GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Examination Board Specification: Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Politics (9PL0)

Why Study Politics? Politics helps to shape our society and the world in which we live. The study of Politics is a social science, using models and theories to chart and explain voting behaviour, political identification, participation and pressure group activity. It also explores concepts of political organisation and government, how institutions function but also the meaning and implication of political ideologies. At A level the topics provide a broad focus on British and US politics and government mechanisms, plus theories of comparative politics and core ideological frameworks.

Content and Assessment of the Course:

Component 1: UK Politics (9PL0/01)		
Written examination	**2 hours**	**33⅓%**
This covers political participation: democracy, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media. Assessment will be through one 30-mark question from a choice of two (each question based upon a quote), plus one 30-mark question from a choice of two. There is also a section on core political ideas: conservatism, liberalism and socialism. Assessment will be through a 24-mark question from a choice of two.		
Component 2: UK Government (9PL0/02)		
Written examination	**2 hours**	**33⅓%**
This covers the UK constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive, including relationships between the branches of government. Assessment will be through one 30-mark question from a choice of two (each question based upon a quote), plus one 30-mark question from a choice of two. There is also a section on optional political ideas. We will study feminism. Assessment will be through a 24-mark question from a choice of two.		
Component 3: Comparative Politics - USA (9PL0/3a)		
Written examination	**2 hours**	**33⅓%**
We will study the US Constitution and federalism, US Congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court, democracy and participation, and civil rights. Assessment will be one 12-mark question from a choice of two, one compulsory 12-mark question based on a source, and two 30-mark questions from a choice of three.		

Entrance Requirements: There are no specific subject requirements, although a genuine interest in the subject and in current affairs is essential. Aptitude in GCSE subjects such as English, History or Geography will be a sound platform from which to embark on the study of Politics at A Level. There is a particular and extensive requirement for the independent study of US politics so a taste for reading and researching – much of it on-line - is important. The subject aims to develop a knowledge and informed understanding of contemporary political structures and issues in their historical context, both within the UK and US. The ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate political information to form arguments and make judgements is central to success in this course.