

A Level Politics: Curriculum Intent

Vision: In an age of misinformation and polarisation, the Huntington politics curriculum will help students to form a well-balanced and highly informed understanding of the world in which they live.

Students will learn to scrutinise political processes and structures in detail. They will develop the skills of critical source evaluation. They will be able to make well evidenced comparisons between the political systems of the US and UK. Finally students will gain an understanding of a broad range of ideologies underpinning the study of politics.

Through regular discussion and debate, politics students at Huntington will be given the opportunity to develop, articulate and defend their political opinions. Alongside this they will be able to listen to, understand, and appreciate the different views of others. They will form the habit of always asking critical questions of the information they receive. Our curriculum and teaching aims to produce politically aware, informed and engaged citizens who understand and promote the importance of democracy.

<p>Politics Curriculum Intent: We aim to create the very best thinkers, analysts and communicators. The aim of the Politics curriculum is to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to be able to understand the ever changing world around them and to be able to communicate their analysis of current events. We want students to be able to navigate the best course for themselves through an understanding of power and influence in the 21st century and to appreciate how decisions are made that affect their lives. Our curriculum in Politics supports the ethos of the school as students are constantly challenged to think respectfully when engaging in debates in class. Kindness and tolerance are always exhibited in Politics lessons which allows students to express themselves in a confident manner. To complement the schemes of work students also engage in politics through a visit to the Houses of Parliament and meeting the local MP. These activities allow students to gain valuable insight into the subject that is only available through participatory experiences.</p>			
Unit / Module	Rationale	Unit / Module	Rationale
<p>1 <i>UK Politics Paper 1</i> Democracy & participation Term 1</p>	<p>In Year 12 we begin with UK Politics as this builds the foundation of the whole course and covers key concepts that will be compared with ideologies and the US topics. The unit is useful for assessing student's general and prior knowledge of politics. The students are introduced to vital concepts of democracy and participation. In these units students develop source analysis and essay writing skills.</p>	<p>1 <i>UK Government Paper 2</i> Constitution Term 1</p>	<p>The students begin to learn about the Constitution first as this is the foundation of UK Government and all following Government topics link back to the support and constraints of the constitution. This topic is also essential comparison with the Year 13 USA Constitution topic. The students are taught the concepts of authority, power and sovereignty. In UK Government students are taught to make synoptic links to UK Politics.</p>

<p>2 UK Politics Paper 1 Electoral systems</p> <p>Term 1</p>	<p>In the previous unit the students learnt about voter turnout and participation, so this unit builds on this knowledge by looking at the mechanisms of how elections work. This is a challenging unit as we students need some mathematical understanding to examine representation and effectiveness as we use terms such as majority. The unit links to UK Govt relations between branches as we look at electoral systems in other nations of the UK. This unit links to Year 13 Democracy and Participation.</p>	<p>2 UK Government Paper 2 Parliament</p> <p>Term 1</p>	<p>This unit links to the previous unit as students would have learnt that the Parliament is sovereign in the UK. Students will examine how parliament functions, makes laws and scrutinises. This topic connects with UK Politics units of democracy and participation and electoral systems. In UK Government students are taught to make synoptic links to UK Politics. This unit links directly to the Year 13 on Congress.</p>
<p>3 UK Politics Paper 1 Political parties</p> <p>Term 2</p>	<p>In the previous units the students learnt about how representatives are elected and why there may be a lack of participation in the UK democracy. In this unit the students learn about the role of political parties and the major and minor parties in the UK. It is important that this unit is taught separately from the ideologies units as some weaker students can confuse the ideas of parties with the ideologies of politics, for example conservatism. This unit links to Year 13 Democracy and Participation.</p>	<p>3 UK Government Paper 2 Prime Minister & cabinet</p> <p>Term 2</p>	<p>In the previous units, students learnt about the foundation of the UK political system and how parliament is sovereign. In this unit they will see how the Prime Minister is an executive in parliament. This unit will link to electoral systems and political parties as they will see how manifestos and electoral results can affect mandates. In UK Government students are taught to make synoptic links to UK Politics. This unit compares to the Year 13 unit on the President.</p>
<p>4 UK Politics Paper 1 Voting behaviour</p> <p>Term 2</p>	<p>The final unit on UK Politics links back to all the previous units as students examine how voters act in general elections. They will examine how voters are less driven by long term issues and more influenced in the short term in recent years. There are connections with Sociology as we examine how factors such as age, race, religion and class affect voting. This unit links to Year 13 Democracy and Participation.</p>	<p>4 UK Government Paper 2 Relations between branches</p> <p>Term 2</p>	<p>In the final unit on UK Government the students will connect the branches of the UK and how they work together. They will examine the PM, judiciary and devolved bodies. This unit is challenging as students will study how the EU operates which can be complex such as the European Court of Justice. The complexities of the process of leaving the EU is not on the specification. In UK Government students are taught to make synoptic links to UK Politics. This unit compares to the Year 13 unit on the Constitution as the students will be able to compare the devolution in the UK to the federalism in the USA.</p>
<p>Unit / Module</p>	<p>Rationale The ideologies units are conceptually the most complex of all the units studied in Year 12 and so the units are taught by both teachers and are left until the end of the year when students have developed their skills of analysis and their knowledge in politics. There is no source component in any of these units. Students are taught to make detailed comparisons. For each unit there are 5 key thinkers</p>		

	which they need to learn and apply to their analysis. The students can make comparative points learnt from this unit in Paper 2 UK Government essays and Paper 3 USA.
5 <i>UK Politics</i> <i>Paper 1</i> Liberalism Term 3	This unit is conceptually easier to understand than the other ideologies units so it is a useful starting point. The ideas of liberalism will seem familiar to the students as we will have discussed these in the UK constitution and political parties. Some of the key thinkers may have been learnt by students in other subjects such as History and Economics. For the exam, students not need to compare between ideologies but it is a key teaching strategy to embed understanding and to prevent students becoming confused. This unit will link when students study the USA Constitution as key liberal ideas such as 'limited government' are fundamental.
6 <i>UK Politics</i> <i>Paper 1</i> Conservatism Term 3	This next unit is more challenging as students can struggle to understand the differences between the strands of conservatism. Students also find it challenging as some weaker students try to compare the Conservative party with conservatism and struggle. For the exam, students not need to compare between ideologies but it is a key teaching strategy to embed understanding and to prevent students becoming confused. Key concepts that we study are pragmatism, organic society and tradition.
7 <i>UK Politics</i> <i>Paper 1</i> Socialism Term 3	The final UK politics ideologies unit is the most complex of the three core ideologies. Socialism has the most strands and has challenging concepts of collectivisation and equality. Students find analysing the Third Way challenging. Some students may be able to draw links between the international relations and their studies in History. For the exam, students not need to compare between ideologies but it is a key teaching strategy to embed understanding and to prevent students becoming confused.
8 <i>UK</i> <i>Government</i> <i>Paper 2</i> Anarchism Term 3	This unit is similar to the other ideologies units in skills but different in terms of knowledge. In this unit students will look at the ideas of anarchists and how it is not a cohesive ideology. They will explore the different strands of anarchism that exist and 5 key anarchist thinkers.

Unit / Module	Rationale
1 Comparative Paper 3 USA Constitution Term 4	Students begin studying the USA constitution as this document outlines the foundation of the three branches of government which students then study in further detail throughout the year. Key concepts of limited government and separation of powers are introduced which are necessary for their understanding of the course. The comparative theories section will encourage links between Paper 1 liberalism, Paper 2 UK Constitution and Relations between branches.
2 Comparative Paper 3 USA Democracy & participation Term 4	The next unit covers a large amount of material including elections, pressure groups and political parties. In the previous unit, students will have learnt about how the Founding Fathers intended the USA to be governed and this unit looks at how democracy functions in practise. This unit will fall in the Autumn term which is useful as USA elections are scheduled in November. Students will be encouraged to analyse across the USA course as the essay questions are synoptic in nature. The comparative theories section will encourage links between all of the Paper 1 UK Politics units, including democracy and participation, electoral systems, political parties and voting behaviour.
3 Comparative Paper 3 US Congress Term 5	This unit will return to the USA Constitution and then consider how the USA Congress may be seen by some as the 'weakest branch.' Students will have learnt about Congressional elections in the previous unit and so will be able to apply their knowledge to Congressional representation. Students will be encouraged to analyse across the USA course as the essay questions are synoptic in nature. The comparative theories section will encourage links between Paper 2 UK Parliament.
4 Comparative Paper 3 US Presidency Term 5	This unit will again return to the USA Constitution and then consider how the Presidency has evolved to become the powerful branch that it is today. Students will have studied Presidential elections in the Democracy unit and will be able to apply this knowledge. Students will also be able to connect how Congress interacts with the Presidency and scrutiny it can use including impeachment. Students will be encouraged to analyse across the USA course as the essay questions are synoptic in nature. The comparative theories section will encourage links between Paper 2 UK Prime Minister.
5 Comparative Paper 3 US Supreme Court & Civil Rights Term 5	In the final unit of the course we return to the USA constitution and the final of the three branches of government. The Supreme Court has a complex relationship with the other branches and so it seems right to conclude with this unit. The students will examine civil rights which is a challenging issue which requires knowledge of democracy and participation. Students will be encouraged to analyse across the USA course as the essay questions are synoptic in nature. The comparative theories section will encourage links between Paper 1 Democracy, Paper 2 Relations between branches and UK Constitution.

Assessment and Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be tested on their key vocabulary after every topic. They will be expected to act on advice if performing poorly on these tests. • Students will receive the equivalent of at least one full exam section per half-term per component. • Students will receive an additional mock examination in the allocated weeks on the whole school calendar. • All exam style work will be marked formatively. Students will be given time to reflect and improve on these pieces. Feedback will highlight both strengths and areas for improvement. • Group feedback may be used to deliver suggestions for improvement and to share good practice. Peer feedback will also be used to help students learn and will be structured by the class teacher. • Folders will be checked half-termly for maintenance of note-taking and organization. Students failing to organize their folders properly will be asked to provide evidence more frequently.
Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be set one-hour of additional work after each lesson. • Typically - extended learning tasks require students to: pre-read prior to the next lesson, consolidate or extend the lesson's learning. • Additionally – students will record political news stories relevant to the scheme of learning on Padlet • A further piece of non-examined homework will be set each half-term to encourage analytical skills – this will be formatively marked. • Completion of all homework notes will be checked. • Wherever possible – timed assessments will not be completed at home but under supervision in lesson time.
How can you support your child?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best thing you can do to support your child is talk to them about what is going on in the news. Watch Question Time with them, discuss the 6 o'clock news, and ask them how it links to what they have studied on the course. You can find the link to the spec below for a full explanation of all the topics. <p>https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/politics-2017.coursematerials.html#filterQuery=category:Pearson-UK:Category%2FSpecification-and-sample-assessments</p>