

Politics

Examination board: Edexcel

Overview

Politics is the study of how power is used and, more specifically, how we are governed. Pupils often develop a curiosity for the subject while studying history: the clashes of capitalism and communism, democracy and dictatorship lead to questions about how people around the world are governed and the ideas that underlie politics.

Pupils will spend a good portion of lessons debating the issues of the day and applying them to the structures and processes they have studied. They will learn to develop considered judgements about what they see on the TV and in the papers, as well as how to structure their thoughts argumentatively and persuasively.

Future careers

Politics is a popular single-honours degree; it also features in several joint-honours courses, including History and Politics, Politics and International Relations or Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE). Those who have studied A Level Politics go on to a wide variety of careers (they don't have to become MPs!), using their skills in Law, Business, Journalism or the Civil Service.

Content

Component 1: UK Politics

This component focuses on democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media. You will consider questions such as the following: How democratic is our system? Does our 'First past the Post' voting system waste votes and rig things in favour of the major parties? What influences people to vote as they do? How much influence does the media have on voting patterns and the broader political process? Do *The Sun* or Elon Musk have the power to swing votes?

This module also includes a study of core political ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism. We will explore the history of, and key thinkers behind, these ideologies and how they have shaped politics.

Component 2: UK Government

In this unit, we will focus on the constitution, parliament, Prime Ministers & the executive, and the relationships between the branches of government. Government is about how the system works and where power lies; the concept of sovereignty is key to this unit, and we will ask key questions about how much power any one branch of government has. Can the Prime Minister rule in the manner of an elected dictator if they have a sufficient majority? How effective are the Commons and Lords in holding them to account? How are laws passed? Can the judiciary act in defence of the constitution?

This module also includes an examination of Feminism as a political ideology. We will look at its history and development in various waves to consider its views on sex and gender, patriarchy, equality and intersectionality. Key thinkers on liberal, radical, socialist and post-modern feminism will feature in this section of the unit.

Component 3: Global Politics

Global Politics includes studies on the state and globalisation, global governance (political, economic, human rights and environmental), power and recent shifts in it, regionalism and the EU. Component 3 is a very current module, as seen by the sorts of questions we will consider. They include: to what extent can institutions such as the UN work for peace, climate solutions and freedom in the face of global anarchy? How has globalisation challenged the nation state? Has it led to conflict? Can liberal economics spread rule of law, democracy and co-operation?