

government and politics

A Level Government and Politics Awarding Body: Edexcel

Course content

Government & Politics addresses 'the art of the possible'. How and why do the people with power over us achieve their goals? How possible is it for us, the voters, to bring about genuine change to the system? The course begins with an excellent grounding in the UK political system inviting students to explore, investigate and evaluate the people and institutions that govern us. In year 2 the course focuses on key political concepts and ideas as well as a comparative study of US politics, examining aspects such as the presidential system, the constitution and race and ethnicity.

To those who enjoy the cut and thrust of debate, Government & Politics is an intensely fascinating subject that never fails to engage, anger or inspire. With its focus on developing enquiring minds and the highest academic standards, it is also an excellent preparation for degree level study and beyond.

Topic 1: In year 1 you will cover key areas of UK politics such as democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the influence of the media. You will also study core political ideas such as Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism. As part of this students will learn about key thinkers, the effect of these ideas and the divisions within these.

Topic 2: In this topic you will explore the institutions that shape life in Great Britain such as the constitution; the Prime Minister and executive, parliament, and the relationships between these branches. In year 2 you will be given an opportunity to study a further ideology in the form of nationalism-an ideology that is currently enjoying a resurgence across Europe.

Topic 3: This focuses on the US political system and covers areas such as elections and political parties alongside American institutions such as the Constitution; Congress; the Presidency and the Supreme Court.

Students will also be required to take a comparative approach to UK and US politics. This unit will be taught solely in the second year.

Assessment:

There are three exams, Papers 1 and 2 will include a source based question, and two extended essays. Paper 3 consists of two short essay questions based on comparative theory and two extended essays based on US politics.

Progression:

Students may go on to university to study Politics, but others may study Law, Social Sciences, the humanities, Business Studies, Languages and many other courses. Some students go into politics, whilst others may plan careers in journalism, international relations, business or the civil service.

Entry requirements:

Minimum of GCSE English Grade 5.
A GCSE in Sociology or History is desirable but not essential.

