

POLITICS

Advanced Level Subject Guide
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel



COURSE OVERVIEW – Why Study Politics?

- Politics helps you develop a knowledge and an informed understanding of contemporary political structures and issues within their historical context, both within the UK and globally.
- You will gain a critical awareness of the changing nature of politics and the relationships between political ideas, institutions and processes.
- You will also develop knowledge an informed understanding of the influences and interests which have an impact on decisions in politics.
- You will develop knowledge and an informed understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the individual and groups.
- You will gain the ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate political information to form arguments and make judgements.

And you will develop an interest in, and engagement with, contemporary politics!

COURSE OUTLINE

KEY PARTS OF COMPONENT 1: UK POLITICS

Democracy and Participation: This puts British democracy into context, and considers the nature of the electorate and whether it should be widened.

Political Parties: This examines the principles of major and minor political parties within the UK. It also places the political parties into context.

Electoral Systems: This will examine the system used to elect the UK Parliament, along with electoral systems used for elections to other parliaments and assemblies in the UK. It also examines electoral outcomes and looks at the use of referendums.

Voting Behaviour and the Media: This theme looks at the factors that influence voting behaviour, with an examination of three case study elections since 1945 (Thatcher landslide 1979; Blair landslide 1997; Coalition 2010). It also considers the role of the media in influencing and/or reflecting voting behaviour.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A general interest in politics and current affairs, in Britain and around the world, is required. A minimum of 5 GCSE passes at Grade 9-5 is also required. A grade 6 or better in English and/or History GCSE is desirable but not essential.

“A student who studies Government and Politics will enjoy finding out how Britain and the world works.”



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KEY PARTS OF COMPONENT 2: UK GOVERNMENT

The Constitution: How this has developed, how it has changed since 1997, how it has been affected by devolution and whether it is still fit for purpose.

Parliament: The roles of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the legislative process and the ways in which Parliament scrutinises the government.

The Prime Minister and the Government: The role and powers of the government, ministerial responsibility, the powers of and limitations on the Prime Minister, with case studies of at least two prime ministers

Relations between institutions: The powers of the Supreme Court, the relationship between Parliament and Government, the impact of the European Union and the changing location of sovereignty.



THE CORE POLITICAL IDEAS

In addition to the two components outlined above, students will study the three core political ideas in British politics:

CONSERVATISM

LIBERALISM

SOCIALISM

Students will also be expected to study a non-core ideology:

NATIONALISM



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KEY PARTS OF COMPONENT 3: GLOBAL POLITICS CONTINUED

Human Rights and the Environment: including the growth of international law, humanitarian interventions, climate change and environmentalism.

The types and nature of power: examining the relative of power of key states like the USA and China, plus the nature of liberal free market economics and the impact of global terrorism.

Regionalism: with particular emphasis on the European Union and the impact of Brexit on both the UK and the EU, as well as the nature of the EU within the trend towards regionalism across the world.

KEY PARTS OF COMPONENT 3: GLOBAL POLITICS

Theories of global politics: comprising the different ways in which different people think of global issues.

Sovereignty and globalisation: considering the future role of the nation state, and the challenges posed to states and individuals by the process and impact of a globalised world.

Global Governance: in particular the role and effectiveness of the United Nations, the role of NATO in the modern world, the effectiveness of global financial governance in the wake of the global crisis of 2007-2008, and the attempts to reduce global poverty.



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CAREERS AND NEXT STEPS

How useful is Politics for my career?

- In the world today employers want people who are:
- Able to think quickly for themselves.
- Able to consider different viewpoints with an open mind.
- Disciplined enough to work independently.
- Able to solve problems and/or debate solutions.
- Able to form reasoned judgements.

Students should not believe the jibe that Government and Politics is only useful for those wanting to become a politician. There are plenty of other opportunities open in the world of work, including journalism, accountancy, government and administration, law and business.

Some jobs where A Level Politics is useful

Accountant, Banker, Barrister, Broadcaster, Business Manager, Civil Servant, Economist, Environmental Officer, Information Officer, Journalist, Lawyer, Librarian, Local Government Officer, Military Officer, Planning Officer, Police Officer, Political Party Organiser, Political Researcher, Publisher, Solicitor, Teacher, Town Planner, Trade Unionist and many, many more...

And yes—Prime Minister!



WOULD I ENJOY POLITICS?

Look at the following questions:

- Do I want to know more about the world I live in?
- Do I enjoy learning about real life issues?
- Am I likely to get at least a Grade 5 in one or more of the following subjects: History, Geography, Religious Studies, English?
- Do I enjoy debating issues and looking into controversial events?
- Do I want to know about real people and help to improve their lives?
- Do I want to know about the way my country is actually governed?
- Do I want to get a good job?
- Do I want to study a subject that doesn't limit my career plans?

If you can answer **YES** to any of these questions, you should think about doing A Level Politics.

