



DIXONS
SIXTH FORM
ACADEMY

SUMMER WORK: A LEVEL POLITICS

20

23

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About the Summer Work

This booklet contains a number of tasks that students are expected to complete to a good standard in order to be able to be enrolled in this subject.

Please complete these tasks on A4 paper and bring them with you to your first lesson. The work handed in should be:

- written in black or blue ink on A4 lined paper
- written in full sentences with no copying and pasting from external sources
- have all compulsory tasks completed
- Have students' full names on each sheet
- multiple sheets should be connected together

This booklet also contains significant additional information and a range of optional tasks. We would encourage you to complete all the tasks including the optional ones to fully prepare for Sixth Form study.

Welcome to Politics

Subject outline

Welcome First Year Politics students, you have made an excellent choice in taking a subject that will help you understand how the world works and your place in it. We are living in *unprecedented* times, there has never been a better time to study this subject. Brexit, Covid-19 and Partygate have all changed the world we live in beyond recognition. This is a time of great change and this subject will be an able guide to help you understand what is going on, why it is happening and how you can make a change.

Great Politics students are highly engaged with the news, keep up to date with a range of newspapers and often are quite active on political social media. Politics requires students to read large volumes of information and be able to write detailed and focused essays, so it is a subject for those who enjoy expressing their opinions. We expect students to regularly spend time looking at BBC News, the Guardian, the Times, the Economist and Politico, as well as listening to the *Today* programme on Radio 4 and watching *Question Time* on Thursdays. Keeping up with what is going on in UK and US Politics is essential for success in this subject.

The course is made up of 3 examined units that all take place at the end of Year 2:

Paper 1 UK Politics and Core Ideology - 2 hour paper 33%

Paper 2 UK Government and Non-Core Ideology (Feminism) - 2 hour paper 33%

Paper 3 Comparative Politics- USA and UK - 2 hour paper 33%

We spend the first year investigating British politics- we look at how our democratic institutions work, what factors in society lead to political action, and interrogate the dominant ideologies that underpin British politics - Liberalism, Socialism, Conservatism and Feminism.

In the second year we jump into American Politics, and there is no better time to do this than during this year's midterm elections! We will look at their constitution, how congress works, what the President does and how the judiciary has shaped racial politics in the USA.

Careers & Higher Education

Politics is a great A level in terms of careers, as it is highly versatile. Many students who take Politics are unsure what to expect, but often enjoy it so much that they end up taking it as their University course. Politics is highly relevant, it gives students broad ranging knowledge about how the UK and USA political systems work, which is really useful for any job that has to react to political events such as journalism, the law, finance, consultancy, accountancy, local government and civil service sector jobs. In terms of Degrees, Politics is excellent preparation for Politics, History, Economics, Law, Sociology, Public Policy, Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE), English and Geography. It is well suited to any degree centred on extended writing and analysis of large volumes of information.

Politics, like other essay- based subjects, is excellent for providing students with a range of desirable and useful service sector skills. You have to be able to read and research topics rapidly and effectively, summarise and explain challenging concepts, build persuasive, carefully evidenced arguments and be able to critically analyse a range of different arguments and situations. These skills are desirable across a range of different sectors from business and finance, to local and national politics and academia.

The local labour market has relevant jobs in the education, legal and public administration sectors, there over 150,000 jobs in West Yorkshire that would welcome students with a Politics qualification. One of the greatest gaps in the local labour map is in teaching, a career that Politics lends itself to. Similarly communication skills are identified as the highest single skill requirement - this is something that Politics is particularly good at developing as constant debates and discussions are how we teach and writing effective written reports are what we aim for to ensure exam success. All of this is also supplemented by the fact the recent creation of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Mayor, currently Tracy Brabin, has created a number of specifically political jobs and opportunities in West Yorkshire, on top of the numerous Councillor and Civil Servant roles that exist across the region.

Links to key information:

Course information guide:

<https://www.dixons6a.com/uploads/files/Politics.pdf>

Specification:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/politics-2017.html>

Summer Work Tasks

Task One: Short research task

Use the following links and your own research to help you answer the questions below:

Democracy: <https://studyrrocket.co.uk/revision/a-level-politics-edexcel/uk-politics/democracy-and-participation>

Political Ideologies: <https://youthpolitics.org.uk/political-ideologies/>

“Political Compass” test: <https://www.politicalcompass.org/test>

Electoral systems: <https://www.britpolitics.co.uk/uk-elections-systems-fptp-pr-vote-democracy/>

Ensure that you answer in your own words; **do not copy and paste!**

Democracy: What is democracy?	
Democracy: What is the difference between direct and representative democracy?	
Democracy: How do Referendums work?	
Ideologies: What do liberals believe?	

Ideologies: What do socialists believe?	
Ideologies: What do conservatives believe?	
Where do you lie on the "Political Compass"? Why do you think this is?	
Electoral systems: How does first-past-the-post (FPTP) work?	

Electoral systems: What is proportional

Representation (PR)?

Electoral systems: Why don't some people like coalition governments?

Task Two: Who are these people and why are they important in Politics?

If you aren't sure, use the following links and your own research to find out:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers>

<https://members.parliament.uk/Opposition/Cabinet>

<https://www.snp.org/about/>

<https://today.yougov.com/ratings/politics/popularity/politicians/all>

	Name	Significance?
		
		



Task Three: Long Answer Questions

Pick one of the following questions. Explain your opinion with evidence to back it up and feel free to do your own research on sites such as the BBC, Politico, The Guardian, The Times etc. to help you. These should be about 1 page.

Ensure that you answer in your own words; **do not copy and paste!**

1. How Democratic is the UK?

2. Why did Brexit happen?
3. What political impact has Covid-19 had on the UK?
4. Should Trump have been imprisoned after the January 6th insurrection?
5. Should Boris Johnson still be the UK Prime Minister?

You must provide a list of references to show which sites you have used in your research. Then, for each site, you must evaluate how trustworthy you think they are. For example:

BBC News, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-65979777> This website is very trustworthy as the BBC must maintain political neutrality at all times. This particular article is written by Chris Mason, the political editor of BBC News, which also adds to how trustworthy it is as he is a widely respected journalist.

Task Four: Ideology Research

Task

Part of the A level Politics course is investigating, exploring and analysing ideologies. Ideologies are groups of ideas and concepts that come together to create a philosophy, in our case about politics. Your task is to:

1. Read **at least one** of these core texts (follow the links below)
2. Summarise the key ideas in roughly one side of A4 (3 paragraphs maximum)
3. Write an additional paragraph explaining the impact of these ideas on the world today. You may need to do extra research to do this.

EITHER

Liberalism

<file:///C:/Users/jmcgrath/OneDrive%20-%20Dixons%20Academies%20Trust/Download/How%20does%20liberalism%20view%20freedom%20and%20equity%20.pdf>

OR

Socialism

<file:///C:/Users/jmcgrath/OneDrive%20-%20Dixons%20Academies%20Trust/Download/socialism%20or%20socialisms%20.pdf>

OR

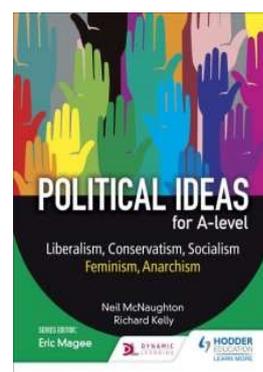
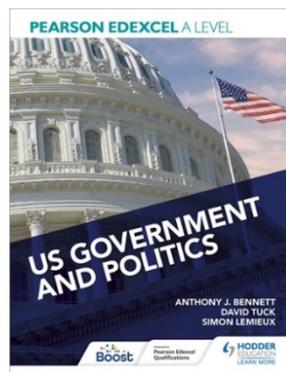
Conservatism

<file:///C:/Users/jmcgrath/OneDrive%20-%20Dixons%20Academies%20Trust/Download/Why%20do%20conservatives%20value%20authority%20.pdf>

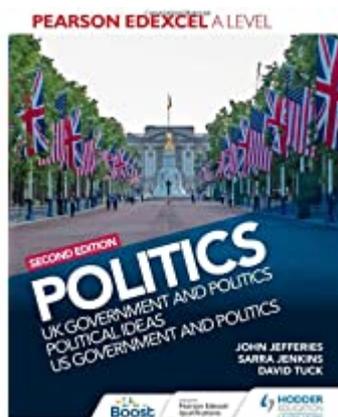
Reading list

Essential Reading

You will need the following textbooks for the course. You can choose to buy the three individual textbooks, OR the combined textbook. To make sure you are buying the right ones, make sure that the title, front cover and authors' names match the images below.



OR



Ensure that you have bought at least the UK Government and Politics textbook before you start in September. Please keep the receipt – if you are eligible for the college bursary, you will be entitled to a full refund.

Download these apps:



(BBC News; The Guardian; Twitter; The Washington Post; The New York Times)

If you haven't made a Twitter account, it is vital to do so now. It is an excellent resource to help you broaden your subject knowledge and keep up to date with current developments. When you have created an account, follow this account: @a_levelpolitics Make sure that you check it and read some of the articles that are shared there every week.

Read these newspapers:



Listen to and watch:



Further reading

Politics is a subject which relies on your building up your subject knowledge. It links well with History, Law, Politics and English Literature. It is good to get into the habit of reading widely around the subject.

Suggested Podcasts

BBC Newscast

BBC Westminster Hour

Choppers Politics

Coffee House Shots

Guardian Politics Weekly UK and US

Payne's Politics

Political Thinking with Nick Robinson

Sophy Ridge on Sunday

The A level Politics Show

The Rest is Politics

General Reading

Andrew Marr, Making of Modern Britain, and History of Modern Britain

Isabel Hardman, Why we get the wrong politicians

Constitution

Bagehot, The English Constitution

Dicey, An Introduction to the Study of the law of the constitution

Erskine May, A Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament

Political Ideology

Aristotle, Politics

Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France

Hobbes, Leviathan

Locke, Two Treatises on Government

Marx, The Communist Manifesto

Mill, On Liberty

Paine, Rights of Man, Common Sense

Plato, The Republic

Wollstonecraft, A vindication of the rights of women

Political Biography/ Autobiography

Alan Clark, In Power

Benn, The Benn Diaries

Blair, A Journey

Brew, Citizen Clem

Brown, Beyond the Crash

Campbell, Diaries

Moore, Margaret Thatcher

Mullin, A View from the Foothills

Obama, Dreams from my father, The Audacity of Hope

Phillips, Everything You Really Need to Know About Politics: My Life as an MP

Wolfe, Fire and Fury (Trump)