

Politics

Students will sit Edexcel A level Politics at the end of year 13. There are three papers each worth 90 marks and lasting two hours and 15 minutes.

Year 12

Paper 1: UK Politics

There are four content areas in the UK Politics unit:

1. Democracy and participation,
2. Political parties,
3. Electoral systems, and
4. Voting behaviour and the media.

Students will investigate in detail how people and politics interact. They will explore the emergence and development of the UK's democratic system and the similarities, differences, connections and parallels between direct and indirect democracy. They will focus on the role and scope of political parties that are so central to contemporary politics including the significance of the manifestoes they publish at election time and their relevance to the mandate of the resulting government.

Students will examine how electoral systems in the UK operate and how individuals and groups are influenced in their voting behaviour and political actions. This component will further examine the role of the media in contemporary politics. It will also give students an understanding of voting patterns and voting behaviour.

Paper 2: UK Government

There are four content areas in this unit:

1. The constitution,
2. Parliament,
3. Prime Minister and executive, and
4. Relations between the branches.

This component is fundamental to understanding the nature of UK government, since it enables students to understand where, how and by whom political decisions are made.

The component also gives students a basis for comparison with other political systems. It introduces students to the set of rules governing politics in the UK - the UK constitution - which is different in nature from most of those in the rest of the world. It further introduces students to the specific roles and powers of the different

major branches of the government – legislative, executive, and judiciary – as well as the relationships and balance of power between them; it also considers where sovereignty now lies within this system.

Students will explore the following key themes: the relative powers of the different branches of UK government; the extent to which the constitution has changed in recent years; the desirability of further change; and the current location of sovereignty within the UK political system.

Paper 2: Non-core Political Ideas

This section allows students to explore one of five additional political ideas. Students will learn about the core ideas and principles and how they apply in practice to human nature; the state; society and the economy; and the divisions within each idea and their key thinkers. We have chosen to study feminism as our non-core ideology.

Year 13

Paper 1: Core Political Ideas

This section allows students to explore the three traditional political ideas of conservatism, liberalism and socialism. Students will learn about the core ideas and principles and how they apply in practice to human nature; the state; society and the economy; and the divisions within each idea and their key thinkers.

There are three content areas in Core Political Ideas:

1. Liberalism,
2. Conservatism, and
3. Socialism.

Paper 3: Comparative Politics - Government and Politics of the USA

There are six content areas in this unit:

1. The US Constitution and federalism,
2. US Congress,
3. US presidency,
4. US Supreme Court and US civil rights,
5. US democracy and participation, and
6. Comparative theories.

Students will explore the US Constitution and the arguments surrounding this guiding

document of US democracy. In learning about the key institutions of government in the USA and analysing the manner in which they achieve this power and exercise it over their citizens, students will judge ultimately whether 'liberty and justice for all' has been achieved in the USA. Students will be expected to highlight the debates on the nature of democracy in the USA and evaluate the extent to which it remains an issue.

The impact of the US government on the world beyond its borders is increasingly a feature of international politics. Students will begin to engage with this interaction by comparing and contrasting politics and institutions in the US with those in the UK. This will develop a wider understanding of politics as a discipline, underpinned by the theoretical concepts of comparative politics.