

Edexcel A Level Politics: Bridging the Gap



Welcome, year 11!. The pack is designed to give you a flavour of what A level Politics is all about. You will be introduced to some core political concepts and events to get you ready for sixth form. There is also the chance to do independent research, ready for September. The work in this pack will take a long time, so you can break it up. Don't feel you need to complete it all in one go!

Please complete the tasks and bring them with you for the first lesson in September.

If you have any questions, please do ask.

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A Level course outline		
Year 12: UK Politics	Year 12-13: Ideologies	Year 13: US Politics
UK Constitution, Parliament & Prime Minister	Liberalism	US Constitution, Congress & Presidency
UK Democracy	Conservatism	US Democracy
UK Parties	Socialism	US Parties
UK Elections & Voting	Nationalism	US Elections & Voting

Task One: What is Politics?

“Politics is the study of how a people, a nation or a state is governed.”

When most people think of politics, they think of people in offices, making deals and agreements that will affect millions of people – and it is. Politics is about power, about people, equality, war, conflict, debate, cooperation, freedom, money, etc. – it’s about the relationship between the state (the government) and its citizens, or the state and other states. It governs everything we can and will do in our lives.

One of the reasons politics is so exciting is that it changes every single day based on the actions of individuals. Less than 500 people (in a country of 330 million) decided the result of the 2000 presidential election that made George Bush president. Closer to home, if just one out of every 50 people who voted to leave the EU had voted differently, we wouldn’t have left. Each individual vote is vital, and yet 28% of all the people who could vote and registered to vote in that referendum didn’t. It would take just a small number of them to change the result.

Your first task is to help you understand what Politics is really all about. Use the internet to research and understand what the following key terms mean and create a short definition for each in your own words.

The most important thing in an A level is your understanding – so it’s not about having the “right” or “word-perfect” definition, it’s about you understanding what a concept means.

Term	Explanation
Power	
Authority	
Legitimacy	
Government	
Politics	
Civil society	
Executive	
Prime minister	
Cabinet	
Parliament	
House of Commons	
House of Lords	
Supreme Court (UK – not US!)	
Direct democracy	

Representative democracy	
Sovereignty	
Parliamentary sovereignty	
Referendum	
Constitutional monarchy	
Devolution	
Labour Party	
Conservative Party	
Liberal Democrats	

Task Two: Which party policies do you support?

Go to these links here for the 2019 manifesto pledges of the UK's three major parties

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50524262>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50501411>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election-2019-50459123>



- ➔ I would like you to choose a few policies of your choose and explain below why you support OR oppose that policy.
- ➔ **You must choose at least one policy from each manifesto** to discuss. If you want to extend yourself and consider more than three, go for it!

Make your notes in bullet points or a table and focus on:

- Party:
- Manifesto policy:
- Agree/disagree & why:

Task Three: Who represents us?

Research and create a factfile on a current MP. They can be in any political party, they might even serve in the Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet.

The following are off limits: Boris Johnson, Keir Starmer, Nadine Dorries and Mohammad Yasin (locals MP).

Aim to include following details about them in your factfile:

- **MP's name:**
- **Political party:**
- **Constituency** (the area they represent):
- **Areas they have a particular interest in:**
- **Points from their voting record:** (found here <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/> by clicking 'voting record')
- **Significant information:** *For example, Mhairi Black is the youngest MP or that Yvette Cooper is Chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee.*
- **Their official Parliament portrait**



Task Four: What is happening in Politics?

As a Politics student, you need to keep up to date with news and current affairs. Each week record at least one news article or report that has influenced UK Politics.

You can create a table like this to keep a running news log.

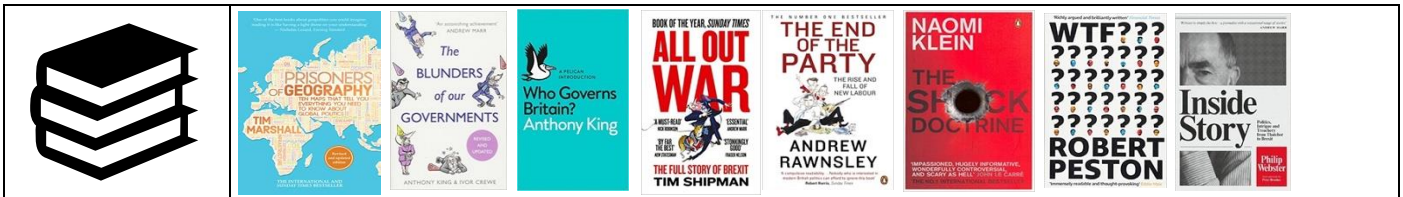
(It's tricky but try to avoid stories about Covid-19, even though it is dominating the news.)

Date	News source	Summary of news	Impact on UK Politics
02.07.22.	BBC news website	What happened? Why?	This has meant that...

GETTING READY FOR POLITICS A-LEVEL



The politics department would love for you to use this time over the coming weeks and months to get interested in Politics. Start to develop your interest in the subject and build your general political knowledge. The following are suggestions, they are not compulsory, but we would love for you to engage in any that you find interesting.



	<p>Stitcher – A-level politics podcast Beyond Westminster BBC politics podcasts The Westminster Hour Politics.co.uk podcasts</p>	<p>Guardian ‘politics weekly’ podcasts Going the way of the dodo 10 of the best podcasts Takes from the lobby Learn out loud podcasts</p>
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	<p>iPlayer Climate Change Playlist World economic forum videos Politics Live – BBC iPlayer The Andrew Marr Show The Politics Show</p>	<p>Question Time BBC Parliament Cabinet Confidential Globalisation if Good – Johan Norberg</p>
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If you would like to share what you've learnt, we'd love for you to produce a piece that we could share with other students.