



POLITICS

Entry Requirement: Grade 6 in GCSE English

Examination Board: EDEXCEL 9PLO

Course Content and Assessment

Component 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas

Students examine the key channels of communication between government and the people and evaluate the adequacy of existing arrangements for ensuring representative democracy and participation. This allows students to have a comprehensive understanding of the democracy in which they live and its effects on their lives. The five sections studied are: Democracy and Political Participation, Political Parties, Elections, Voting behaviour & the Media and Political Ideas (conservatism, liberalism, socialism).

Assessment: One written examination of 2 hours. Two questions to be answered (each from a choice of two) on the four core themes studied, then one question from a choice of two on a political idea.

Component 2: UK Government

Students examine the major governmental processes within the UK. They develop a critical understanding of the role and effectiveness of key institutions and the relationship between them. This component allows them to understand the inner functions of our political system. The five sections studied are: The Constitution, Parliament, The Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches and one Political Ideology (of anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism, nationalism).

Assessment: One written examination of 2 hours. Two questions to be answered (each from a choice of two) on the four core themes studied, then one question from a choice of two on a political idea.

Component 3: Comparative Politics: Government and Politics of the USA

Students examine the representative processes of the US political system and consider their adequacy in terms of popular participation and democracy. They make links across the various elements of US Politics and gain a current understanding of the trends in the American political world. The six sections studied are: The Constitution and Federalism, Congress, The Presidency, The Supreme Court, civil rights and Democracy and Political Participation.

Assessment: One written examination of 2 hours. One short comparative essay from a choice of two, one stimulus response comparative question, and then two long essays from a choice of three on US Politics will be answered.

Teaching and Learning Methods

A wide variety of teaching and learning methods are used, including class discussion and debate, research and presentation by individuals and groups. Students have a wide variety of source documents and secondary sources which can be used together with worksheets and directed assignments to prepare essay questions and topics for discussion and debate in class.

Individual research and preparation is at the heart of study and student skills in note taking, essay preparation and writing, source evaluation, revision and examination technique are developed and improved through the tasks set and lesson presentation and discussion. Power Points, appropriate DVDs, didactic methods together with diagrams, visual and mind maps etc. Are also used to sharpen understanding.

Homework

This is set regularly, but is dependent on the tasks set in the lessons and the nature of the assignments. It may be set at the end of one lesson for the next or another named lesson or it may be set over a longer period of time. **Students are expected to demonstrate and continually maintain an up to date knowledge of recent developments in Politics throughout the course.**

Complementary Subjects

Government and Politics combines extremely well with History at A Level, allowing a deeper understanding of both subjects through the frequent areas of overlap, particularly in the coursework element of the History course. Combined with Economics and a modern foreign language, it would provide a good basis for degrees related to International Relations or European Studies. In addition, Government and Politics combines well with any combination of the following subjects: English, Sociology, Psychology etc.

Trips and Visits

A trip to Parliament, subject to availability, takes place in the Spring Term and a trip to Washington DC in the Autumn Term of year 13. In addition, study and revision days are available for all aspects of the course.

Materials

Students are expected to purchase their own copies of the textbooks under direction from staff. Other printed materials are provided by the department for purchase by students. Students provide their own note paper.

Key Features

A level Government and Politics is an excellent qualification that provides students with a critical understanding of the nature and effectiveness of political systems in the UK and the USA. It can lead directly to a wide range of interrelated Higher Education courses in Politics, International Relations and Diplomacy, as well as providing a strong basis for courses in History and a variety of joint honours courses. The course can offer career opportunities both within and outside the political world as it develops within students the skills of debate and constructive criticism that can be transferred to a wide variety of employment roles. Students who find the course interesting do so largely because they can see the impact that political events have on the world around them and can relate what they are studying to the real world.