

Lead Teacher: Ms Cramp

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Subject Overview

A-level Politics is one of the most interesting and engaging qualifications you can choose. Covering news and current affairs from the UK and US, it helps you understand how the UK country is run and develops research, written communication, and debate skills.

The course is a two-year exploration of British and American politics and political philosophy. The course is designed to develop:

- A critical awareness of the nature of politics and the relationship between political ideas, institutions, and processes.
- Knowledge and understanding of the structures of authority and power within the political system of the United Kingdom.
- An understanding of how the political system of the United Kingdom may differ from other political systems.
- Knowledge and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the individual.
- An interest in and engagement with contemporary politics.

There are 3 broad areas of study in A Level Politics:

1. *Government and politics of the UK*: this is divided into ten sections. Each has a particular focus, but their interrelationships must be understood to appreciate the complexities of the system. You will study: the nature and sources of the British Constitution, the structure and role of Parliament, the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the judiciary, and devolution, democracy and participation, elections and referendums, political parties, pressure groups and the European Union.
2. *Government and politics of the USA and comparative politics*: this is divided into eight sections. Each has a particular focus, but their interrelationships must be understood to appreciate the complexities of the system. You will study: the constitutional framework of the US government, Congress, the President, the judicial branch of government, the electoral process and direct democracy, political parties, pressure groups and civil rights.
3. *Political ideas*: you will study three core ideologies: liberalism, conservatism, and socialism and in addition we will study one of the following five ideologies, nationalism, feminism, multiculturalism, anarchism or ecologism.

Assessment percentage : Exam: 100%

Progression routes:

Studying A Level politics is ideal if you are considering studying politics, sociology, ethics, advertising, or journalism at university and is highly regarded by employers in industries including politics, international organisations, the media, government, and the civil service.

GCSE Subject Exam results minimum requirements:

- A Grade 5 in *English Language*
- At least 6 other GCSE subjects with Grade 4s. This **MUST** include *Mathematics*.

Complementary learning:

History

Psychology

Economics

Sociology

Geography

English

Assessment

100% exam.

Unit Code	Unit Title	Assessment Details	Weighting
Component 1	Government and Politics of the UK.	Written paper, 2 hours. A mixture medium 'explain' and essay style questions.	33.3%
Component 2	Government and Politics of the USA.	Written paper, 2 hours. A mixture medium 'explain' and essay style questions.	33.3%
Component 3	Political Ideas.	Written paper, 2 hours. A mixture medium 'explain' and essay style questions.	33.3%

Additional information

Course specific equipment:

- Lever arch folder
- 20 file dividers
- Pink and green highlighters

Essential Reading Material:

Lemieux S, AQA A-level Politics: Government and Politics of the UK, Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics (2021) ISBN: 978-1398311329

Lynch P, Fairclough P, Cooper T, UK Government and Politics for AS/A-level (2017) ISBN: 9781471889233

Bennett A, US Government and Politics 5th Edition (2017) ISBN: 9781471889363

Kelly R. and McNaughton N, Political Ideas for A-level (2017) ISBN: 9781471889516

Recommended resources:

- Politics Review – published by Philip Allan Updates four times in each annual volume (September, November, January, and April) is the most widely used journal for students of A-level Politics. It contains a wealth of relevant articles, factual summaries and examination guidance and is available as a competitively priced student subscription.
- Talking Politics – articles can be found in old issues, published by the Politics Association three times in each annual volume between 1989 and 2007 and may provide useful stimulus material for students or opportunities for extended background reading.
- Economist – many useful articles can be found in more mainstream publications, such as The Economist.
- UK Government and Politics Annual Survey – Paul Fairclough, Richard Kelly and E Magee's 80-page survey, published each January, provides a comprehensive overview of the main developments in UK government and politics during the preceding year.
- Politics PAL – the long-running A5-format annual UK political update provides a different taken on the year's major developments and debates.

Enrichment:

Trips to the Houses of Parliament and NYC/Washington DC.