

GWA Politics A Level Handbook



Exam board: Pearson Edexcel



Welcome to Politics @GWA!

It's fantastic that you have chosen to study Politics at A Level. There are many, many reasons why Politics is such a great subject at A Level, but here are our Top 5:

1. Politics Helps You to Know Your Rights

The course enables you to see beyond any initial belief that we have no real say in the running of our country. It will truly educate you on a fundamental part of our society and help you to understand that if you engage in political processes, using the options built into the system, then every individual really does have the opportunity to change the world!

2. Politics Clarifies What YOU Believe

A Level Politics will give you the opportunity to discover your own political beliefs and to see in much greater detail the benefits and disadvantages of the vast array of political ideologies that are present in the world today. Being able to express what you believe accurately and concisely is extremely useful - and forces you to take a long, hard look at yourself!

3. Politics is a Living, Breathing Subject

In Politics, textbooks go out of date the day they are published. Why? Because the political landscape changes every day, with new examples appearing constantly in the media. Picking which examples to use in your answers to essay questions is really exciting as something that has happened on the day you are taking your A Level exam can appear in your response!

4. Politics Helps You to Understand Our Nation's Parties

At a time of political turmoil in Britain, this course will teach you about democracy, rights, ideologies and party policies. You will find out about the Constitution and Parliament. With the knowledge gained from the classroom, you will watch events unfold worldwide, see our leaders' reactions to these events and come to understand these reactions as demonstrations party politics.

5. Politics Prepares You for Adult Life

Given you will be able to vote by the time you finish this A Level, it could easily be said that Government and Politics is the most applicable subject on offer at any school and is a subject that people should be encouraged to take due to nothing less than the way it prepares you for entering the adult world.

An A Level in Politics can lead to many different pathways including:

- A degree in Politics or a related subject such as International Relations
- Law
- Teaching and education
- Becoming an M.P
- Working in Parliament or for your local council
- Political Journalism on the T.V / Radio
- Finance and Banking
- Management Training
- P.R, Advertising and Media
- Charity organisations such as the UN or NGO's



This pack contains a programme of activities and resources to prepare you to start an A Level in Politics in September. It is aimed to be used over the summer holidays to ensure you are ready to start your course in September.

In preparation for your course, it is vital that you begin reading a newspaper **every day**. We recommend the 'I' or the Times. You could also look to use the following for political news:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/politics>

<https://uk.reuters.com/>

<https://www.aljazeera.com/>

<https://www.politics.co.uk/>

You might also want to start visiting these websites and reading articles/blogs/essays designed specifically to support A Level Politics Students:

<http://alevelpolitics.com/>: This website is only updated occasionally, but does contain useful articles/links to A Level Politics debates.

<https://www.tutor2u.net/politics/collections/uk-politics-study-notes-for-a-level-politics>: Not fully updated for the current course, but still packed full of useful notes on the topics we will cover

<https://politics-blog.ashbournecollege.co.uk/2017/09/08/transition-to-linear/#comments>: Not fully updated to new course, but still contains many useful pointers for A Level Politics. Check out their pdf revision notes section.

A Level Politics Course:

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Politics consists of three components of equal value, each of which will be examined in a separate 2-hour exam paper in the summer of 2021.

UK Politics: Year 12

1. UK Politics (9PL0/01)

Political Participation, students will study:

- democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media.
- Core Political Ideas, students will study:
- conservatism, liberalism, socialism.

Section B: Core Political Ideas: One 24-mark question from a choice of two, which assesses AO1, AO2 and AO3.

2. UK Government (9PL0/02)

UK Government, students will study:

- the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive, relationships between the branches.

Non-core political ideas – there is a choice of topics, we will study Anarchism

3. Comparative Politics: Year 13 (9PLO/3B)

For Global (3B) students will study:

- sovereignty and globalisation, global governance: political and economic, global governance: human rights and environmental, power and developments, regionalism and the European Union, comparative theories.

You can find more by reading the specification here:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/politics-2017.html>

Book Recommendations:

As is the nature of Politics, books can become out of date very quickly, so if you want to buy any books off the internet etc., check first that they are the most up to date edition and that they cover our course. **You will be provided with a course textbook for the duration of the course.** Having your own textbook would be useful, but not essential.

The current course began in September 2017, so any specific Edexcel textbooks should have been published after that date.

For Units 1 and 2:

- Goodland, Mitchel, Colclough; Edexcel GCE Politics AS and A-level Student Book and eBook (Edexcel GCE Politics 2017)
- Andrew Heywood; Essentials of UK Politics, A level (4th edition)
- Wyn Grant; Pressure Groups and British Politics (Contemporary political studies)
- The Oxford Very Short Introduction Guides e.g to Politics, Conservatism, Liberalism

For Unit 3:

- Murphy, Jefferies, Gadsby; Global Politics for A-level (course textbook)
- Andrew Heywood; Global Politics

Other interesting reads:

The Origins of Political Order (Fukuyama)

The Spectre At the Feast (Gamble)

The Establishment and how they get away with it (Owen Jones)

British Politics (Madgwick)

Mind The Gap (Mount)

The Politics Book (Kelly)

After Europe (Krastev)

Gorgias (Plato)

What is Good? (A.C. Grayling)

How to outwit Aristotle (Peter Cave)

Do you think what you think you think? (Julian Baggini)

The Philosophical Life (Miller)
 What do we really know? (Blackburn)
 The Communist Manifesto (Karl Marx)
 The Political Writings of John Locke (John Locke)
 All out War: the full story of Brexit (Tim Shipman)

Other sources:

<p>TED Talks: "Can Democracy Exist Without Trust?" Ivan Krastev. "Why Nations Should Pursue Soft Power" Shashi Tharoor "A Conservative's Plea: Let's Work Together" Arthur Brooks. "Why Democracy Matters" Rory Stewart. "The Global Power Shift" Paddy Ashdown.</p>	<p>Other sources: • BBC 6 o'clock or 10 o'clock news / Channel 4 news • Question Time (BBC) • Daily Politics Show (BBC) • Newsnight (BBC) • Have I Got News For You (BBC)</p>
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Summer work 2019

In order to prepare yourself fully for you're A level in Politics, please ensure the following tasks are completed by September:

ESSENTIAL SUMMER WORK: Required Knowledge and Skills – you must complete this work for September and it will be checked:

- 1) Draw a timeline showing the main events in British Politics since 1997 – you need to include the British Prime Ministers, key events such as 7/7 terror attack, referendums, date & result (including turnout) of elections
- 2) Create a summary of the 2019 manifestos of the 3 main parties (Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem). Include their policy on welfare, economy, foreign policy and law and order.
- 3) Create (or find and copy) a diagram showing how laws are passed. Include an example of a recent law.
- 4) Create (or find and copy) a diagram showing how Parliament works.
- 5) What is the role of the British Prime Minister? Briefly explain.
- 6) What is the role of the Queen in British politics? Briefly explain.
- 7) Research your local MP and create a fact file on them – include when they became an MP, their majority, their party and what they have done to improve their constituency

To be submitted in your first Politics lesson in September Essay question (must be at least 2 sides of A4) 'The monarchy should be abolished. Discuss.'

OPTIONAL EXTENSION WORK Complete this for September if you have time/opportunity (this will not be checked, but will be useful for you):

- Research Labour and Conservative policy in the following areas (create a comparison table)

- o European Union
- o Voting age
- o Scotland
- o Constitutional reform
- o Education
- o The Economy

- Create a table showing the election results from 2019. Ensure you include:

- o Number of seats for each party
- o Percentage of the vote & seats each party received
- o Statistics for the number of female / ethnic minority / non-university / non- Oxbridge / went to state school

- Research and define the following key terms:

- o Constitution
- o Codified
- o Uncodified
- o Entrench
- o Judicial review
- o Unitary constitution
- o Federal constitution

- Create an A3 information sheet, with facts and images, of the following British Prime Ministers: Margaret Thatcher, John Major, Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and David Cameron.

- Find at least 5 newspaper articles about British Politics – create 5 bullet points which summarise each article and annotate to identify the **bias** in each article.



**KEEP
CALM
I'M A
POLITICS
STUDENT**