

Government & Politics

A Level

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Exam Board: EDEXCEL



What is this subject about?

This subject will provide you with the political knowledge and skills that will enable you to make more sense of the political processes and decisions, both in the UK and internationally, that have so much impact on your everyday life. It will enable you to develop the political awareness that provides a foundation for effective participation as a citizen of the United Kingdom, the European Union and the world.

For the AS level you will study:

You are introduced to the political system in the UK. This includes a study of the policies and beliefs of political parties and how elections are contested. You examine the case for referendums and critically consider the role of pressure groups. You also identify and evaluate the role of institutions such as the cabinet and Parliament, the judiciary and the constitution.

For the A2 level you will study:

The focus is on global politics. You examine theories of international relations, globalization and world order. You also assess the role of international organizations, such as the United Nations, and study the political issues arising from the European Union. In addition, you consider, in a global dimension, topics such as international conflicts, human rights, poverty, development and environmental issues.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment is by 2 written examinations in each year. There is no coursework.

What skills will I need and develop in this course?

You will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, concepts and theories and be able to analyse and evaluate political arguments and views. You will be able to construct and communicate clear arguments, using relevant examples and evidence and appropriate political language.

Subject combination advice:

This subject combines well with others, such as English, where there is an emphasis on clear written communication, evaluation and analysis. In addition there are some subjects, such as Economics, Film Studies, History, Philosophy and Sociology that include an element of political knowledge or where an awareness of political analysis and concepts is useful.

What can the course lead to in terms of higher education and future careers?

Many of our students go on to study Politics or related degrees, such as International Relations, at university. Some may eventually work in an area of political life but for the majority a qualification in Politics provides a range of intellectual skills that are transferable to a variety of employment and higher education opportunities. For example, the skills and knowledge developed in the Politics A level provide a good basis for studying law, and a number of our students go on to a Law degree and a legal career.

What are the formal entry requirements for this course?

Aside from the general entry criteria that the College requires, you will also need to achieve at least a C grade in English Language at GCSE.

What extra support / enrichment activities are on offer?

In previous years we have offered students residential visits to Belfast, looking at the issue of conflict resolution in Northern Ireland, and to Brussels to discover more about the politics of the European Union. In addition, we have an extensive programme of visiting speakers from political parties, pressure groups and other organisations, including the media, who present and discuss a range of political topics. We also arrange cultural activities, such as theatre visits, where there is an obvious political dimension.

Do I need to have any previous knowledge of Politics in order to take it at A level?

The course assumes no previous knowledge of the subject. However, during the course you will be expected to take an interest in politics that extends beyond the classroom, for example, using the media to follow the latest developments and the internet to undertake political research.



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