

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Exam board: Edexcel

% of exam vs. coursework/practical assessment: 100% exam

Length of exams: Three 2 hour exams

Breakdown of units:

Component One – UK Politics and Core Political Ideas introduces students to the key channels of communication between government and the people. It encourages them to evaluate the adequacy of existing arrangements for ensuring representative democracy and participation. This area of study also considers the ways in which people participate in politics and models for voter behaviour. The unit is broken down into four topics: democracy and participation; voting behaviour and the media; electoral systems; and political parties. Alongside the study of British Politics, Political ideas and philosophies central to major British political parties are studied: conservatism, liberalism and socialism.

Component Two – UK Government and Optional Political Ideas introduces students to the major governmental processes within the UK. It encourages them to develop a critical understanding of the role and effectiveness of key institutions, and of the relationship amongst them. The topics cover the four key institutions for the governance of the UK: the constitution; Parliament; the Prime Minister and core executive; and the relationships between these branches. Alongside these topics, one further ideological tradition will be studied from a choice of anarchism, ecologism, feminism, multiculturalism and nationalism.

Component Three – Comparative Politics - the USA examines the institutional framework of US government and considers the interrelationships between its legislative, executive and judicial processes, placing them in the context of the American constitution, alongside the political framework of the US: political participation and civil rights. The focus of this unit is one of comparison between US and UK government, drawing contrasts between the two systems. The topics covered are: the constitution and federalism; Congress; the presidency; the Supreme Court; democracy and participation; and civil rights.

Overlap with other subjects: Government and Politics seeks a critical understanding of political processes and the place of people within them. As such it overlaps with subjects which seek a similar understanding of the world, such as History, Geography and Sociology. The Political Ideas sections will complement the current Philosophy and English Literature courses, while the US Politics dovetails with our History specification.

*The Government and Politics specification is currently in draft form, awaiting Ofqual approval and is subject to amendment.



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