The course considers the processes by which Britain became the first nation to overcome growth constraints and embark on a path of sustained expansion of per capita income. It looks at the roles played by increased investment and labour supply to industrial activities and changed incentives, which improved the efficiency of agriculture and promoted the development of industry. But it also emphasises the roles of country-specific institutions, such as property rights, and national cultures, such as inheritance patterns and work roles for men and women, in understanding Britain's 'exceptionalism'. The course covers key debates both on the causes of industrialisation and the consequences for the people who lived through it. It looks at the following main topics:

1. Industrialisation - overview and outline of main debates
2. Agrarian change - enclosure, service in husbandry and rural class structure
3. Agrarian change - new techniques and rising land productivity
4. Revolution or evolution? - trade, industry and growth
5. Work and industrialisation - child labour and the emergence of the male breadwinner family
6. The Poor Law and changes in the welfare system
7. Industrialisation and the standard of living - qualitative assessments and quantification
8. Industrialisation and women - implications for the measurement of welfare

The aims of this course are to introduce students to the main debates, conceptual tools and empirical findings that are central to understanding British economic history during the Industrial Revolution. By the end of this course students should have acquired a good understanding of the key debates surrounding Britain's industrialisation and the welfare implications of the changes that occurred. They should be familiar with the various methodologies and data sources employed and have knowledge of recent empirical findings.