

A-level Politics is relevant and challenging. It stretches students thinking, challenges preconceptions and traces political ideas back to their origin. It is academic yet also sometimes lively and controversial. The course content is broad and appeals to a wide range of learners who bring a broad spectrum of perspectives to the class.

Our aims include:

- helping students to understand how the country is run
- help students to build their own well substantiated opinions by teaching them where political ideas come from
- develop research, written communication and debate skills
- increase student confidence in speaking and writing
- promote an enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject
- prepare students for further study

Year	Knowledge (Topics / contexts) What pupils will 'know'.	Skills acquired What pupils will be able to 'do'.	Concepts developed What pupils will 'understand'.	Assessment
12 13	Unit 1: Government and Politics of the UK Democracy and participation Elections and referendums The UK constitution Parliament Prime minister and cabinet (executive) The judiciary Political parties Pressure groups Devolution and EU	- comprehend and interpret political information - critically analyse and evaluate the areas of politics studied - construct arguments and explanations leading to reasoned conclusions - identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the areas of politics studied - construct and communicate arguments and explanations with relevance, clarity and coherence - use appropriate political vocabulary - make connections between the different areas of politics studied (synoptic links) - make comparisons across two political systems.	- how government and politics works in the UK and how our democracy functions. - understand how this is similar or different to government and politics in the US - understand the origins of political ideas and institutions in the UK using their knowledge from Unit 3	Teacher checking homework for accuracy and level of comprehension AFL in lessons led by teacher Peer assessment in lessons e.g. of practise exam questions End of topic test for each topic in high control conditions, followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work Mock exam followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work
12 13	Unit 2: Government and Politics of the USA - Introduction to America - US constitution - Congress - Executive - The judiciary	- comprehend and interpret political information - critically analyse and evaluate the areas of politics studied - construct arguments and explanations leading to reasoned conclusions	- how government and politics works in the US - understand how this is similar or different to government and politics in the UK - understand the origins of political ideas and institutions	Teacher checking homework for accuracy and level of comprehension AFL in lessons led by teacher

Year	Knowledge (Topics / contexts) What pupils will 'know'.	Skills acquired What pupils will be able to 'do'.	Concepts developed What pupils will 'understand'.	Assessment
	- Federalism - Elections and direct democracy - Political parties - Pressure groups - Civil rights	- identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the areas of politics studied - construct and communicate arguments and explanations with relevance, clarity and coherence - use appropriate political vocabulary - make connections between the different areas of politics studied (synoptic links) - make comparisons across two political systems (US and UK).	in the USA using their knowledge from Unit 3 in particular	Peer assessment in lessons e.g. of practise exam questions End of topic test for each topic in high control conditions, followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work Mock exam followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work
12 13	Unit 3: Political ideas - Liberalism - Conservatism - Socialism - Nationalism	- identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the ideologies studied - explain ideologies in their historical context - analyse the core strands of the ideologies studied: state, society, economy, human nature - Draw comparisons between the various strands of an ideology and between different ideologies - analyse, evaluate and compare the ideas of key thinkers in context	- how political ideas developed with reference to their historical context - how political ideas link to their Unit 1 and Unit 2 studies	Teacher checking homework for accuracy and level of comprehension AFL in lessons led by teacher Peer assessment in lessons e.g. of practise exam questions End of topic test for each topic in high control conditions, followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work Mock exam followed by dedicated feedback time and the opportunity to review and redo work

Year	Knowledge (Topics/Unit of work? What pupils will 'know')	Prior Knowledge (KS2/Previous learning)	Skills acquired What pupils will be able to 'do'	Concepts developed (What pupils will understand?)	Key Vocabulary (Tier 3)	Writing & Communication
12	Unit 1: Government and Politics of the UK • Democracy and participation • Elections and referendums • The nature and sources of the British Constitution • Parliament • Prime Minister and Cabinet (executive) • The judiciary • Political parties • Pressure groups • Devolution and European Union Unit 2: Government and Politics of the USA • Introduction to the USA • Constitutional framework • Congress • President/executive • Supreme Court and judiciary • Federalism • Elections and direct democracy	• GCSE History: chronology, causation, change and continuity, significance and interpretations. • GCSE/KS3 understanding of democracy, elections, parliament, rights and government where encountered. • Knowledge of key historical developments provides context for the origins of UK and US political institutions. • Students begin by developing the political vocabulary and conceptual knowledge needed for A-level study. • Existing awareness of current affairs is used as a starting point, but students are taught to distinguish evidence from assertion.	• Comprehend and interpret political information. • Accurately use political vocabulary and concepts. • Explain and analyse political participation, elections, institutions, processes and issues. • Construct developed arguments supported by specific examples. • Compare UK and US institutions and political processes where appropriate. • Analyse the ideas of key political thinkers in historical context. • Write structured 9-mark and 25-mark answers. • Begin to develop explicit AO1, AO2 and AO3 exam technique.	• Democracy: representative and direct forms; representation, participation and political legitimacy. • Electoral systems, voting behaviour and referendums. • Parliamentary sovereignty, the rule of law and codified/uncodified constitutions. • Parliament: representation, scrutiny, accountability and legislative power. • Executive power and executive-legislative relationships. • Separation of powers, judicial independence and judicial review. • Political parties, ideology, representation and party competition. • Pressure groups, pluralism and methods of political influence. • Devolution, multi-level government and the relationship between the UK and European Union. • The relationship between political ideas and political institutions.	Democracy; participation; representation; suffrage; legitimacy; electoral system; plurality; proportional representation; referendum; mandate; constitution; codified; uncodified; statute; convention; parliamentary sovereignty; rule of law; Parliament; bicameral; scrutiny; delegate; trustee; executive; Prime Minister; Cabinet; prerogative; legislature; judiciary; judicial review; ultra vires; separation of powers; political party; party system; pressure group; pluralism; devolution; European Union; federalism; checks and balances; Liberalism; Conservatism; individualism; freedom; authority; tradition; New Right.	• Frequent retrieval and low-stakes quizzes, cumulative across the UK topics in teaching order. • Short analytical paragraphs using Point–Evidence–Analysis. • 9-mark 'explain and analyse' responses. • Comparison paragraphs linking UK and US examples. • Thinker comparison grids and concept explanations. • Structured 25-mark essays with a clear line of argument. • Peer assessment using AQA-style criteria and teacher feedback. • Regular debate and discussion using evidence and political vocabulary.

	• Political parties • Pressure groups • Civil rights Unit 3: Political Ideas • Liberalism • Conservatism					
13	Unit 1: Government and Politics of the UK – consolidation and synoptic study • Interrelationships between UK institutions and political processes. • Democracy, participation, elections and referendums. • Constitution, Parliament, executive and judiciary. • Political parties, pressure groups, devolution and the EU. • Contemporary examples used to test the effectiveness of institutions. Unit 2: Government and Politics of the	• Year 12 knowledge of UK and US institutions and political processes. • Year 12 understanding of Liberalism and Conservatism. • Established knowledge of political vocabulary and core concepts. • Experience of applying political ideas to institutions and contemporary examples. • Year 12 practice of 9-mark and 25-mark questions provides the foundation for more independent synoptic writing.	• Make explicit, sustained comparisons between the UK and USA. • Apply structural, rational and cultural approaches to comparative politics. • Synthesise knowledge from different sections of the specification. • Evaluate competing interpretations and arguments using precise evidence. • Develop substantiated judgements rather than descriptive conclusions. • Select relevant examples rather than relying on generic current affairs. • Interpret extracts, data and other political information. • Produce fluent, coherent 9-mark and 25-mark responses under timed conditions.	• How institutions, political processes and political ideas interact. • The significance of different constitutional arrangements. • The relative power and accountability of executives and legislatures. • How electoral and party systems shape political behaviour. • The role and influence of pressure groups and civil rights movements. • Similarities and differences between UK and US political systems. • Internal debates within Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and Nationalism. • How historical context influences political ideas and contemporary political debate. • The importance of synopticity across the whole A-level course.	Comparative politics; structural approach; rational approach; cultural approach; accountability; legitimacy; representation; sovereignty; federalism; devolution; electoral system; plurality; proportional representation; party system; polarisation; factionalism; pluralism; civil liberties; civil rights; judicial activism; judicial restraint; executive power; checks and balances; socialism; collectivism; social democracy; Marxism; revisionism; Third Way; nationalism; self-determination; minority nationalism; state nationalism; national identity.	• Timed 9-mark and 25-mark practice across all three papers. • Comparative essays requiring explicit UK/US parallels and differences. • Extract analysis and evaluation of arguments. • Synoptic essay planning across institutions, processes and ideologies. • Retrieval quizzes followed by targeted intervention. • Independent use of contemporary examples and evidence. • Full mock examinations with detailed feedback and redrafting. • Students practise concise, reasoned conclusions that reflect the argument developed.

	USA – consolidation and synoptic study • Constitutional principles, Congress, President, Supreme Court and federalism. • Elections, parties, pressure groups and civil rights. • Relationships between institutions and the significance of checks and balances. Comparative Politics • Constitutional arrangements • Legislatures • Executives • Electoral systems and voting • Political parties • Pressure groups • Civil rights • Structural, rational and cultural approaches Unit 3: Political Ideas • Socialism • Nationalism					
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	• Synoptic comparison of all four ideologies • Key thinkers and competing strands within each ideology					
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Year	Knowledge (Topics/Unit of work? What pupils will 'know')	Assessment (KPIs: Diagnostic + Summative)	Cumulative Links (What is revisited?)	Adaptive Teaching (How all pupils access learning)	Future Links (KS4/KS5)
12	Year 12 develops the foundations for the full A-level course: • UK Government and Politics: democracy and participation; elections and referendums; constitution; Parliament; Prime Minister and Cabinet (executive); judiciary; political parties; pressure groups; devolution and EU. • US Government and Politics: introduction to the USA; Constitution; Congress; executive; judiciary; federalism; elections/direct democracy; parties; pressure groups; civil rights. • Political Ideas: Liberalism and Conservatism.	Diagnostic: • Baseline political knowledge/current affairs quiz. • Retrieval starters at the beginning of each topic, drawing on earlier topics in the sequence. • Diagnostic questioning and checking of misconceptions. Summative: • End-of-topic tests in high-control conditions following the UK teaching sequence. • Timed 9-mark and 25-mark questions. • UK/US comparison practice. • Unit/topic assessments and Year 12 mock. • Dedicated feedback, redrafting and opportunities to redo work.	• GCSE/KS3 knowledge of democracy, government, Parliament, elections and rights. • Democracy and participation is revisited through elections and referendums. • Elections and referendums are revisited when considering constitutional change and legitimacy. • Constitution is revisited through Parliament, executive power and the judiciary. • Parliament is revisited when studying Prime Minister and Cabinet and executive-legislative relations. • Executive and constitutional principles are revisited through the judiciary. • Participation and elections are revisited through political parties and pressure groups. • Constitution, sovereignty and representation are revisited through devolution and the EU. • Retrieval of UK content when US institutions are	• Pre-teach Tier 3 vocabulary in the order topics are encountered and provide knowledge organisers. • Chunk democracy/electoral processes and constitutional/institutional processes into stages and diagrams. • Use worked examples and model paragraphs before independent writing. • Scaffold 9- and 25-mark answers with planning frames initially, gradually removing support. • Use cumulative retrieval so each new UK topic revisits earlier topics in the sequence. • Provide differentiated reading materials, glossaries and guided notes. • Use paired discussion/rehearsal before extended writing. • Stretch through counter-arguments, synoptic questions and independent research.	• Direct preparation for Year 13 comparative and synoptic work. • Democracy, elections and referendums support later UK/US comparison of participation and electoral systems. • Constitution, Parliament, executive and judiciary underpin Paper 2 institutional comparisons. • Political parties and pressure groups support direct UK/US comparison of representation and influence. • Devolution and EU support comparison with US federalism and wider questions of sovereignty. • Political Ideas links to historical understanding and to UK/US institutions. • Exam technique provides the foundation for Year 13 timed papers.

			introduced, enabling comparison. • Liberalism/Conservatism provide the conceptual foundation for later Socialism and Nationalism.		• Knowledge of Liberalism and Conservatism supports Year 13 study of Socialism and Nationalism.
13	Year 13 consolidates and applies the whole A-level specification: • UK Government and Politics: synoptic links between democracy/participation, elections/referendums, constitution, Parliament, executive, judiciary, political parties, pressure groups, devolution and EU. • US Government and Politics: constitutional principles, Congress, President, Supreme Court, federalism, elections, parties, pressure groups and civil rights. • Comparative Politics: UK/US comparison using structural, rational and cultural approaches. • Political Ideas: Socialism and Nationalism, followed by synoptic comparison of all four ideologies.	Diagnostic: • Retrieval quizzes covering Year 12 before each Year 13 unit. • Short comparative tasks to identify gaps in UK/US knowledge. • Thinker/concept retrieval and misconception checks. Summative: • Timed Paper 1, Paper 2 and Paper 3 questions. • Full/sectional mock examinations. • Comparative and synoptic assessments. • Individual feedback targets followed by redrafting. • Final examination preparation using mixed-topic retrieval and timed practice.	• Revisit all Year 12 UK and US institutions when completing comparative work. • Revisit separation of powers/checks and balances when analysing US institutions. • Revisit parliamentary sovereignty and executive-legislative relations when comparing the UK. • Revisit Liberalism and Conservatism when studying Socialism and Nationalism. • Revisit AO1 knowledge, AO2 application/analysis and AO3 evaluation throughout Year 13. • Build cumulative synoptic links across all three papers.	• Use retrieval grids and interleaving to maintain Year 12 knowledge. • Break comparative questions into manageable dimensions before moving to whole essays. • Provide comparison tables, essay plans and model analytical chains. • Use explicit modelling of evaluation and judgement. • Scaffold weaker students with sentence stems and evidence banks, then remove scaffolds. • Use targeted intervention based on mock/question-level analysis. • Stretch higher-attaining students through alternative interpretations, counter-arguments and independent contemporary examples. • Frequent timed practice builds fluency and exam stamina.	• Directly supports A-level examination success across Papers 1, 2 and 3. • Comparative Politics develops the ability to make explicit UK/US comparisons. • Political Ideas provides a bridge to further study of Politics, PPE, History, Law and related social sciences. • Research, debate and written communication skills support university study and wider academic work. • Synoptic understanding allows students to connect institutions, political processes and political ideas across the course.