



OXFORD
HIGH SCHOOL
GDST

A Level Politics

Sixth Form study options



A Level Politics

Why study Politics?

The Politics Department was established in 2000. It is always a popular subject with a very high proportion of the students going on to study Politics at university. The aim of this booklet is to introduce you to the subject, provide an outline of the course and ensure that, if you opt for it, you will be aware of what you will be expecting in Years 12 and 13.

From Mr Mike Gallacher (Head of Politics) and Ms Rebecca Edsall.

For those students interested in current affairs and changing international relations, Politics is a fascinating course to study. It deals with a range of topical subjects from pressure groups to political parties and from US Politics to political ideologies. As a subject it goes particularly well with studying Economics, History, Geography, Religious Studies and Psychology, though students tend to study it with almost every conceivable combination of subjects in the Sixth Form.

Recent Politics students have gone on to study Politics at university but also to study International Relations, Economics, Sociology, Law, Art Foundation, Philosophy and Development Studies. A good knowledge and understanding of political concepts and recent events is highly regarded by both the professions and the universities and therefore the study of Politics will be extremely useful. It does also give students an awareness of Politics that will be important as they become eligible to vote.

What general skills will I learn on the course?

The general skills you will learn from the course include:

- The ability to construct a logical argument.
- The ability to communicate both orally and in writing in a fluent and coherent manner.
- The ability to apply evidence from current political events in the support of theoretical interpretation.
- The capacity for sustained, relevant analysis in written answers.

What kind of student does this course suit?

This course will be of interest to you if:

- You enjoy debating politics and current affairs in general.
- You have an interest in the world around you.
- You enjoy reading quality newspapers or watching the news.
- You like doing a subject that affects your everyday life.
- You like doing a subject that offers the opportunity to progress to a career in politics or a related area.
- You want the chance to study a new subject. Politics gives you that opportunity, though you should be clear what you are undertaking.

What is studied?

In Years 12 and 13, students will study the following:

- Government of the UK to include: the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Parliament, the UK Supreme Court and the UK constitution.
- Political participation in the UK to include: democracy and participation, elections and voting and political parties.
- Political ideas to include: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and one other, from your choice of Multiculturalism, Feminism, Nationalism, Ecologism or Anarchism.
- Comparative government and politics of the USA to include: the US Constitution, Congress, the President, the Supreme Court, Democracy and participation and civil rights.



Resources

There are many sources of information available to you during the course. This includes textbooks:

Textbooks

- UK Government and Politics for AS/A Level.
- Political Ideas.
- US Government and Politics.
- Edexcel AS/A Level Politics.

The library is very well-stocked with up-to-date British and US books. It also contains back issues of Politics Review. Students can also subscribe to four current editions of this excellent A Level Politics journal for a price of about £15 per year.

Students are encouraged to subscribe to the Washington Post, which is useful for American Politics.

There is a huge amount of material on the internet and the following websites may be useful:

www.parliament.uk	www.news.bbc.co.uk
www.number-10.gov.uk	www.realclearpolitics.com
www.labour.org.uk	www.270towin.com
www.conservative-party.org.uk	www.democrats.org
www.libdems.org.uk	www.gop.com

Students are encouraged to read a quality newspaper daily as a hard copy or online from a list of The Times, The Telegraph, The Independent, The Guardian and The Financial Times. On a Sunday, The Sunday Times, The Observer and The Independent on Sunday are most relevant. There are many quality television and radio programmes that are worthwhile. These include, subject to change:

Television

Sunday with Laura Kuennsberg	BBC 1, 9am Sunday
Panorama	BBC
Dispatches	Channel 4
Question Time	BBC 1, 10:45pm Thursday
Newsnight	BBC 2, 10:30pm weeknights
Channel 4 News	Channel 4, 7pm
Have I Got News for You	BBC 1, 9pm Friday
The Parliament Channel	Sky
CNN	Sky

Radio

The Today Programme	BBC Radio 4, weekday mornings
Any Questions	BBC Radio 4, Friday 8pm/Saturday 1pm

Recent A Level Results:

2024	47%	A*
	100%	A* - B



Planned Politics visits abroad for 2025 onwards

Economics and Politics trip to Brussels: October 2026 (to be confirmed).

European Commission	Brussels
Council of Ministers	Brussels
European Parliament	Brussels
Parliamentarian	Brussels
Committee of the Regions	Brussels
European Economic and Social Committee	Brussels

This will also include planned Economics related-visits to: a brewery, a chocolate factory, the Coca Cola factory, as well as an escape room, a theme park and time for shopping and sightseeing.

Politics in school

Students regularly participate in Mock Elections on Open Day (which has become a high-profile feature). They have also organised a superb student-led and run conference on Women in Politics which included three prominent politicians. They have organised a US Foreign Policy conference which featured many leading academics.

They have organised conferences on the Middle East and North Africa and also on Ukraine. Students have entered Democracy in Crisis essay competitions organised by the UK Supreme Court after a highly enjoyable visit to the UK Supreme Court and to the House of Commons. There is also a weekly discussion group for students studying Politics lower down the school and in Sixth Form.

Quotes from former students

“Thank you for all of your inspirational teaching in Politics. Before coming to study it I hardly knew anything but now even my parents ask me over political matters.”

A former Politics student studying Politics at university.

“I honestly can say I never thought I could enjoy lessons so much.”

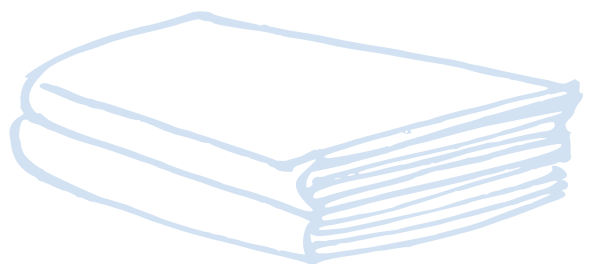
A former Politics student studying Politics at university.

“I cannot thank you enough for all the help and support you have given me. You have been an inspiring teacher with lessons we all look forward to.”

A former Politics student studying Natural Sciences at Cambridge.

“I hope to pursue politics in the future in some form or another and I probably would not have considered this without you firing up my interest.”

A former Politics student studying Modern Languages at Oxford.





At the National African American Museum of History and Culture on the Politics, Economics and RS visit to New York and Washington DC
October 2022

Politics at university

Oxford High School students have gone on to study the following Politics-based courses at university:

Human, Social, and Political Sciences	Cambridge	Philosophy, Politics, and Economics	Durham
Philosophy, Politics, and Economics	Oxford	European Social and Political Studies	University College, London
Politics	Leeds	Politics	Exeter
Politics	Durham	Politics and International Relations	Nottingham
Politics and History	Edinburgh	Politics	Edinburgh
Politics and International Relations	Manchester	Politics and Economics	Nottingham
Politics	London School of Economics	International Relations	Exeter
Politics and International Relations	Warwick	Politics and History	Manchester
Politics and History	Warwick	Politics and Economics	Bristol
Politics	Sheffield	Politics and International Relations	SOAS

Oxford High School
Belbroughton Road
Oxford, OX2 6XA

oxfordhigh.gdst.net



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