

Entry Criteria: Standard entry criteria for A levels.

Exam board: AQA

Qualification: Politics

Qualification web link: <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/government-and-politics/asand-a-level/politics-7152/introduction>

Unit 1 – The Government and Politics of the UK

This unit focuses on the following; Parliament, the Prime Minister and cabinet, judiciary, devolution, democracy and participation, elections and referendums, political parties, pressure groups and the European Union. It will also focus on important issues in Politics and current affairs such as Britain's exit from the EU, Britain's approach to Climate Change, recent voting behaviour and election, government response to the pandemic, methods of protest against government and many more.

Unit 2 – The Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics

This unit focuses on the following; the constitutional framework, Congress, the President, judiciary, elections and direct democracy, political parties, pressure groups, civil rights and comparative politics. Students will then compare the US system to that of Britain. It will also focus on important issues in US Politics like USA's approach to international relations, Climate Change, the Presidential elections, and many more. We'll study the individual approaches of Presidents like Barak Obama and Donald Trump and how they differ.

Unit 3 – Political Ideas

This unit focuses on the following; liberalism, conservatism, socialism, nationalism, feminism, multiculturalism, anarchism and ecologism.

A Level Assessment:

Unit 1: Government and Politics of the UK (33% of the total A Level)

Externally examined assessment of:

Section A – three compulsory questions, explain and analyse (3 x 9 marks)

Section B – one essay question linked to an extract (25 marks)

Section C – one essay question (25 marks)

Unit 2: Government and Politics of the USA and comparative politics (33% of the total A Level)

Externally examined assessment of:

Section A – three compulsory questions, explain and analyse (3 x 9 marks)

Section B – one essay question linked to an extract (25 marks)

Section C – one essay question (25 marks)

Unit 3: Political Ideas (33% of the total A Level)

Externally examined assessment of:

Section A – three compulsory questions, explain and analyse (3 x 9 marks)

Section B – one essay question linked to an extract (25 marks)

Section C – one essay question (25 marks)

Politics A Level Suggested Bridging Activities and reading

The best preparation for a course in Politics is to keep up with current events. This means watching the news and reading the quality newspapers (either online or print). Try to read a variety of newspapers and watch a variety of TV news stations, they have different points of view and agendas. For example, you could read the Times, the Telegraph and the Guardian, and watch Sky, BBC, CNN and GB news channels. See if you can identify which side they take and which political views they hold. Should you trust everything you read? <https://www.anewseducation.com/post/the-uk-media-explained>

See where you stand on Politics, use a site like this and try the quiz:

<https://www.politicalcompass.org/>

UK Politics

Some nice introduction videos to Parliament, the House of Commons and the House of Lords:

<https://learning.parliament.uk/resources/what-is-the-house-of-commons-video/>

<https://learning.parliament.uk/resources/who-is-in-the-house-of-lords/>

Have a go at this game as a way of understanding how members of Parliament do their jobs:

<https://learning.parliament.uk/resources/mp-for-a-week/>

I advise looking at the 2024 General election:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2024/uk/results>

Some background reading on elections: <https://www.parliament.uk/elections>

<https://www.parliament.uk/about/how/elections-and-voting/general/>

I love this site because I love elections, and it goes through all the factors involved in deciding who won since WW2:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/vote_2005/basics/4393311.stm

This booklet is quite detailed but still useful:

<https://assets-learning.parliament.uk/uploads/2019/12/How-it-Works-booklet.pdf>

After reading the above, think about making notes and answers to the following questions:

- What do you think are the most important issues facing Britain and the world right now? What do you think should be done about them?
- What do you think are the main factors that influence people to choose a political party to vote for?
- If the 2019 General Election was run again at the end of 2023, do you think the result would be the same as what you have read about? What factors would people take into consideration before voting? Who would you vote for if you could?

Research Task: Make profiles of the following Prime Ministers of Great Britain: Rishi Sunak, Boris Johnson, Theresa May, David Cameron, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair. Find out their main beliefs, policies, achievements and failures.

USA politics:

Have a look at some of these articles on how the race to be the President of the USA in November 2024 turned out:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/cj3ergr8209t>

Research Task:

The election was fought between Donald Trump for the Republicans and Kamala Harris of the Democrats. Find out a little about both, their beliefs, policies, and the types of people who supported them.

Things to watch:

As well as keeping up with the news and current affairs stories, there are many other programmes that you can watch that will help prepare you for studying Politics, some examples are:

The Thick of It (UK)

The West Wing (USA)

These are available on Netflix and other platforms.