

Politics

Intent

The Politics department runs A Level Politics at Key Stage 5. The curriculum design is underpinned by the Edexcel A Level Politics specification. The curriculum is intended to introduce students to five areas of study: UK Politics, UK Government, US Politics, US Government and Ideologies (e.g. Conservatism; Liberalism). Schemes of work are comprehensive and engaging, usually with visible, audible and tangible resources. A Level Politics has considerable content and the department provides case study information sheets, relevant articles, exercise worksheets, and key term organisers for students, in addition to an excellent quality textbook which contains the entire course. We aim to create opportunities for all learners, irrespective of their starting points, to make at least good progress in the subject of Politics. The curriculum has been designed to provide students with the opportunity to enhance their own understanding of key areas of study through a range of teaching strategies. Schemes of work are also designed to prepare students for their future studies at university in mind. There is therefore a focus on independent research and essay writing skills (e.g. structure and accurate citations). Many of our Key Stage 5 Politics students are seeking a career in Politics (e.g. lobbyists; think tanks; legislative assistants) as well as related fields such as law enforcement or civil service.

Implementation

At Key Stage 5, students are allocated nine hours of teaching time a fortnight in Year 12 and eight hours a fortnight in Year 13. Students are given the opportunity to engage with a highly challenging course through the carefully planned and differentiated activities. Political theory debates are encouraged, particularly in the Ideologies module of the course where this is highly relevant. Students are encouraged to form good habits in keeping up with current events through the use of high quality political podcasts and periodicals. Formative assessment is used by teachers to gain a good understanding of how students are progressing and to provide feedback for students to improve in their learning. At the end of each unit of work summative assessment is used, where students complete essay style questions linked to the exam. Schemes of work are scheduled to ensure ample revision time for the two years of study at the end of the course. By the end of Key Stage 5, students have a mature knowledge and understanding of the five main areas of study and a comprehensive understanding of the main sub-disciplines within Political Science. This ensures that pupils are well prepared for further study of Politics as well as other disciplines at university.

Impact

Progress is routinely analysed at several points during the year following results from internal exams and home learning assessments. Formal internal exams take place three times a year and help to inform predicted grades. Individualised intervention programmes are used to support students not making expected progress. A full results analysis is carried out after all external exams and used to inform the departmental improvement plan. Politics complements the rest of the A Level curriculum well and there is a large overlap with subjects such as RF, History,

Sociology and Economics. Many of the A Level Politics students choose to take the subject at degree level.

Attributes of Politics students at the end of the A level course:

- A critical approach to ideas, demonstrating curiosity, independence of thought and the ability to appreciate a range of perspectives on political and governmental problems
- An appreciation of the underlying concepts and values in the democratic system and the principles behind political ideologies
- The ability to synthesise large amounts of information and build a coherent, persuasive argument
- An appreciation of the ethical implications of political ideas
- The ability to actively pursue a future career in Politics and related fields.