



## A LEVEL Politics EDEXCEL

Politics textbooks are out of date on the day they are published, this is because the subject changes daily. Significant changes are taking place in the UK, European and US Politics.

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed everything, a Conservative government has borrowed billions to prop up the UK economy, unemployment is spiralling and there's no end in sight. No major politicians have advocated anything but the attempt to return as we were, socially, politically and economically.

In the US, the tribalism of politics continues to astound seasoned observers and, as we approach the presidential election, we wonder how the US, and the world at large, would respond to a second term of President Trump. Whichever of the candidates is ultimately successful, how the losers respond should be a source of great concern to all of us

The world of British politics really opens up to teenagers after their eighteenth birthdays, with the vote giving them the ability to change our nation and allow the principles they hold dear to thrive. With this in mind, it could easily be said that Government and Politics is the most applicable subject on offer at any school, and is a subject that people should be encouraged to take due to the way it prepares you for entering the adult world.

All students in year 12 will take part during the first term in a visit to the Houses of Parliament. This includes a tour of the Palace of Westminster and a workshop activity in the Parliament Education centre. This fascinating trip gives a valuable insight into the world of Westminster. If Parliament is in session students will have the opportunity to watch both debating chambers at work & will see many well-known political figures as they go about their work. If parliament isn't in session students will be able to walk through both chambers and to consider the momentous events that have taken place where they stand. Full of interesting facts and anecdotes from the excellent guides, this trip is always enjoyed by the students. The ensuing workshop activity gets them involved in real debates; how they take place, and the importance of debate, scrutiny & law-making in the lives of all citizens.

Prominent speakers who have visited the school in recent years include John Bercow, Michael Portillo, Douglas Carswell, Matthew Barzun (former US Ambassador to the UK), Peter Kellner (YouGov chairman & BBC election pundit), Baroness Tyler of Enfield.

At Ashlyns we offer the Edexcel Government & Politics A level syllabus. Students will be examined over three two-hour papers:

- i) UK Politics & Core Political Ideas (Liberalism, Conservatism & Socialism)
- ii) UK Government & Non-Core Political Ideas (Multiculturalism)
- iii) Comparative Politics (Politics of the USA, Global issues).

A link to the Edexcel Government & Politics site is provided below:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/government-and-politics-2008.html>

### WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW OR BE ABLE TO DO BEFORE TAKING THIS COURSE?

Students should have a good command of English, demonstrated by a grade 5 or above in GCSE English Language and a Grade 5 in any Humanities subject. Students should possess good powers of analysis and have an interest in current affairs and society. The course specification provides an approach to Government and Politics that allows candidates to acquire knowledge and understanding of the political dimension within their own and other societies. This includes knowledge and understanding of authority, control and power and the nature and articulation of different interests in western societies. Candidates will develop an understanding of political systems and study different levels of government, comparing the practices of the British and United States systems of government. Candidates will have the opportunity to study different political

ideologies and theories; for example conservatism, environmentalism, liberalism and socialism.

## **WHAT WILL I LEARN ON THIS ADVANCED GCE COURSE?**

This specification is designed to encourage candidates to:

- develop their critical thinking skills and the ability to interpret, evaluate and comment
- develop a critical awareness of the nature of politics and the relationship between political ideas, institutions and processes
- acquire knowledge and understanding of the structures of authority and power within the political system of the United Kingdom and how these may differ from those of other political systems
- acquire knowledge and informed understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the individual
- develop an interest in and engagement with contemporary politics

**Contact:** [rmurray@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk](mailto:rmurray@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk)