

Politics A Level

Board: EDEXCEL, Specification 9PL0

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Course

Politics is a subject to be studied if you have an interest in politics and the way we are governed. If you want to understand how parliament and the government work, or how politicians are elected, or what agendas political parties have on some of the hot political issues of the day, then this is the subject for you.

Politics has a profound influence on everyone's life as the government and politicians decide how much tax we pay, whether certain crimes are punished, whether the laws on immigration and abortion should be reformed, or even if we should go to war with another country.

Politics will deal with these current affairs and will turn you from being a passive member of society to an active political animal.

Politics is the subject for you if you like debate and discussion and you want to develop your own views, rather than accept the views of others!

During the two years we will study many different topics as separate areas, but you will discover that all areas of political life are interconnected, such as: political ideologies and current political ideas; electoral systems and voting behaviour; pressure groups and democracy; constitutions, citizen rights and the judges who guarantee them.



Course Content and Assessment (exam only).

Year 12: UK Politics/UK Government

Topics studied in Year 12 comprise:

- Political participation i.e. Democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems and voting behaviour and the media
- Core political ideas i.e. conservatism, liberalism and socialism
- UK government i.e. the constitution, Parliament, the Prime Minister and executive and relationships between institutions
- Non-core political ideas i.e. nationalism

Year 13: Comparative Politics

Topics studied in Year 13 comprise:

- The US Constitution and federalism,
- US Congress
- The Presidency
- US Supreme Court
- Democracy and participation in the US
- Civil rights

Revision and exam skills

In higher education almost all British establishments offer a variety of courses in politics, both as a single honours subject and in combination with other subjects (law, history, geography, economics and international relations). You will also be able to progress to vocational qualifications (at university) such as BTEC higher national certificates/diplomas in subjects such as public services, business or media (journalism).

Furthermore, a knowledge of government and politics is considered an advantage in occupations which involve the knowledge of the political process, e.g. management, public

administration, civil service, secret service, broadcasting e.g. researching for current affairs programmes, policy research, publishing, journalism, the armed forces (officer level), public relations, managing campaigns of pressure groups/charities or even teaching!

Where next?

Former Robert Smyth students who studied politics have gone to university to study the following degrees:

International Relations at University of London

"Politics has given me a better understanding of what's going on in the country regarding things like the credit crunch. It's also nice to be able to read a broadsheet and actually know what it is they're talking about! Overall A Level Politics increases your awareness of how decisions are made in countries and as a result enables you to make much more informed and balanced opinions about politicians and the political system as a whole. It's an A Level that's more than just writing essays and getting grades, it's about developing skills and knowledge you'll use for the rest of your life!"

Politics at Manchester Metropolitan University

"Politics was definitely my favourite subject at Sixth Form! It enabled me to get involved with many new opportunities such as MUNGA, 'Question Time' with our local MP and serving the vote count at the 2010 General Election. Not only have I gained a lot of knowledge about British and American society but I have also gained many skills and built on others such as timed-essay writing which enabled me to be successful in my exams."