

What are the aims and intentions of this curriculum?

The first year of the two-year A-level course is the AS course, designed to introduce students to work at a new level, making the transition from GCSE studies. For many students, the two-year A-level course will lead to higher education, and the AS course is the first stage of that progression.

In politics the aim of the course is to encourage reflection on **the nature of politics in a representative democracy**: politics is more than just ‘what happens at Westminster’. For example, a key theme running through the course is **accountability**. Students will reflect on the relationship between voters and their elected representatives in the House of Commons; they will also discuss the extent to which Parliament (the legislature) might exercise control over the Prime Minister and Cabinet (or executive).

The intention is that students will complete the AS course with a good understanding of **key aspects of political ideas, activity, and government in the contemporary UK**. They will want to continue their studies into a second year with the A-level course. If they opt not to continue, they have nonetheless become better informed as citizens.

For **Edexcel Politics AS** student study **UK Politics (Unit 1)** and **UK Government (Unit 2)**. Unit 1 includes questions of democracy and the individual’s participation in political activity; political parties and pressure groups; electoral systems; voting behaviour; and the role of the mass media. Unit 2 includes the constitution; parliament; the prime minister and the cabinet; the judiciary; and questions of sovereignty.

Term	Topics	Knowledge and key terms	Skills developed	Assessment
Autumn 1	Introduction to politics and government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Desert Island: how ‘government emerges Democracy Political participation and protest How Parliament works The role of the mass media in shaping public opinion 	In the first half-term students will be introduced to a range of topics chosen to provide a broad overview of the course as a whole <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct and indirect/representative democracy Legitimacy: based on sovereignty and accountability Popular and legal sovereignty Protest, eg direct action Different kinds of pressure group Media influence: manipulation and agenda-setting vs consumer model 	Contested knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of different political ideas and arguments: from the outset students should start to understand how to select evidence when forming an argument Revision and retrieval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lessons start with a topical new story that can be used to stimulate discussion of work done, a way in to recalling content of earlier lessons – how successful is ongoing revision? Writing for assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how shorter questions on examination papers will be structured. Here, students learn how to develop their written work. Students will also start work on source questions: responses here will require the ability to infer from a source and then apply knowledge to the response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first half-term is devoted to knowledge and understanding of key terms, exploring language Students will be formally assessed on their ability to develop their writing in response to questions such as: ‘Describe the features of representative democracy in the UK today.’ They will also be assessed on responses for the first source question These 10-mark questions will then feature on the suitability test at the end of September: students will demonstrate progress made thus far

<p>Autumn 2</p>	<p>Introduction to parties and ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major parties • Ideas associated with parties • How ideas translate into policies • How the electoral system sustains a 'two-party system' <p>Electoral systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons why one system might be preferred over another <p>Preparation for the November Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal examination • One paper to focus on strengths and weaknesses that have emerged in this term. 	<p>Parties and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservative party and conservatism • One Nation Tories • Modern conservatism and neoliberalism • Labour and social democracy • Consensus politics: Butskellism and Blatcherism • Adversity politics • Party factions • Differences between parties and pressure groups <p>Electoral systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-past-the-post • Additional member system • Single transferable vote • Supplementary vote • Majoritarian system • Proportional representation • Safe seat • Marginal 	<p>Contested knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction to different political ideologies: starting to understand how and why these ideas/perspectives have come about <p>Revision and retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each part of the course, building on what has gone before, recalls and also changes it <p>Writing for assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be able to start making intelligent connections, eg between ideologies and different approaches to democracy (top-down vs bottom-up) • Essay-writing has been introduced by the end of term • Students are also more familiar with requirements for two different source questions 	<p>November Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One paper: one hour 30 minutes • Material selected based on issues identified as being appropriate for an exam paper at this time
<p>Spring 1</p>	<p>Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution • Three branches of government • Relations between branches <p>Preparation for the February Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal examination • One paper produced to focus on strengths and weaknesses that have emerged in this term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codified and uncodified constitutions • Executive, legislature, and judiciary • Separation of powers vs fusion of powers • Prime minister: first among equals • Cabinet government • Kitchen cabinet • Presidential prime minister • Parliament: legal sovereignty • Backbenchers 	<p>Contested knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is based on questions about the desirability of different forms of government as indicated • Students will be familiar with this approach from the first term <p>Revision and retrieval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We can now start to make connections between two units no longer seen as discrete • Example: work on the relationship between PM and backbenchers builds on earlier work on factions <p>Writing for assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should be able to start making intelligent connections, eg between ideologies and different approaches to democracy (top-down vs bottom-up) • Essay-writing has been introduced by the end of term, including requirements for two different source questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay-writing • Source questions

Spring 2	Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislative process Judiciary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bills and Acts Introduction of legislation Queen’s Speech and a ‘mandate to govern’ Parliament Acts Salisbury Convention Judicial review (ref sovereignty) 	Contested knowledge Work on different perspectives now includes conflict between different branches, eg judiciary and executive Revision and retrieval	February Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either before or after half-term One examination paper for AS students One hour 30 minutes Material chosen because issues have been identified
Summer 1	Examination preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public exams start in May TBA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBA For students sitting public exams this is final exam preparation For students continuing the course progression can be negotiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBA For students continuing to the end of the year this phase balances revision and retrieval strategies with the beginning of examination preparation For all students work with take into account strengths and weaknesses identified throughout the year, not least in November and February Assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBA
Summer 2	Preparation for end-of-year examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8PLO/01 8PLO/02 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two full examination papers Each paper: one hour 45 minutes