



POLITICS

A-Level Course Information



Qualification: Advanced Level Politics

Exam Board: Edexcel

Subject Leader: Ms P. Burns

Entry Requirements:

Minimum Entry Requirements:

5 x 5s

4 in English and Maths

Subject Specific Entry Requirements:

6 in a humanities subject at GCSE or English GCSE

Why study Politics?

From the moment you get up to the moment you go to bed, politics affects nearly everything you do: the information on the packet of cereal; the licence fee you have to pay for the TV you watch whilst eating breakfast; the age at which you can drive; what you study at sixth form; how much money comes to your sixth form; the way that healthcare is run – the list is endless!

This course will enable you to study contemporary politics and develop a strong understanding of the factors shaping both the British and American systems. This subject also helps in the development of discussion and debating skills and encourages students to think beyond the constraints of a textbook. Politics is not linear, but ever changing with a multitude of avenues detailing the best and worst of the UK and US political structures.

What can I do with Politics after A-Level?

Politics will obviously equip students for the further study of politics at university. Many of our students have also gone onto study international relations or complimented their primary course with politics modules. As a subject which encourages critical thinking, it is respected and could contribute, along with other subjects, to a career in politics, journalism, law, social work and related areas.

Politics Extras

We are looking to run a trip to Washington DC during the July of Year 12 along with a number of UK-based visits including trips to the Houses of Parliament. We also invite MPs to come to talk and discuss issues with students.

What will I study?

The Politics course is made up of the following components:

Unit 1: UK Politics

Political participation: Democracy and participation, electoral systems, voting behaviour, and the media

Students will investigate how people and politics interact. They will explore the development of the UK's democratic system and the similarities, differences, and connections between direct and indirect democracy. They will focus on the role and scope of political parties, and learn how individuals fit into the political process. Students will examine how electoral systems in the UK operate and how individuals and groups are influenced in their voting behaviour and political actions – through pressure groups, social media, and the traditional media.

Core political ideas: Conservatism, liberalism, socialism

Students to explore the three political ideas of conservatism, liberalism and socialism. Students will learn about the core ideas and principles and how they apply in practice to human nature, the state, society and the economy, the divisions within each idea, and their key thinkers.

Unit 2: UK Government

Government: The constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and the executive, relationships between the branches.

The component introduces students to the set of rules governing politics in the UK, the UK constitution. It further introduces students to the specific roles and powers of the different branches of the government, as well as the relationships and balance of power between them. Students will learn about the relative powers of the different branches of UK government, the extent to which the constitution has changed in recent years, the desirability of further change, and the current location of sovereignty within the UK political system.

Non-Core Political ideas: Nationalism

Students will learn about the core ideas and principles, the effects of these ideas, the divisions within each idea and their key thinkers.

Unit 3: Comparative Politics

Government and Politics of the USA: US Constitution and federalism, US congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court, democracy and participation, civil rights

The USA has been considered by some to be a 'beacon of democracy' – is it? As a world power, understanding the nature of US democracy, and the debates surrounding it, is crucial given the considerable impact that the USA has on UK, European and global politics. Students will explore the US Constitution and the arguments surrounding this guiding document and will judge ultimately whether 'liberty and justice for all' has been achieved in the USA, through exploring many different areas such as the voting system, racial and ethnic politics, and the role of pressure groups. Students will learn to compare and contrast politics and institutions in the US with those in the UK.