



RIDGEWOOD  
SCHOOL

# EDEXCEL POLITICS

Transition Task 2025



## PURPOSE

The aim of this preparation work is to help you gain knowledge of the vital vocabulary, people and pieces of legislation which underpin success in the A-Level Politics course.

## TASKS

The Politics Team would like you to complete three tasks for your first Politics lesson in September. These have been designed to help bridge the gap between GCSE and A Level study in terms of knowledge and vocabulary:

1. Please define the terms in section A. These terms all link to the first topic we will study in September – *Voting Behaviour and the Media*. Please summarise your definitions into one complete sentence of **exactly** 15 words.
2. Research into the eight pieces of legislation listed in Section B. Briefly state which party passed them, when, what the legislation was about, and what the impact has been.
3. Look into the five “key thinkers” outlined in Section C. Please provide three key beliefs of each person, alongside their picture.

Your first Politics lesson in September will start with a mini-quiz on this information, so please take your time with it, and make sure you have **learned** the information, not just completed the tasks.

## RESOURCES

- When searching online, put “politics” in your search, along with the key term
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/>
- <https://www.parliament.uk/>
- <https://www.tutor2u.net/politics/collections/profiles-of-key-political-thinkers>

**Section A – Define the key terms in exactly 15 words**

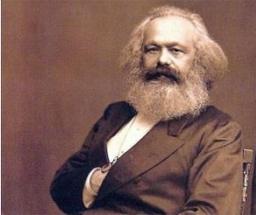
Politics	
Power	
Authority	
Legitimacy	
Mandate	
Democracy	
e-Democracy	
Pluralism	
Electorate	
Franchise	
Political Apathy	

Political Hapathy	
Participation Crisis	
Turnout	
Voting Behaviour	
Differential Turnout	
Mass Media	
Partisan Alignment	
Partisan Dealignment	

## Section B – Legislation

Legislation	Detail
Magna Carta, 1215	
Human Rights Act, 1998	
Good Friday Agreement, 1998	
Constitutional Reform Act, 2005	
Equality Act, 2010	
Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act, 2013	
European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act, 2020	
Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022	

**Section C – Key thinkers** (Use this website: <https://www.tutor2u.net/politics/collections/profiles-of-key-political-thinkers>)

Thinker	Beliefs
<p data-bbox="240 338 435 367">Edmund Burke</p>  A portrait of Edmund Burke, an 18th-century English philosopher, statesman, and orator. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a red coat and a white cravat, with his hair powdered.	
<p data-bbox="213 636 462 665">Michael Oakeshott</p>  A black and white photograph of Michael Oakeshott, a British philosopher and political theorist. He is wearing a suit and tie, and has a pipe in his mouth.	
<p data-bbox="264 949 405 978">John Locke</p>  A portrait of John Locke, an English philosopher, physician, and scientist. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat, with long, wavy hair.	
<p data-bbox="272 1247 397 1276">Karl Marx</p>  A portrait of Karl Marx, a German philosopher, economist, sociologist, and revolutionary theorist. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark coat, with a full white beard and hair.	
<p data-bbox="225 1547 450 1576">Anthony Giddens</p>  A photograph of Anthony Giddens, a British sociologist and philosopher. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit and a red tie, with a white shirt. He is standing in front of a bookshelf.	

**REMINDER:** Your first Politics lesson in September will start with a mini-quiz on this information, so please take your time with it, and make sure you have learned the information, not just completed the tasks.

## Preparing for A Level Politics



Are you hoping to study Politics at A level?

**Are you interested in learning more about how Great Britain and Northern Ireland is governed at this important time?**

**Are you interested in discovering more about the American political system?**

**If so, then please see the pages below for actions you can take to further your interests, and prepare for Year 12 and Year 13:**

**1. Preparing for the A Level Course** – start to explore the topics and their foundations that you will study throughout the A level course.

**2. Develop as a Political Student** – general reading around/watching videos/listening to podcasts etc. to develop your political knowledge and understanding.

To be a successful student of Politics, it is vital that you keep abreast of current affairs; the political landscape is ever-changing and immeasurably important. You can do this by watching the news, reading newspapers (either the print version or via online apps) and listening to podcasts.

Twitter is used by journalists, politicians and politicians alike, to share news and information as well as discuss political issues. Below are users you could follow on Twitter for information, news and views:

@BBCPolitics and @BBCLauraK (for summaries of all the important stories, and links to articles)

@TelePolitics and @DailyMailUK (or any other newspaper of your choice – or even more than one!)

@bbcquestiontime (the UK's most-watched political talk-show: BBC Question Time)

@POTUS and @realDonaldTrump (the President of the United States of America)

@postpolitics and @HuffPostPol (for American political stories)

@havegotnews and @PoliticsJOE\_UK (for a satirical take on US and UK Politics)

Success at A level requires an ability to evaluate political ideas and make judgments about whether you agree or disagree with them. The questions considered during the course are not merely intellectual ones, but practical ones too: Should referendums be used more widely? Should the voting age be lowered to 16? Should Yorkshire have a regional Parliament?

This guide is designed to provide you with reading, watching and listening lists to help you gather important, background knowledge that will widen your political expertise.

Please collate your research, notes and any questions you have together in a folder. If you do go on to study this course with us in Year 12, you will be able to start by sharing your preparation and thinking with your teacher and other students in the class. Specifically, you will be asked to share the **three** most interesting pieces of information you have learned, **two** questions you are ready to ask and **one** thing you would like to know more about (you will need to make a note of these). We cannot wait to hear what you come up with!

***THE PAGES BELOW WILL HELP GIVE YOU IDEAS FOR WHAT YOU CAN DO TO DEVELOP AS A POLITICAL STUDENT AND PREPARE FOR AN A LEVEL IN POLITICS.***

## Preparing for A Level Politics



At Ridgewood Sixth Form we follow the Edexcel A level in Politics (2017). You will study and be examined in three different components:

**Component One:** UK Politics and Core Ideologies

**Component Two:** UK Government and Anarchism

**Component Three:** Government and Politics of the USA

We have outlined each component for you below. This will support you to start doing some research and reading around the topics that you will cover during the two-year course.

If you want a starting point, in the September of Year 12 we look at what happened in the 1979, 1997, 2010 and 2019 Elections.

<b>Component One: UK Politics</b>	<b>Component Two: UK Government</b>	<b>Component Three: Comparative Politics (USA)</b>
<p><b>This section explores the nature of politics and how people engage in the political process in the UK.</b></p> <p>Students will investigate in detail how people and politics interact. They will explore the emergence and development of the UK's democratic system and the similarities, differences, connections and parallels between direct and indirect democracy. They will focus on the role and scope of political parties that are so central to contemporary politics, including the significance of the manifestos they publish at election time and their relevance to the mandate of the resulting government. This section allows students to understand the individual in the political process and their relationship with the state and their fellow citizens. Students will examine how electoral systems in the UK operate and how individuals and groups are influenced in their voting behaviour and political actions. This component will further examine the role of the media in contemporary politics. It will also give students an understanding of voting patterns and voting behaviour.</p>	<p><b>Politics is ultimately about people, but most political decisions are made by a branch of government whose roles and powers are determined by a set of rules: the constitution.</b></p> <p>This component is fundamental to understanding the nature of UK government, since it enables students to understand where, how and by whom political decisions are made. The component also gives students a base of comparison to other political systems. The component introduces students to the set of rules governing politics in the UK, the UK constitution, which is different in nature from most of the rest of the world. It further introduces students to the specific roles and powers of the different major branches of the government – legislative, executive, and judiciary – as well as the relationships and balance of power between them and considers where sovereignty now lies within this system. Students will explore the following key themes: the relative powers of the different branches of UK government; the extent to which the constitution has changed in recent years; the desirability of further change; and the current location of sovereignty within the UK political system.</p>	<p><b>The USA has been considered by some to be a 'beacon of democracy'. As a world power, understanding the nature of US democracy, and the debates surrounding it, is crucial given the considerable impact that the USA has on UK, European and global politics.</b></p> <p>Students will explore the US Constitution and the arguments surrounding this guiding document of US democracy. In learning about the key institutions of government in the USA and analysing the manner in which they achieve this power and exercise it over their citizens, students will judge ultimately whether 'liberty and justice for all' has been achieved in the USA. Students will be expected to highlight the debates on the nature of democracy in the USA and evaluate the extent to which it remains an issue. The impact of the US government on the world beyond its borders is increasingly a feature of international politics. Students will begin to engage with this interaction by comparing and contrasting politics and institutions in the US with those in the UK. This will develop a wider understanding of politics as a discipline, underpinned by the theoretical concepts of comparative politics.</p>

The following link will take you to the A level Politics specification on the Edexcel website where you can explore the course in more detail:

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

## Developing as a Political Student

The students who achieve the best results in the A level Politics course ensure they are knowledgeable about current political events, issues and beliefs.

You can use the reading material, podcasts, video links and useful websites below to do that, and gain other valuable background information.

Reading Material	Podcasts	Online Video Links	Useful Websites
<p><b>These books are relevant for Component One:</b></p> <p><i>Essentials of UK Politics</i> by Andrew Haywood</p> <p><i>UK Government and Politics</i> by Neil McNaughton</p> <p><b>These books are relevant for Component Two:</b></p> <p><i>Essentials of Political Ideas: For A Level</i> by Andrew Haywood</p> <p><i>The Blunders of Our Governments</i> by Anthony King and Ivor Crewe</p> <p><b>These books are relevant for Component Three:</b></p> <p><i>American Politics and Society</i> by David McKay</p> <p><i>Governing America: The Politics of a Divided Democracy</i> by Robert Singh</p> <p><i>US Government and Politics Annual Update</i> by Anthony Bennett</p>	<p><b>The BBC Politics Podcast</b>– A regular podcast which reviews the important issues of the day.</p> <p><b>Stitcher Podcast</b> – This podcast focuses on the key issues which are studied during the A level course and is produced for a student audience.</p> <p><b>The Westminster Hour</b> – The “Big Beasts” of politics (past and present) are interviewed in this 60-minute podcast.</p> <p><b>Beyond Westminster</b> – This podcast looks at how decisions made in Parliament affect the rest of the country. The podcast also looks at the state of affairs in the UK’s regions.</p> <p><b>Tales from the Lobby Podcast</b> – This new podcast speaks to serving politicians and Civil Servants about the mechanics of politics. It is often a more light-hearted listen than other podcasts.</p>	<p><b>The Cameron Years</b> (<i>BBC iPlayer</i>) – Drawing on exclusive interviews with the former PM, this series explores his leadership, the events leading to the EU referendum and his impact on our political landscape.</p> <p><b>Taking Control: The Dominic Cummings Story</b> (<i>BBC iPlayer</i>)– To some he is an evil genius; to others he is a master strategist. This film examines his role in Brexit and beyond.</p> <p><b>The Invention of Boris Johnson</b> (<i>on 4oD and All4</i>)– This documentary builds a picture of how Boris Johnson became PM.</p> <p><b>Brexit the Uncivil War</b> (<i>on 4oD and Netflix</i>) – This drama looks at the trials and tribulations of the 2016 Brexit referendum campaigns.</p> <p><b>Trump’s War on the Border</b> (<i>on 4oD</i>)– This film gives an insight into life on the US-Mexican border as Trump pursues his campaign promise to build a wall.</p> <p><b>Angry, White and American</b> (<i>on 4oD</i>) – The interviewer travels across the US to find out why Donald Trump resonates with so many people.</p>	<p>All of the day’s political stories in one place: <a href="http://www.politicshome.com">www.politicshome.com</a></p> <p>Political news from a more liberal perspective: <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/politics">https://www.theguardian.com/politics</a></p> <p>Political news from a more conservative perspective: <a href="https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/">https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/</a></p> <p>Research-based blog, which analyses current political problems from a range of A level topics: <a href="https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/">https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/</a></p> <p>Breaking US news and analysis: <a href="https://www.politico.com/">https://www.politico.com/</a></p> <p>Facts and analysis about US Politics: <a href="http://www.rollcall.com/">http://www.rollcall.com/</a></p>

The list above is certainly not exhaustive, so if you are interested in learning more, you could do your own research and explore more.