

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

KS5 (AQA A-Level Politics)



YR12

Curriculum Overview

The A Level Sociology course provides students with a thorough understanding of comparative Government and Politics. In the first year students cover essential topics such as The nature and sources of British Politics, democracy as well as The constitutional framework of US government. Students also explore the three traditional ideologies of Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism, with the optional Feminism. The course is Lively, relevant and controversial. There's no denying that it's one of the most interesting and engaging qualifications you can choose. Covering news and current affairs from the UK and US, it helps you understand how the UK country is run and develops research, written communication and debate skills. It also helps grow your confidence. Assessment is based on three written exams at the end of the course, each testing knowledge, understanding, and critical evaluation through a mix of short-answer, extended writing, and essay questions. The A Level is ideal if you're considering studying politics, sociology, ethics, advertising or journalism at university and is highly regarded by employers in industries including politics, international organisations, the media, government and the civil service.

Course Content & Skill Development

There are three broad areas of study in this specification:

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

The specification requires in depth study of UK and US government and politics. Comparisons across the two political systems are required in the topic entitled Comparative politics. Students will be required to 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 will enhance the students' knowledge and understanding of politics, political debate and political issues in both the UK and the USA.



Course Content & Skill Development (Continued)

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 of politics 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

An essential element of the assessment of students' work in A-level politics is the extent to which they display a synoptic or holistic understanding of the subject. To demonstrate this students will be expected to 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.

Numeracy

Government and Politics students need strong numeracy skills to analyse and interpret quantitative data effectively. This includes calculating measures like mean, median, mode, range. Understanding percentages, and interpreting graphs such as scattergrams, bar charts, and histograms. They also learn to assess correlations (positive, negative, zero) and recognise distributions (normal, skewed) in political contexts. These skills are crucial for conducting and understanding political research, applying statistical methods appropriately, and drawing meaningful conclusions from data.

When and how assessment of learning will happen

Students are assessed via an 'End of Topic Assessment' at the end of each module. There is one formal set of mock exams at the end of the first year (June), followed by two formal mock exam sessions during year 13.

Self and peer assessment will happen regularly in lessons. Students will engage with exam style assessment activities in most lessons. Some independent learning tasks will also be formatively assessed.



The final exams/ assessment:

Students are required to complete three terminal examination papers.

- Paper 1: Government and politics of the UK
- Paper 2: The government and politics of the USA • Comparative politics
- Paper 3: Political ideas

Specification Link

<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/politics/specifications/AQA-7152-SP-2017.PDF>

Independent Learning Expectations

Students will complete exam style essay questions regularly as independent tasks. They will be required to extend their research and learning beyond the classroom via a variety of mediums e.g. websites, national and international news, webinars, podcasts etc...

Students will need to consolidate their notes and develop effective revision strategies. They should also complete examination style questions and self-assess these against the published mark schemes.

Useful Information

Students will be required to purchase a revision guides for the course:

- <https://www.hoddereducation.com/politics/my-revision-notes-aqa-a-level-politics-uk-politics-second-edition>
- <https://www.hoddereducation.com/politics/my-revision-notes-aqa-a-level-politics-us-and-comparative-politics-second-edition>
- <https://www.hoddereducation.com/politics/my-revision-notes-aqa-a-level-politics-political-ideas-second-edition>

They will be joined to a Google Classroom in which all lesson resources will be stored. There will also be access to extended research and information via the Google Classroom.