



**Subject: Politics**

**Curriculum vision**

*The study of Politics at A Level provides students with a deep understanding of how political institutions operate in both the UK and the US at a local, national and global level. By exploring issues such as how constitutions operate, the legislative process, political parties and elections students become more informed about national and global issues and debates which enhances their ability to participate in discussions about political and social matters.*

*In their study of politics students will gain a greater awareness of their role within the political system, in particular understanding their own rights and responsibilities within a democracy which plays a crucial role in empowering students to make informed decisions as voters in the future. Students will also develop critical thinking skills in their study of politics through the analysis of complex political systems, ideologies and policies.*

*Over the two year A Level course students will really hone their ability to assess and critique arguments and make clear and sustained judgements on political debates. The study of politics also allows students to further develop their communication skills in both oracy and writing; through regular discussion, debates and written assignments students will improve their ability to confidently express their ideas clearly and persuasively. The study of politics also provides students with a strong foundation to pursue further study in a range of areas such as politics, international relations, law and sociology.*

## Curriculum Overview

### Term 1

	Autumn 1	Why this? Why now?	Autumn 2	Why this? Why now?
Year 12	<p>UK Politics: Democracy and Participation</p> <p>UK Government: The constitution</p>	<p>Students begin Year 12 with an introduction to concepts and ideas that give them a foundational understanding of politics and government in the UK that can then be built upon over the course of Year 12 and into Year 13 where they explore American politics and compare and contrast this with the UK. The focus of this term is also to enable students to understand why politics matters and how it relates to them as individuals and society as a whole. In their study of UK politics students will consider key issues such as the extent to which there is a participation crisis in the UK, how much democratic legitimacy political institutions have, whether the franchise should be extended and the extent to which rights are protected in the UK. This allows students to build on some of their knowledge from KS3 and GCSE history such as the suffrage, democracy and parliament. In their study of UK government students will develop an understanding of the unique nature of the UK constitution, the ways in which it has changed in recent years and whether further reform is needed.</p>	<p>UK Politics: Political Parties and Electoral systems</p> <p>UK Government: Parliament, and Prime Minister and the Executive</p>	<p>In their study of UK politics in this term students will develop an in depth understanding of the range of political parties in the UK, their core beliefs and policies and the impact that they have had on the political system. Electoral systems are also explored, making use of election case studies and statistics – both local, regional and national – to consider the extent to which electoral reform is necessary. In UK government students are introduced to the way in which Parliament operates, including the legislative process and explore the roles and responsibilities of the Prime Minister and the Executive branch. This continues to build upon key ideas and concepts covered in Autumn 1 allowing students to strengthen their understanding and make links between political issues.</p>
Year 13	<p>The US Constitution and federalism</p> <p>US democracy and participation</p>	<p>In Year 13 students will study the final component which is US politics and comparative politics. Here students explore the way in which the US political system operates and gain an insight into the key issues within each unit before making comparisons with the UK political system. Students begin with an exploration of the way in which the UK system works and the concept of federalism, this is essential to understanding US politics as a whole and so provides a strong grounding for the study of further units. Students will also explore the issues surrounding democracy and participation in the US, including how the electoral process works, the reasons why people vote in the way that they do and the key differences between political parties. This is an incredibly exciting time to be exploring these issues in the context of the American presidential election in November.</p>	<p>Congress in the US</p> <p>The US Supreme Court and Civil Rights</p>	<p>Students build upon their understanding of the constitutional framework in the US to explore the way in which two key branches of government work – the legislature and the judiciary. They will consider the powers and functions of these institutions and the extent to which they carry out their role effectively. Students will explore issues such as the extent to which Congress fulfils its representative role and whether the Supreme Court adequately protects civil rights – contemporary issues such as gun control and abortion rights will also be explored here.</p>



**Term 2**

	<b>Spring 1</b>	<b>Why this? Why now?</b>	<b>Spring 2</b>	<b>Why this? Why now?</b>
<b>Year 12</b>	<p>UK Politics: Voting behaviour and the media</p> <p>UK Government: Relationships between the branches of government</p>	<p>In UK politics students explore the reasons why people vote in the way that they do, or even choose not to vote at all. They will continue to revisit election case studies in order to consider why people voted for certain political parties in different elections. Students have the benefit of two recent elections (2019 and 2024) to interrogate and use to explore issues in depth. In UK government, students build on their understanding of the different branches of government and consider how they work together and the extent to which each branch effectively performs its function in relation to another.</p>	<p>Core Political Ideas: Conservatism and Liberalism</p>	<p>In Autumn 2, students studied the range of political parties in the UK. Here, they explore the ideologies behind the beliefs and policies of those parties in greater depth and also add to their understanding of party factions. Conservatism and liberalism are explored in this term as the oldest of the traditional political ideologies. Students will consider how the core ideas and principles behind these ideologies relate to the state, society, economy and human nature and will be able to link them to the way in which current political parties operate.</p>
<b>Year 13</b>	<p>US Presidency</p> <p>Comparative Theories</p>	<p>Students will study their final component of US politics in this term, exploring the role and powers of the US president. Students will consider presidential case studies, and will be familiar with some of the presidents explored as a result of their study of the Cold War in GCSE history. In this term students will also begin to build upon their understanding of the contrast between UK and US politics by delving into this comparative aspect further and considering the reasons why the two political systems differ based on rational, cultural and structural comparative theories.</p>	<p>Revision</p>	<p>This term focuses on revising and preparing for upcoming A Level exams by revisiting past units and working on really securing the key knowledge and skills that students need for success.</p>



**Term 3**

	<b>Summer 1</b>	<b>Why this? Why now?</b>	<b>Summer 2</b>	<b>Why this? Why now?</b>
<b>Year 12</b>	<p>Core Political Ideas: Socialism</p> <p>Non-core political ideas: Feminism</p>	<p>In this term students will explore the third core political idea of socialism as well as the non-core political idea of feminism. In their study of both they will gain an insight into the core ideas and principles behind these ideologies and how they relate to the state, society, the economy and human nature. Their study of socialism will build upon work done in Autumn 2 and allow students to develop their understanding of the Labour party, its historical development and the factions within it. Students will also have some grasp of the concepts behind socialism from their study of the Russian Revolution in Year 9 and the Cold War in Year 11 history. In studying feminism students get to grips with the multi-faceted nature of the feminist movement historically and explore some of the tensions between feminists. Here, students can make links to the suffrage movement which they will have studied in Year 9.</p>	<p>UK Politics and core political ideas review</p> <p>UK Government and non-core political ideas review</p>	<p>Having gradually built up their understanding of political concepts and issues, students will focus this term on revising key ideas, making links between the units and continuing to explore political debates in greater depth.</p>
<b>Year 13</b>	Revision and Exams		Revision and Exams	



## Wider reading

### Extracurricular Opportunities (competitions, associations and clubs)

**Trip to the Houses of Parliament which is a really exciting opportunity for students to bring their study of UK politics to life.**

**Regular speakers invited in to discuss local and national political issues with students. Previous speakers have included Tobias Elwood, former Conservative MP for Bournemouth East and Tom Hayes, current Labour MP for Bournemouth East.**

**Opportunity to participate in and lead the KS3 Politics club to be launched this year.**

### Revision Guides

**My Revision Notes: Pearson Edexcel A-level Politics: UK Government and Politics, Political Ideas and US Government and Politics**

**Students will also be provided with tailor made revision material and suggested revision schedules as well as specific guidance on how to revise for the exams.**

### Academic Reading

**Students are expected to read widely in order to deepen their understanding of political issues and keep abreast of current political developments. Students will be expected to read articles from broadsheet newspapers on a weekly basis and listen to political podcasts such as The Rest Is Politics and The News Agents.**

**There are also a range of academic texts for students to access which they will be signposted to during their study of each unit.**