



A-Level Politics

If you are curious and critical, care passionately about the state of the world whilst being able to see two sides of an argument, you will find Politics A Level exciting and rewarding.

The more active you are, the more you will get from the course. This bridging work guides you through some ways you can engage with politics and current affairs before September.

Maybe you love the detail of how government works; or perhaps the big visions of the political ideologies excite you; or maybe there's a particular issue that fires you up, such as justice, peace or access to common fisheries. In this booklet, you have a chance to explore some of the ideas and topics that we will cover in depth next year.

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What to expect

Although, essay writing is the main way in which you will be formally assessed in Politics, the lessons will be largely discussion-based and you will learn how to construct a supported argument.

Alongside the written skills, you will develop your research skills; you will learn how to find relevant evidence and to use this to produce a persuasive case.

You will develop your evaluation skills and learn how to weigh up the strength/s of different opinions.

Above all, you will learn how to think critically; how to question and debate; how to make judgments and how to weigh up evidence to reach a logical, supported and justifiable

What you will study

Module 1 is UK Politics. This covers how people participate in politics: the role of elections and the effectiveness of different electoral systems; political parties; pressure groups and social movements, e.g. Extinction Rebellion; the role that referendums have increasingly made in decision-making and how democratic British politics is. You will also study the Core Ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism.

Module 2 is UK Government. This covers how the British government is organised and the features of the different branches of government (PM, cabinet, Parliament, judiciary – courts, devolved assemblies and parliaments, constitution and sovereignty). You will study an Optional Ideology – a choice between Anarchism, Feminism, or Nationalism.

Module 3 is Global Politics which you will study in Year 13. It covers global governance on many levels, including: rights, development, environment, conflict. You will also study theories of International Relations. conclusion.

Exam Board and Specification: Edexcel A-Level Politics

Link to Specification:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Politics/2017/Specification%20and%20sample%20assessments/A-level-Politics-Specification.pdf>



Bridging *work*

Task 1: Your interests and motivation

Are there any particular issues or ideas that motivate you to act? For example, you may feel passionately about women's reproductive rights, or about climate change, or about access to sports facilities.

Task 2: Your MP

Use this website to find out about your local MP: <https://members.parliament.uk/FindYourMP>

Have a look at their voting record on key issues. To what extent do you agree with their voting choices? For example, look at their voting record on VAT on Independent Schools, Winter Fuel Payments, or Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill.

Task 3: Follow, subscribe...

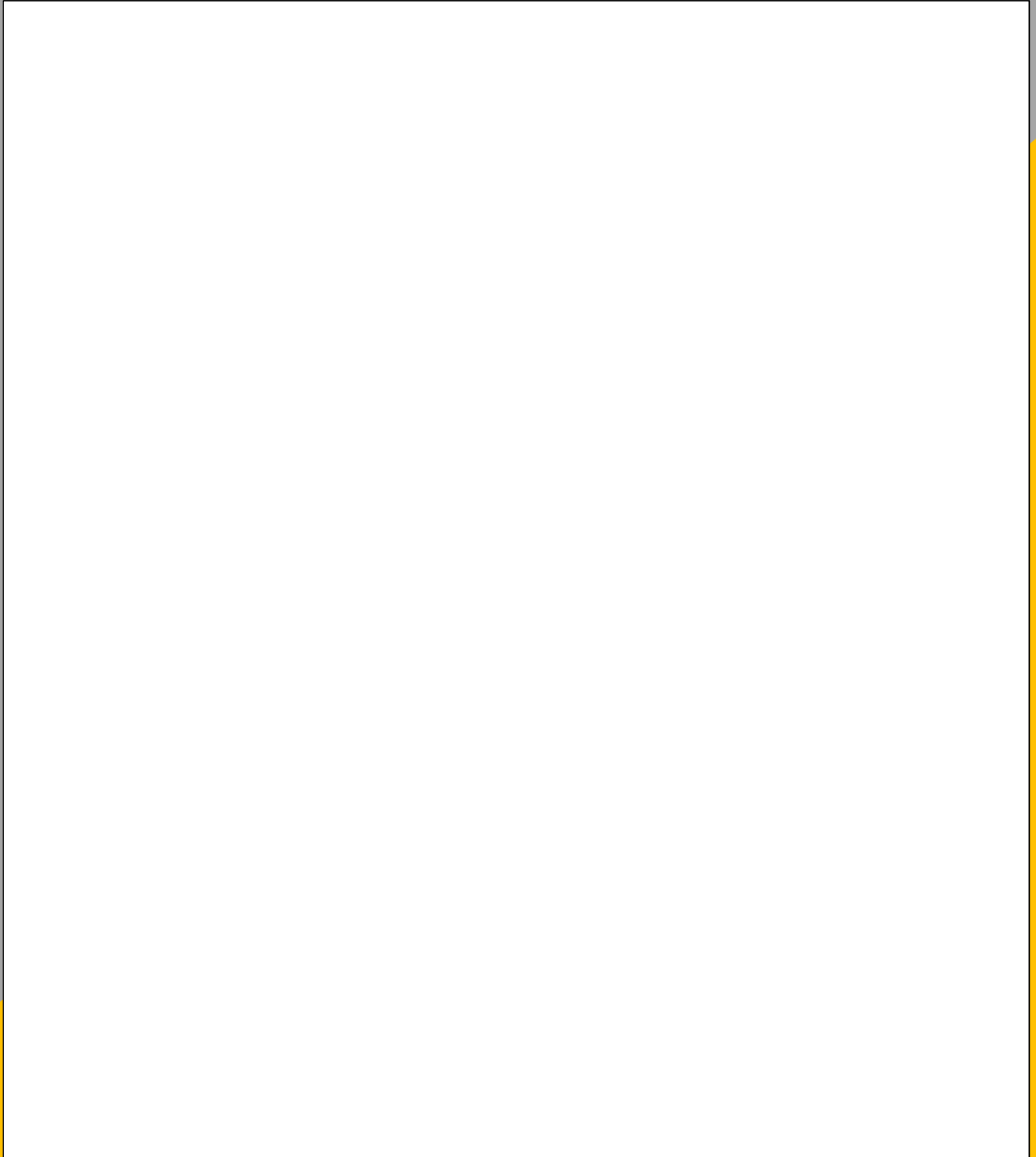
On whichever social media platforms you use, follow or subscribe to podcasts, newsletters, tweets etc of political parties, news sources etc. See the last page of this booklet for some ideas.

What issues interested you this summer? How were they presented and communicated in the media and on social media? Summarise here what happened, why it interested you, its significance and how it was communicated and presented:

Task 4: Finding out about the UK Parliament

Read this factsheet: https://www.parliament.uk/globalassets/documents/commons-information-office/leaflets/how_the_uk_parliament_works_june22.pdf or Google How the UK Parliament Works and go to the factsheet on the Parliament website.

Make a visual representation (drawing, diagram, graphic notes) of the information in the factsheet.





Task 5: Finding out about Political Parties

Go to this website to find out the manifesto promises for the main political parties in the 2024 election: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cxeez8271nvo>

For the Conservative Party, Labour Party and a party of your choice, complete the information below:

Party: _____

Manifesto policy:

Agree/disagree & why:

Party: _____

Manifesto policy:

Agree/disagree & why:

Party: _____

Manifesto policy:

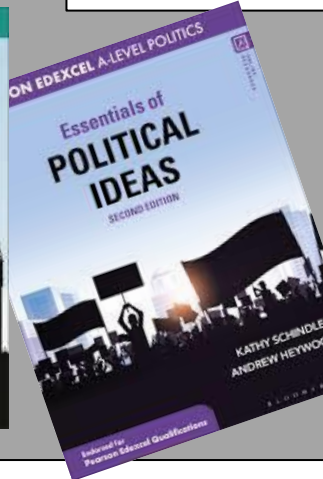
Agree/disagree & why:



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Recommended Reading & Media

Politics is fast-changing and complex. Staying abreast of events and developing a critical approach is a key part of Politics A Level and is one of its best features! Subscribe to podcasts, download apps and join the conversations we will have in class.



We will be using the 'Essentials of ...' series of textbooks as a basis of independent study.

Copies will be available to borrow during Year 12, but you may prefer to have your own copy. The 'Essentials of Political Ideas' will be useful after Easter. The ISBN for this is 9781350382398. You can buy it here:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/essentials-of-political-ideas-9781350382398/>

Recommended Podcasts:

The Rest is Politics on YouTube – analysis and comment
Oh God what now – UK politics
A Level Politics Show on Spotify

Recommended Publications and Websites:

On Substack – This week in A level Politics

Recommended Reading:

How Westminster Works and Why it Doesn't by Ian Dunt
Code of Conduct by Chris Bryant
Politics on the Edge by Rory Stewart
The Life of an MP by Jess Phillips

Recommended Films and TV:

Some amazing movies to learn more about political figures, theories and events.

- [The Iron Lady \(2011\)](#) – An aged Margaret Thatcher gets nostalgic as she empties her late husband Denis's wardrobe. She struggles to come to terms with her husband's passing while also recollecting her political journey.
- [The Deal \(2003\)](#) -The relationship between Gordon Brown and Tony Blair upon the death of the leader of the Labour Party.
- [The Queen \(2006\)](#) – Queen Elizabeth II tries to deal with a series of events following the death of Princess Diana.
- [The Special Relationship \(2010\)](#) – The story of Tony Blair and his relationship with Bill Clinton.
- [In the Loop \(2009\)](#) – satirical film about the invasion of Iraq.
- [Brexit: The Uncivil War \(2018\)](#) – a drama about the biggest foreign policy decision in recent years.
- State of Chaos – a documentary about the 5 Conservative Prime Ministers 2016-2023
- [Question Time \(BBC\)](#) – a weekly Q&A show where members of the audience give questions to ministers, politicians, journalists and more. Great for keeping up to date with political developments as they happen.
- [Politics Live \(BBC\)](#) – a daily talk show with politicians and journalists, again good for keeping up to date with political events.
- [Yes Minister \(BBC\)](#) – a favourite of Margaret Thatcher, this satirical programme looks at the work of the (fictional) Minister of Administrative Affairs.
- [The Thick of It \(BBC\)](#) – satirical show about the ins and outs of a government department.
- [Blair & Brown: The New Labour Revolution \(BBC\)](#) – a look into the governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.
- [Four Hours at the Capitol \(BBC\)](#) – the inside story of the January 2021 Storming of the Capitol.