



A Level Politics - Course Information

Exam Board - Edexcel - 9PL0/3A

What is A Level Politics?

Politics explores the UK political system (Government and Politics of the UK) and its core political ideologies (Liberalism, Socialism, Conservatism). It includes a detailed comparative study of the US political system, focusing on its Constitution, Congress, Presidency, and Supreme Court. This qualification develops crucial analytical and evaluative skills necessary for higher education and understanding current affairs.

Entry Requirements: GCSE English grade 5, grade 4 in Maths and grade 5 in any Humanities subject or above.

What units are studied?

- **Paper 1 - UK Politics (Political Participation)** - democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media. (**Core Political Ideas** - conservatism, liberalism, socialism)
- **Paper 2 - UK Government** (the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches / **Non-core political ideas:** feminism)
- **Paper 3 - Comparative Politics (USA / 3A)** - the US Constitution and federalism, US Congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court and civil rights, democracy and participation, comparative theories)

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is through **three written exams** at the end of Year 13, each testing knowledge, source analysis, essay writing and evaluation skills across all three units.

- **Paper 1:** Written examination: 2 hours, 33⅓% of the qualification, 84 marks.
 - **Section A - Political Participation:** One 30-mark question (uses a source). Plus, one 30-mark question.
 - **Section B - Core Political Ideas:** One 24-mark question
- **Paper 2:** Written examination: 2 hours, 33⅓% of the qualification, 84 marks.
 - **Section A - UK Government:** One 30-mark question (uses a source). Plus, one 30-mark question.
 - **Section B - Non-Core Political Ideas (Feminism):** One 24-mark question
- **Paper 3:** Written examination: 2 hours, 33⅓% of the qualification, 84 marks. **USA (9PL0/3A)**
 - **Section A** - One 12-mark question (comparative)
 - **Section B** - One 12-mark question (comparative theories)
 - **Section C** - Two 30-mark questions

What are lessons like?

Politics lessons are designed to be relevant and engaging by exploring current news and events and applying this knowledge to core course debates. Students are actively encouraged to develop and defend their own positions, embracing the principle of disagreeing agreeably. Class discussion plays a central role, allowing students to share perspectives and refine arguments supported by evidence. Beyond the classroom, students undertake wider reading, watch the news, and listen to political podcasts. This focus on dialogue and real-world application strengthens students' analytical, communication, and persuasive writing skills.

Where can Politics take you?

A Politics A Level opens the door to rewarding career paths by developing crucial skills in research, analysis, communication, and debate. Studying politics teaches you how to evaluate political evidence, understand complex global and domestic issues, and construct persuasive arguments, abilities highly valued in fields like Law, Journalism, the Civil Service, Public Relations, and Policy Research. It provides an excellent foundation for further study in the social sciences. The transferable skills gained prepare you to adapt to diverse professional environments, offering both flexibility and intellectual depth in your future career.

For more information about the course, please see Mr Barton