

Politics

Pathway 2

Course description:

As a politics student you will engage with key political ideas that have shaped our modern thinking, explore different modern political systems and gain a greater understanding of the political world around you. The course is focussed on the UK and the US Systems of government and politics, and includes a comparative study of these. We follow the Edexcel 2017 exam specification.

Qualifications required:

- In line with the entry requirements for a Pathway 2 subject.
- Grade 5 and 6 in a Humanities subject and English Language. This combination of grades can be either way round.

Aims of the A Level course:

- Critical understanding of key philosophers and their political ideologies
- Ability to evaluate the UK political system including; democracy, party politics and elections.
- Ability to evaluate key aspects of US politics including; the Presidency, the Constitution and the judicial system.
- Ability to make analytical comparisons between the UK and US political systems.

Future prospects:

Politics introduces students to the skills needed to analyse and evaluate concepts in depth. The emphasis on the development of legislation, its subsequent impact, and the power of the judiciary is suitable for those considering law as further study. The understanding of key political concepts, and the comparative element of paper three also compliments those undertaking further study in politics or international relations. Finally, the focus on political ideas is also valuable for those looking to pursue philosophy or economics.

Subject Teachers:

Miss Carlow, Miss Bishop and Mr. Berrill.

Features of the course:

- Government and Politics of the UK
- Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics
- Political Ideas (conservatism, liberalism, socialism)
- Feminism

Politics

Units

The Government of the UK

Students will study:

- The nature and sources of the British Constitution
- The structure and role of parliament
- The Prime Minister and the Cabinet
- The judiciary
- Devolution
- Democracy and participation
- Elections and referendums
- Political parties
- Pressure groups
- The European Union

Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics

- The constitutional framework of the US government
- The legislative branches of government: congress, president and judiciary
- The electoral process and direct democracy
- The electoral process and direct democracy
- Political parties
- Pressure groups
- Civil rights
- Comparative politics – structural, rational and cultural comparisons between the US and UK

Political Ideas

Pupils will study three key core ideologies:

- Liberalism
- Conservatism
- Socialism

As part of this topic, pupils will learn about the key principles of these ideas, debates, issues and thinkers within them.

Pupils will also do a depth study on a fourth political topic. The one we will be focusing on is feminism.

Pupils will be learning about the core ideas and principles of feminism, feminist views on human nature, the state, society and the economy. They will explore liberal feminism, radical feminism and socialist feminism.

As part of this topic pupils will learn about the following key thinkers:

- Charlotte Perkins Gilman
- Simone de Beauvoir
- Kate Millett
- Shelia Rowbotham
- bell hooks

Methods of Assessment:

A2 Exams, all 2 hour exams worth 33.3% of the overall A Level

Paper 1 – Government and politics in the UK

- A mixture of medium length 'explain' and essay style questions

Paper 2 – Government and politics of the USA and comparative politics

- A mixture of medium length 'explain' and essay style questions

Paper 3 – Political Ideas

- A mixture of medium length 'explain' and essay style questions