

Politics

Edexcel A-level Politics (9PLO)

Head of Department: Mr Luke Fisher

Introduction

A-level Politics is fascinating and stimulating, especially with politics on both sides of the Atlantic in a moment of constant flux. An academically engaging subject, the course will teach you more about the world around you, while developing your extended writing and critical thinking skills. You will investigate and analyse the key processes, ideas and conventions that sit at the heart of the political systems in both UK and US politics, and will need to be flexible in your analysis and ready to challenge conventional wisdom, using the latest events to exemplify your thinking. Having a genuine interest and confident understanding of current affairs is a real advantage, and the weekly Politics Society, as well as trips to the Houses of Parliament and the UK Supreme Court, and to Washington DC and Philadelphia provide lots of opportunities for students to learn, experience and discuss the subject.

Subject Requirements

Students may have taken any combination of GCSE courses but need to be interested in people and society, and able to express themselves fluently on paper and in discussion. A minimum of a 6 in GCSE English is therefore essential. GCSE History is an advantage but not a prerequisite to success.

Course Outline

The Edexcel course is well-known and highly regarded. Students are examined in three parts, which they study over both of their years in the Sixth Form. There is no coursework element and instead the final grade is based on essays written during the exam papers on:

- **Component 1:** UK politics and core politics ideas
- **Component 2:** UK government and non-core political ideas
- **Component 3:** US government and comparative politics.

Higher Education and Careers

Politics-related university courses are very popular among Epsom students. The A-level is also an obvious choice for candidates wishing to read Business, Economics, Geography, History, Law and Philosophy at university. It is respected as a strong A-level by the top universities and many of our former students have moved on to Oxbridge and very competitive courses.

What should I study alongside Politics?

In the exams, students are assessed on their ability to construct sophisticated arguments in extended essays. As such, they may benefit from studying Politics alongside other essay-based subjects where the skills learnt overlap.

Is there anything else I should consider?

Politics is very definitely not a lightweight option and it is important to note the emphasis on essay-writing.