

Politics

Qualification Level: GCE Advanced Level

Qualification Duration: 2 years

Exam Board: Edexcel

Intro: We don't always like politicians and the things that governments do... but the business of politics touches every aspect of our lives. And whilst we might criticise governments for some of their policies, it has to be better than having no government at all. Society just wouldn't function without an elected body to decide, say, what taxes will be levied, how those taxes will be spent on things like health and education or how the country will be defended. But no matter whether government makes you feel angry or reassured, it's worth having a knowledge of how the whole process of an elected government works. It also fascinating to compare the political systems in the UK with those in the most powerful democracy in the world – the USA.

Year one content:

1) Component 1 UK Politics

- Political Participation • Democracy and Participation • Political parties • Electoral systems • Voting behaviour and the media. • Core ideas (Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism).
- In this Unit you will study how citizens can play a role in political life in the UK, and you will familiarise yourself with key ideological standpoints that underpin politics in the UK and the USA

2) Component 2 UK Government (the latter half of this will be done at the start of Year 2)

The Constitution • Parliament • The PM and Government • Relations between the branches. • Optional ideas (choose one from anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism and nationalism). We will be studying Feminism for Optional ideas.

- In this unit you will study the institutions that make up government in the UK and you will also learn about a key non-core political ideology in depth,

Year two content:

3) Component 3 – Comparative Politics – We will cover Option 3A - US Politics

- The US Constitution and federalism • US Congress • US presidency • US Supreme Court • Democracy and participation (Elections and voting, Pressure Groups, political parties) • Civil rights

Assessment comprises three exams (at the end of the two-year course) with a range of short and long-answer (essay) questions, one of which may use stimulus material. Comparative links with UK politics will be required.

Trips and other costs:

- Trip to the Houses of Parliament – rail fare and food costs only

Career and further study:

Having a Politics A Level helps you to prepare for the critical thinking, research, analysis and extended writing elements of a university degree. Its high-level academic status means that taking this subject will prepare you for the rigours of study at both undergraduate and post-graduate levels. Careers that use Politics qualifications include Law, business, accountancy, journalism, diplomacy, social work, PR, marketing, museum studies, teaching and librarianship but there are many more.