



Introduction to A Level Politics



Birchwood High School

2022



Specification

Exam Board: **Edexcel**

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

This is a linear course which means you will study the full A Level Specification over Year 12 and 13 and then sit the three A Level exams at the end of Year 13.

All final exams are of equal weighting.

Component 1 (2 hours)

UK Politics

1. Political participation: democracy & participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media
2. Core political ideas: conservatism, liberalism, socialism



Component 2 (2 hours)

UK Government

1. UK Government: constitution, parliament, Prime Minister & executive, relationships between the branches
2. Non-core political idea: nationalism



Component 3 (2 hours)

Comparative Politics

Global Politics:
Sovereignty and globalisation, global governance: political and economic, global governance: human rights and environmental, power and developments, regionalism and the European Union, comparative theories





Summer Tasks and Getting organised

In practical terms, you will need a few things:-

1. Three files for Year 12 and into Yr13 (one for UK Politics, one for UK Government, one for Political Ideas). For Year 13 you will need one file for the Global Politics unit.
2. Several dividers for each folder.
3. Plastic wallets for sheets that cannot (or that you do not want to) hole-punch
4. Packs of lined paper

Over the summer, in preparation for studying A Level Politics, you should ensure you regularly (**at least** 3 times a week) watch the news and read newspapers (online editions are available, but paper copies are much more fun!). Different newspapers will give you different political views – can you work out the views of each of the big national daily papers?

The Economist and/or New Statesman are also great periodicals for this course – there are student subscriptions available. You may even wish to ask for a subscription as a birthday or Christmas pressie!!

Start a well organised scrap book of articles you come across to do with the following (make sure you read them thoroughly!). The exams require you to include relevant examples to support arguments to achieve the higher levels and this will give you a head start :-

- *Voting participation*
- *Electoral reform*
- *Changing Party policies*
- *Political parties and their leadership*
- *Pressure groups and protests*
- *Constitutional change*
- *The House of Common or the House of Lords*
- *Relationships between the Prime Minister and the Cabinet members*

There is so much going on at the moment, both nationally and globally, and it will be useful for elements of all three exam Components.

In essence, you need to keep up to date with current affairs so that you are able to become conversant with the world of government and politics. The more you know about what's going on around us every day the more you will be able to make links with, and understand, the role that government and politics play in your lives and the better your exam essays will be!

**Those exciting debates you have about the world
would not exist if there were no politics!**



Suggested reading and resources

There are some textbooks you may find useful in the library.

The textbook we will be using most in class in Year 12 is:

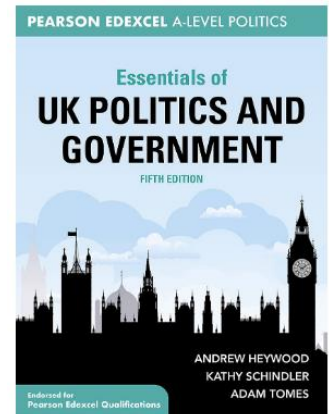
Essentials of UK Politics and Government: Pearson Edexcel A-Level (8 July 2021)

by Andrew Heywood, Kathy Schindler and Adam Tomes

** These are available on Bloomsbury.com/uk and Amazon (slightly cheaper).

There will be an opportunity to purchase this at the start of the academic year, but if you want to buy one ahead of time it can be found here:-

https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/1352012308/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_image_o06_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1



Just a flavour of the watching / listening available:

BBC 1 – Question Time

BBC 1 – The Politics Show

BBC 1 – Have I got News For You (satire) Repeats also available on Dave

BBC iPlayer - Yes Minister (satire)

- Blair & Brown: the New Labour Revolution (docu-series)

- Thatcher: A Very British Revolution (docu-series)

BBC Radio 4 – Today in Parliament

Netflix – The Thick of It (satire)

Netflix – Brexit: The Uncivil War

The A Level Politics Show – series of podcasts aimed at A Level Politics students

Bookmark these useful websites:

<http://peped.org/politicalinvestigations/>

<https://www.parliament.uk/>

<https://www.simplepolitics.co.uk/>

<https://www.tutor2u.net/politics>