

# Politics A Level

## Course Description:

Politics exists because people disagree - they disagree about how they should live, about who should get what and about who should make decisions. In Politics A level you will learn about how Politics works in both the UK and the USA and by the end of the course you will also understand political ideas and the impact they have on current affairs today. You will have the chance to investigate the important political issues of both the UK and the USA such as; the role of the Media in politics today; the Civil Rights movement and its impact on equality in the USA; how powerful Presidents and Prime Ministers actually are; do we have the best way of electing our governments? and many more...

## Qualifications Required:

The minimum entry requirements apply and candidates need to have a Grade 6 or above in English Language. Politics is not a GCSE subject but you should have a Grade 6 at either Geography or History GCSE, if studied, as Politics A level requires you to retain a high level of factual information which you must then analyse and evaluate in written answers.

## Aims of the Course:

Politics aims to encourage your interest in the world around you and inspire you to want to know more about how society works and how it could be changed for the better; to enjoy debate and discussion and make you comfortable with the fact that there are no simple 'rights' or 'wrongs' in politics; to think independently and to want to develop your own views and enjoy weighing up and evaluating evidence in making arguments. It will teach you to be a successful essay writer, to choose the best evidence when making arguments, to make detailed comparisons between the USA and the UK and to become an expert in where political ideas come from.

The course involves both teacher and student-led learning, using presentations, debates, case studies, discussions, video and audio-based exercises, and you will learn essential note-taking and research skills. You will learn to keep up-to-date with current events that are relevant to their course and you will also be directed to articles to read to build knowledge of real-life examples of 'politics-in-action' to back-up the theory of what you have learned in class.

## Future Prospects:

Politics A level prepares you well for under-graduate courses in Humanities subjects and beyond. You will develop skills that are in demand in a number of careers such as creating effective arguments and analysing and evaluating evidence. You will develop a wide range of valuable skills and will gain insight into the lives and viewpoints of others. This is invaluable for a host of careers, whether you go down the route of further study, an apprenticeship or go directly into industry after your A-levels.

## Student Feedback:

Politics is a new subject at Mark Rutherford this year but will be taught by Mr Ladd and Mr Sledge who between them have a lot of experience, enthusiasm and a track-record of great results.

## Features of the Course:

### **Component 1: UK Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Political participation: students will study Democracy and Participation, Political Parties, Electoral systems and Voting Behaviour and the Media.

Core political ideas: students will study Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism.

### **Component 2: UK Government (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

UK government: students will study Parliament, the Constitution, the Prime Minister and Executive and Relationships between these branches.

Non-core political ideas: students will study Feminism.

### **Component 3: Comparative Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Politics in the USA: students will study the US Constitution, Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, Civil Rights and Democracy and Participation – the electoral system and voting behaviour, power of interest groups,

This unit will also have a “comparative” aspect where the political systems of the USA are compared to those in the UK.

## A Level Units

### **Component 1: UK Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Political participation: the idea of democracy, referendums, pressure groups, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the Media.

Core political ideas: students will study Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism.

### **Component 2: UK Government (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

How the UK government works: students will study the Constitution, Parliament, the Prime Minister and Executive, the Supreme Court and the relationships between these branches.

Optional political ideas: students will also study Feminism.

### **Component 3: Comparative Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Politics of the USA: students will study the US constitution, Congress, the Presidency, Supreme Court, Civil Rights and Democracy and Participation.

This unit will have a “comparative” aspect where certain parts of the political systems of the USA are compared to those in the UK

## Methods of Assessment:

### **Component 1: UK Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Assessment: 2-hour examination (two 30-mark essay questions from a choice of four, one 24-mark essay question on Ideologies from a choice of two).

### **Component 2: UK Government (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Assessment: 2-hour examination (two 30-mark essay questions from a choice of four, one 24-mark essay question on Ideologies from a choice of two).

### **Component 3: Comparative Politics (33.3% of A-Level grade)**

Assessment: 2-hour examination (two 30-mark essay questions from a choice of three and two 12 mark questions – one compulsory and one from a choice of two).