

Politics

A LEVEL - EDEXCEL

What are the aims of the course?

- To forge an informed understanding of contemporary political structures and issues in their historical context, both within the UK and globally.
- To develop a critical awareness of the changing nature of politics and the relationships between political ideas, institutions and processes.
- To appreciate the influences and interests which have an impact on political decision-making, and develop an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups
- To engage with contemporary politics.

What does it involve?

A Level Politics involves the study of three components: UK Politics, UK Government and Comparative Politics. In UK Politics students will explore how people and politics interact; examining the emergence of the UK's democratic system and the similarities, differences, connections and parallels between direct and indirect democracy. They will focus on the role and scope of political parties and their manifestos, and their relevance to the mandate of the resulting government. Students will examine how electoral system in the UK operate, and how individuals and groups are influenced in their voting behaviour. Students will also explore the three traditional political ideas of conservatism, liberalism and socialism and how they apply in practice to human nature, the state, society and the economy. Component Two, UK Government, is ultimately about the role of the constitution and its importance to understand where, how and by whom political decisions are made. Students are introduced to the specific roles and powers of the different major branches of government and the relationships between them. In this section, students will also explore one of five non-core political ideas, from: anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism and nationalism. In Component Three, students will study either the Government and Politics of the USA or Global Politics.

The study of politics will require students to interpret, critically analyse and evaluate political information. They will develop knowledge and understanding of key political concepts and construct and communicate arguments with relevance, clarity and coherence.

How is it assessed?

Component 1 - UK Politics

Written Examination

2 hours; 84 marks

Section A - Political Participation (60 marks): students answer one source question from a choice of two and one non-source question from a choice of two.

Section B - Core Political Ideas (24 marks): students have a choice of two questions and must answer one.

Component 2 - UK Government

Written Examination

2 hours; 84 marks

Section A - UK Government (60 marks): students answer one source question from a choice of two and one non-source question from a choice of two.

Section B - Non-Core Political Ideas (24 marks): students have a choice of two questions from the non-core ideas they have studied and must answer one.

Component 3 - Comparative Politics

Written Examination

2 hours; 84 marks

Section A - (12 marks): students answer one question from a choice of two.

Section B - (12 marks): students answer one compulsory question, which will focus on topics from the comparative theories section.

Section C - (60 marks): students answer two questions from a choice of three.

Are there any specific entry requirements?

A grade 5 or above in GCSE English is desirable.

Why is it a useful qualification?

Politics is a living, breathing subject as the political landscape around us changes almost every day. It gives us the opportunity to discover our own personal political beliefs and to see in much greater detail the benefits and advantages of the vast array of political ideologies that are present in the world today. The study of politics educates us on a fundamental part of our society and helps us to understand that if we engage in political processes, using the pressure points built into the system, then every individual has the ability to affect change. Politics helps us to understand the political institutions of our nation and prepares us for adult life.

The qualities of critical analysis and evaluation lend themselves to university studies and, beyond this, politics graduates are recruited into a broad number of professions such as business and industry, the law, the media and journalism, accountancy and many more.

