Tackling Educational Disadvantage (TED) project, this session explores what the evidence tells us about the barriers disadvantaged pupils experience in GCSE history, and what genuinely helps them to succeed. Grounded in pupil voice, local data, collaborative action research, and wider research this session shared some of the key findings from the project.</p> <p>This session aims to support history leaders in making decisions that close gaps and improve pupils' experience and outcomes at GCSE in their schools.</p>
11:30	<p><i>Cracking the hard parts: collaborative problem-solving in GCSE history</i> <i>Which parts of the GCSE history course consistently prove most challenging – and how can departments tackle them more effectively?</i></p> <p>This practical, workshop-based session brings history leaders together to work collaboratively on the most demanding aspects of GCSE history, such as question types or topics such as the Cold War or America's reconstruction, where pupils often struggle with scale, abstraction and extended historical writing. Delegates will bring their laptops and existing resources to take part in structured problem-solving, resource sharing and joint planning.</p> <p>Ahead of the conference, delegates will be invited to identify the GCSE topics and challenges they find most difficult to teach and their exam board. This will enable purposeful grouping on the day, ensuring that participants work alongside colleagues facing similar curriculum and pedagogical issues. The session is designed to support history leaders in improving approaches and resources that better support pupils to make sense of complex historical content and perform more confidently in exams.</p>
12:40	Lunch Chance to view the history resources from publisher stands and curriculum centre.
13:30	<p>Keynote by Dale Banham: <i>From making it stick to making an argument</i> <i>How can recent research findings from cognitive science be used by history teachers to improve the outcomes of all students at GCSE?</i></p> <p>This keynote presentation will outline a sequence of strategies that help students remember information and then shape it into effective explanations and arguments. It will draw on key findings from cognitive science and successful writing strategies from classroom-based action research.</p>
15:30	Sharing on tables – action planning
15:45	Evaluations and close