

Curriculum Overview Politics (Intent, Implementation, Impact)

Intent

The Twyford Politics curriculum aims to teach our students to be critical thinkers with an informed understanding of contemporary political structures and issues in their historical context, both within the UK and globally. Students develop a critical awareness of the changing nature of politics and the relationships between political ideas, institutions and processes, using their knowledge to gain an informed understanding of the influences and interests, which have an impact on decisions in government and politics. Students develop an informed understanding of the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups; develop the ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate political information to form arguments and make judgements; develop an interest in, and engagement with, contemporary politics.

There are three broad areas of study in the AQA specification:

- the government and politics of the UK
- the government and politics of the USA, and comparative politics
- political ideas.

The AQA specification requires in depth study of UK and US government and politics. Comparisons across the two political systems are required. Students identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of politics. This will ensure that students develop a critical awareness of the changing nature of politics and the relationships between political ideas, political institutions and political processes. The political ideas to be studied have relevance to both of the systems of government and politics. The study of the four ideologies enhance the students' knowledge and understanding of politics, political debate and political issues in both the UK and the USA.

Skills: In all components of this subject students must demonstrate the following skills:

- to comprehend and interpret political information
- to critically analyse and evaluate the areas of politics studied
- to construct arguments and explanations leading to reasoned conclusions
- to identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the areas studied
- to construct and communicate arguments and explanations with relevance, clarity and coherence
- to use appropriate political vocabulary
- to make connections between the different areas of politics studied
- to make comparisons across two political systems.

Synopticity is an essential element of the assessment of students' work in A-level politics - to demonstrate this, students inter-relate areas of content within each module and, when appropriate, across modules, to address the requirements of the exam papers. They must use appropriate concepts and knowledge as well as the skills listed above in developing their answers. Politics, as a subject, is inherently synoptic. The political knowledge, concepts, behaviours and institutions studied in any particular module can often be used and applied to new contexts in other parts of the course. The essay questions are particularly synoptic, giving students the opportunity to draw on and synthesise the knowledge, understanding and skills gained throughout the course.

Assessment Objectives

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues.
- AO2: Analyse aspects of politics and political information, including in relation to parallels, connections, similarities and differences.
- AO3: Evaluate aspects of politics and political information, including to construct arguments, make substantiated judgements and draw conclusions.

Implementation

Students are taught to demonstrate their ability to: • recall information • draw together information from different areas of the specification • apply their knowledge and understanding in practical and theoretical contexts.

Students are taught to answer three broad question types.

9 mark questions require students to explain and analyse different political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues prescribed in the specification. Students are required to develop and substantiate at least three points in a structured, analytical answer, making use of appropriate political vocabulary and examples to substantiate their answer.

25 mark extract based questions require students to comprehend and interpret the argument(s) contained in political information, using their knowledge and understanding of the issue to analyse and evaluate the argument(s) put forward. The answer should be balanced, maintain a sustained line of reasoning and lead to a reasoned conclusion, communicated with relevance, clarity and coherence. The political information used in exams may take the form of political publications, government publications, newspaper extracts, manifestos, visual material and data.

25 mark essay questions require students to analyse and evaluate a given statement using their knowledge and understanding of the issue under discussion. The question may draw from different sections of the specification, requiring students to identify and substantiate parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of politics studied. The answer should take the form of a structured and balanced argument, maintaining a sustained line of reasoning, communicated with relevance, clarity and coherence and leading to a reasoned conclusion. The 25 mark essay questions for comparative politics (component 2, section C), will require students to make explicit comparisons between UK and US government and politics.

Impact - Through the study of politics, students are encouraged to be interested in the politics of the UK and the wider world, developing an interest beyond the curriculum, which will last beyond school.