

Getting Started September 2007

**GCE Government
and Politics**

**Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Government and
Politics (8GP01)**

First examination 2009

Edexcel Advanced GCE in Government and Politics (9GP01)

First examination 2010

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Introduction

What is politics?

Politics exists because people disagree. They disagree about how they should live (moral questions), about who should get what (resource questions) and about who should make decisions (power questions).

As an activity, politics is the process through which people with different ideas, values, opinions and interests attempt to find a way of living together within the same society. Politics therefore seeks to establish the general rules under which we live and it is those rules that make orderly existence possible. As such, politics is the most basic and necessary of social activities — without orderly existence, society will degenerate into a civil war of each against all. For the Greek philosopher Aristotle, politics was the ‘master science’: that is, nothing less than the activity through which people try to improve their lives and create the ‘good society’.

Why study politics?

Who should study politics, and why? The short answer is that everyone should study politics — all members of society should have a better understanding of the general rules under which they live. For these rules to be effective, as many people as possible should actively participate in making them, upholding them and maybe, changing them. This is what is meant by ‘active citizenship’. A healthy society is a society in which many people participate in political activity and do so with insight and understanding.

However, certain students will undoubtedly find politics more exciting than others. What makes politics different as an academic subject is its emphasis on debate, discussion and argument. If politics exists because people disagree studying politics must mean studying how, why and when people disagree and taking an interest in these disagreements. What is more, we study these things not as neutral observers but as active participants. Facts (what is) and values (what should be) are so closely entwined in politics that it is often impossible to prise them apart.

Politics is therefore particularly likely to suit students who:

- have an interest in the world around them — ones who want to know more about the society they live in, how it works and how it could work
- enjoy debate, discussion and argument — ones who are comfortable with the fact that in politics there are no simple ‘rights’ or ‘wrongs’
- like to think for themselves — ones who want to develop their own views, rather than accept the views of others.

Why study the Edexcel GCE in Government and Politics?

The Edexcel GCE in Government and Politics specification has been revised in the light of the above ideas — politics is an exciting and important subject and this needs to be conveyed to students of the subject. This is why the revised specification contains a blend of the best existing features (which have made the Edexcel specification the leading Advanced GCE Government and Politics specification) and exciting new features.

Continuing features

- AS level units that provide an understanding of how the UK political system works and how it is linked to contemporary concerns and events.
- A broad choice of A2 'topics' — covering political issues in the UK and European Union, political ideologies, the politics of the USA and international/global politics.

New features

- A wider opportunity for students to debate and discuss issues in UK politics at AS level.
- A2 topics that have been revised to ensure that they are fresh and up-to-date.
- An approach to synopticity at A2 that encourages students to engage in debate, discussion and argument.
- The opportunity in Units 3 and 4 to either teach corresponding topics (eg Unit 3, Topic A and Unit 4, Topic A) or two different topics (eg Unit 3 Topic B, Unit 4 Topic D).

Specification at a glance**Unit 1: People and Politics**

Democracy and Political Participation
Party Policies and Ideas
Elections
Pressure Groups

AS

Unit 1 = 50% of AS
25% of total GCE
Available January and June
+
Unit 2 = 50% of AS
25% of total GCE
Available January and June

Unit 2: Governing the UK

The Constitution
Parliament
The Prime Minister and Cabinet
Judges and Civil Liberties

A2

Unit 3 = 50% of A2
25% of total GCE
Available June
+
Unit 4 = 50% of A2
25% of total GCE
Available June

Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis

ONE topic should be studied

Topic A: UK Political Issues

Economic Policy
Social Welfare, Health and Education
Law, Order and Criminal Justice
Environmental Policy

Topic B: Introducing Political Ideologies

Liberalism
Conservatism
Socialism
Anarchism

Topic C: Representative Processes in the USA

Elections and Voting
Political Parties
Pressure Groups
Racial and Ethnic Politics

Topic D: Structures of Global Politics

Approaches to Global Politics
World Order
Global Governance
European Union and Regionalism

Unit 4: Extended Themes in Political Analysis

ONE topic should be studied

Topic A: EU Political Issues

Impact of the EU on the UK
European Integration
EU Institutions and their Relationships
Domestic Policy Issues

Topic B: Other Ideological Traditions

Nationalism
Feminism
Ecologism
Multiculturalism

Topic C: Governing the USA

The Constitution
Congress
Presidency
Supreme Court

Topic D: Global Political Issues

Conflict, War and Terrorism
Poverty and Development
Environmental Issues
Human Rights



Introduction to AS Units 1 and 2

The AS level aims to provide students with a general introduction to the study of politics by developing an understanding of political and governmental processes in the UK. It is divided into two units. *Unit 1: People and Politics* focuses on the mechanisms that link people to government. Its core themes are political participation, representation and democratic responsiveness. It would be helpful if students prepared by gaining a basic understanding of the nature of politics and an overview of the main features of the UK political system. The unit is divided into four main topic areas:

- The first topic area considers the nature of democracy, how democracy works in the UK, and ways in which democracy in the UK could be enhanced or strengthened.
- The second topic area examines the nature and role of political parties and in particular, considers the ideas, traditions and policies of the major UK parties.
- The third topic area looks at elections, focusing on the link between elections and democracy, the workings of the electoral systems used in the UK and the adequacy of these systems in delivering representational and effective government.
- The fourth topic area examines the extent to which pressure groups promote democracy, the power and influence of pressure groups and the distribution of power between and among pressure groups.

Unit 2: Governing the UK focuses on the main institutions of the central UK government. Its core themes are the distribution of policy-making power and the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the key bodies in carrying out their roles or functions. This unit is also divided into four topic areas:

- The first topic area considers the nature of the UK constitution, its main strengths and weaknesses, and recent and proposed reforms to the constitution.
- The second topic area examines the structure, composition and powers of Parliament, the effectiveness and relevance of Parliament, and recent and proposed parliamentary reforms.
- The third topic area looks at the role of the Prime Minister and other executive institutions, notably the cabinet, and the distribution of power within the executive branch, especially the extent of prime ministerial power.
- The fourth topic area examines the role of the judiciary, the issues of judicial independence and neutrality, and the extent to which judges can and do uphold civil liberties.

A strong emphasis is placed throughout the AS level on up-to-date knowledge and understanding. Students should be encouraged to follow current affairs and make sense of UK political developments during their period of study. However, their understanding should be critical, analysing and evaluating the adequacy of political arrangements in the UK, focusing not merely on how the system operates but also on how it should operate. In so doing, students should remember that there are no simple right or wrong answers to the 'bigger questions' in government and politics. Students should thus develop their skills of argument and debate, being able to defend a particular viewpoint in the light of the available evidence and through an awareness of alternative viewpoints. These skills will be tested in particular by the (c) parts of the three-part structured questions and by the extended questions which will feature in the Unit 2 examination. This will also, in due course, help students to develop the synoptic skills which are required to demonstrate when answering essay questions in the A2 examinations.

Unit 1: People and Politics

Structure of examination

- *Written examination: 1 hour 20 minutes*
- *Answer two structured questions from a choice of four*
- *Answer the (a), (b) and (c) parts of each chosen question*
- *Structured questions are marked out of 40 – (a) = 5 marks; (b) = 10 marks; (c) = 25 marks*
- *Total marks for paper = 80 marks.*



Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Democracy and Political Participation – 15 hours

Introduction to Government and Politics:

- What is politics? Eg, politics and government; politics as debate; politics as power; discussion and conflict resolution.
- Why politics matters — eg active citizenship, value of political education, making democracy work.
- Power and politics — definitions of power, types of power (decision making, non-decision making, thought control).
- Power and authority — definitions of power, types of power (decision-making, non-decision making, thought control) definitions of authority; types of authority (traditional, charismatic, legal-rational).
- UK politics and government — an overview of the UK political system; introduction to its key features.

Democracy and Political Participation:

- Definition of democracy — key principles: political equality, political participation, public control; differences between direct and representative democracy.
- Nature of direct democracy — principles and features, eg direct popular participation; Athenian democracy; referendums.
- Nature of representative democracy — principles and features (link between representation and democracy, liberal democracy etc).
- Advantages of direct democracy — eg freedom, participation, personal development.
- Advantages of representative democracy — eg practicable, expertise, stability.
- Nature and features of UK democratic system — eg democratic franchise, electoral democracy, party competition, parliamentary democracy (advantages and disadvantages), devolved assemblies.
- Democratic deficit in the UK — eg non-elected posts, electoral system, 'participation crisis', ineffectiveness of Parliament, European Parliament.
- Enhancing democracy — referendums (when/why used, advantages and disadvantages); other reforms (eg compulsory voting, fixed-term elections, e-democracy).

Party Policies and Ideas – 15 hours

- Definition of political party — distinguish from and identify overlaps with pressure groups; differences between major and minor parties (eg Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats and nationalist parties).
- Functions of political parties — eg representation, goal formation, political recruitment, organisation of government.
- Ideological tradition of Labour Party — socialism; Keynesian social democracy; Blairism and modernisation; beyond Blairism?
- Ideological tradition of Conservative Party — Conservatism; One Nationism; Thatcherism; beyond Thatcherism?
- Ideological tradition of the Liberal Democrats — modern liberalism; constitutionalism; pro-Europeanism.
- Ideological and policy differences within major parties.
- Ideological and policy similarities and differences between major parties (consensus and adversary politics).

Elections – 15 hours

- Definition of elections (distinguish from referendums).
- Functions of elections — eg formation of governments, representation of public opinion.
- Link between elections and democracy — how elections promote democracy; nature of electoral representation; electoral mandates and their viability.
- Features of the 'first-past-the-post' (FPTP), or simple plurality electoral system.
- Features of the other electoral systems used in the UK — additional member system (AMS); single transferable vote (STV); regional party list; supplementary vote; where and how they operate.
- Reasons for the wider use of proportional representation (PR) electoral systems since 1997.
- Impact of FPTP and PR on party representation and political systems generally (with reference to recent UK examples), emphasising the difference between majoritarian representation and proportional representation.
- Electoral reform debate — drawbacks of PR and strengths of FPTP including the tendency towards strong and stable government, mandate democracy and the containment of political extremism; drawbacks of FPTP and strengths of PR including fairer representation, more legitimate government and stronger emphasis on consensus building.

**Pressure Groups – 15 hours**

- Definition of pressure group – distinguish from and identify overlaps with political parties.
- Types of pressure group – sectional (interest) and promotional (cause) groups; 'insider' and 'outsider' groups.
- Pressure groups' methods and strategies – eg links to executive, lobbying, links to political parties, public opinion campaigns.
- Factors that influence the success or failure of groups – why are some groups more successful than others (eg economic power, financial strengths, membership base, public support)?
- Changing importance of pressure groups – why have they become more important (eg proliferation of groups, membership growth)?
- Relationship between pressure groups and democracy – functional representation; pluralism and pluralist democracy; elitism; criticisms of pressure groups.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours

Unit 2: Governing the UK

Structure of examination

- *Written examination: 1 hour 20 minutes*
- *Answer one stimulus question from a choice of two and one extended question from a choice of two*
- *Stimulus questions are divided into three parts – (a) = 5 marks; (b) = 10 marks; (c) = 25 total = 40 marks*
- *Extended questions are marked out of 40*
- *Total marks for paper = 80 marks.*

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
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The Constitution – 15 hours

- Definition of a constitution.
- Features of written/codified constitution — eg single source, two-tier legal system, entrenchment, judicial review.
- Features of unwritten/uncodified constitutions — eg variety of sources, flexibility.
- Sources of UK constitution — eg statute law, common law, conventions, works of constitutional authority, EU law and treaties.
- Location of sovereignty within UK system — eg nature of sovereignty, parliamentary sovereignty, implications of EU membership, 'pooled' sovereignty.
- Strengths of UK's uncodified constitution — eg organic and adaptable, responsiveness to public opinion.
- Drawbacks of uncodified constitution — eg elective dictatorship, weak checks and balances, weak protection for individual rights.
- Constitutional reform since 1997 — eg devolution, PR electoral systems, referendums.
- Evaluating past and possible future constitutional reforms.

**Parliament – 15 hours**

- Composition, role and powers of House of Commons.
- Composition, role and powers of House of Lords.
- Features of parliamentary government — eg fusion of powers, interlocking relationship between legislature and executive.
- Features of presidential government — semi-presidential system, eg separation of powers.
- Functions of Parliament — eg legitimation, representation, legislation, scrutiny/accountability.
- Mechanisms by which the executive is made accountable to Parliament, eg question time, select committees.
- Effectiveness of House of Commons — eg factors affecting effectiveness (party system, patronage, size of government majority).
- Effectiveness of House of Lords — eg factors affecting effectiveness (Acts of Parliament, lack of democratic credentials).
- Reforming the House of Commons — eg modernising reforms, select committees.
- Reforming the House of Lords — reform process to date; advantages and disadvantages of fully elected second chamber.

The Prime Minister and Cabinet – 15 hours

- Structure of executive branch of government — Prime Minister; Cabinet; junior ministers; civil service.
- Theories of executive power — cabinet government model; presidential government model; core executive model.
- Collective responsibility — theory and practice.
- Individual responsibility — theory and practice.
- Role of the Prime Minister — contrast with president; styles of prime ministerial leadership.
- Powers of the Prime Minister — eg patronage, party leadership, management of cabinet, influence over the mass media.
- The presidentialism thesis — basis of thesis; similarities and difference between prime ministers and presidents.
- Limitations of prime ministerial power — eg the role of the Cabinet, Parliament, party and mass media in checking prime ministerial power.
- Role and influence of the Cabinet — eg power base of individual ministers, departmental resources, party cohesion.

Judges and Civil Liberties – 15 hours

- Judges and the judiciary – eg role of judiciary (adjudicating the meaning of law, presiding over the courts, sitting on government bodies).
- Relationship between the UK judiciary, the European courts and EU law.
- The rule of law – eg features of the rule of law, benefits of rule-based governance.
- Principle of judicial independence and how it is maintained (including limitations)
- Principle of judicial neutrality and how it is maintained (including limitations).
- Influence of judges – eg relationship between judiciary and Parliament and the executive, uncodified constitutional structure and its implications, scope for judicial review.
- Civil liberties and individual rights in the UK.
- The Human Rights Act – implications for civil liberties, implications for judiciary.
- Strengthening civil liberties – reforms of the judiciary or court system, including the introduction of a supreme court and a constitutional bill of rights.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours



A2 Units 3 and 4

Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis

Structure of examination

- *Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes*
- *Answer three short-answer questions from a choice of five*
- *Answer one essay question from a choice of three*
- *Short answer questions are marked out of 15 (15 minutes each)*
- *Essay questions are marked out of 45 (45 minutes)*
- *Total marks for paper = 90 marks.*

Unit 3: Topic A, UK Political Issues

Overview

Unit 3, Topic A is designed to be a general review of the main areas of public policy, largely since 1979. Some knowledge of policy making before 1979 may be studied as deeper background but detailed knowledge before 1979 is certainly not required. In general, pre-1979 knowledge is likely to be useful when demonstrating basic principles (such as of the welfare state or of Keynesian economic management) or when illustrating the principal ways in which modern policies have developed.

More detailed knowledge of issues and policy is required for the post-1997 era, ie when New Labour came to power, though in some cases earlier landmark events may be significant, such as the Education Reform Act of 1988, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994, or the change in the index linking of the old age pension and the 'right to buy' policy in housing in the early 1980s. The various events and the level of detail which these issues should be studied is indicated in the clarification of content below. This is not a current affairs course, although it will be expected that students are as up to date as possible with developments in policy making and issues.

Where important developments have occurred between production of the examination and students sitting it, it is expected that students will modify responses accordingly. Students will be expected to have appropriate knowledge from throughout the recent historical period.

Some important policy areas are not included, notably defence and foreign policy and issues of race and exclusivity. A complete review of all UK political issues and policies would not be possible within the constraints of study and examination time. The topics chosen reflect some of the main areas of controversy in modern British politics. A factor in their selection has been the fact that they have been especially significant in terms of political conflict, especially inter-party politics.

Questions will be based largely upon the following main themes.

- Explanations and analysis of some issues which have caused political controversy. Such controversies might concern inter-party conflict or ideological differences. This will include the reasons why controversies have arisen as well as the nature of those controversies.
- Assessments of the degree to which there has been and/or is political consensus or conflict over certain issues.
- Evaluations of the degree to which parties and/or governments have achieved their stated objectives in a specific policy area.
- The degree to which the principles underpinning political issues have changed and been challenged in recent times.
- The nature of the political landscape and context within which policies have been developed and issues have been resolved.



Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Economic Policy – 15 hours

- **Economic management** – post-war Keynesian consensus and the emergence of neo-liberalism; the nature of government management of the economy, especially since 1979 (knowledge will need to be shown of the main changes in economic philosophy that occurred after the election of a Conservative government in that year); neo-liberal policies, the changed relationship between the state and the economy; the elevation of free markets to importance, the resultant changes in the distribution of income, conceptions of social justice, understanding of dependency culture and the partial withdrawal of government from interference in markets; the changes in policy occurring with the election of New Labour in 1997, the new economic objectives set at that time, assessment of the degree to which those objectives were met under Labour; alternative economic policies presented by Conservatives and Liberal Democrats since 1997, nature and degree of economic consensus (teachers will need to keep up to date with political developments).
- **Economic concepts** – understanding of the meaning of such terms as neo-liberalism, monetarism, free markets, disengagement interventionism and non-interventionism, supply side, Third Way, fiscal and monetary policy, income distribution, redistribution of income, public sector and private sector, labour markets (avoid too much economic theory); the political context within such concepts that have been applied since 1979.
- **Globalisation** – how issues of globalisation have influenced policy making in the UK; the impact of globalisation on the UK economy; main principles of the impact of EU membership and developments in the EU economy; international economic issues such as free trade, debt relief and economic development aid in relation to the UK.
- **Political context** – the influence of liberalism, conservatism and social democracy on economic policy as well as the changing policies of the main parties in relation to economic management.

Social Welfare, Health and Education – 15 hours

- **Welfare state** — knowledge of the principles of the welfare state as originally established (including housing and pensions); the ways in which these principles have been modified, abandoned or retained, mainly since 1979; an understanding of the main developments in welfare provision, such as private sector involvement, internal markets, target setting, inspection regimes and other initiatives introduced since 1979; knowledge of the main provisions of the welfare state, specifically health, education, pensions, housing and social security.
- **Health and education** — general knowledge of government policies on health and education after 1979, noting ideological conflict of the 1980s; more detailed knowledge of policies and changes since 1997 and the main controversies and conflicts that have emerged over health and education after 1988 (include private sector involvement, internal markets, target setting and performance criteria).
- **Political context** — knowledge of the main party positions on health, education and social security since 1979; an understanding of ideological positions on welfare policy, notably liberal, conservative and socialist attitudes; political conflicts over welfare policy, including health, education, pensions, housing and social security; knowledge of the changing ways in which welfare provision have been viewed by administrations since 1979.

Law, Order and Criminal Justice – 15 hours

- **Law and order policy** — the changing nature of law and order policy since 1979; concepts such as 'prison works', deterrence, rehabilitation, causes of crime, individual responsibility, fear of crime, youth offending, public order, public security; anti-terrorism policy and the debates surrounding it; the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994 and Third Way agenda on law and order after 1994; main Labour initiatives after 1997; Liberal Democrat and Conservative policies over law and order and the neo-Conservative agenda.
- **Crime and causes of crime** — assessment of the balance of public policy towards crime between dealing with crime and dealing with the causes of crime since 1994.
- **Criminal justice** — knowledge of the role of governments and the judiciary in the administration of justice; knowledge and understanding of conflicts between government and the judiciary over crime policy and law enforcement; disputes over measurement of crime (statistical data will be needed).
- **Political context** — an understanding of the changing party positions on law and order since 1979 with most detail since 1994; the ideological attitudes of liberals, conservatives and social democrats towards law, order and security.

Environmental Policy – 15 hours

- **Issues** — knowledge of the main environmental issues facing UK policy makers.
- **Policy** — understanding the policies of the main parties towards the environment including Liberal Democrat and Conservative positions; the conflicts between the parties as well as consensual issues; the development of environmental policy, mostly after 1997; assessment of success of policies since 1997.
- **Global issues** — the relationship of UK policy makers towards global environmental initiatives and issues; UK government involvement in European and global environmental conflicts and agreements; knowledge of main international agreements and British involvement.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours



Unit 3: Topic B, Political Ideologies

Overview

Unit 3, Topic B aims to provide students with an introduction to the study of political ideologies. Political ideology has been in the forefront of the development of politics since the time of the French Revolution, providing a framework of ideas, doctrines and theories that have inspired and guided political action of various kinds. Political ideologies have served to preserve existing systems of power, helped to modify or reform them, or incited revolutionary action to overthrow and remodel an established society.

All political ideologies have three basic features.

- They offer an account of the existing social order, usually in the form of a 'world view'.
- They advance a model of a desired future, a vision of the 'good society'.
- They explain how political change (if needed) can and should be brought about.

The ideologies that feature in Unit 3, Topic B (liberalism, conservatism, socialism and anarchism) all emerged out of the economic, social and political upheavals that brought the modern world into existence. They provide contrasting answers to questions about how industrial capitalist society should be organised. As such, they are ideologies that can be categorised on the basis of the left/right divide, reflecting differing attitudes to issues such as equality and economic organisation.

These issues not only distinguish the ideologies from one another but also reflect differences within each ideology; for example, the individualist and collectivist aspects of anarchism can be seen as an example of both extreme right-wing thinking and extreme left-wing thinking. Liberalism, conservatism and socialism are, moreover, 'core' ideologies in that they have helped to shape, and have to some extent become entwined with, other ideological traditions.

The questions that will be asked on Unit 3, Topic B broadly address four main themes:

- the distinctive features of each ideological tradition — the ideas, doctrines and theories that distinguish one ideology from all others
- relationships between and amongst political ideologies — the extent to which ideologies have influenced one another
- internal divisions within each ideology — the nature, extent and significance of disagreements within an ideology and thus between sub-traditions
- the changing nature of an ideological tradition — the process through which ideologies adapt and change over time in an attempt to remain politically relevant.

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Liberalism – 15 hours
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualism – individualism versus collectivism; methodological individualism and ethical individualism; egoistical individualism versus developmental individualism; implications for equality (foundational equality; formal equality; equality of opportunity); implications for the state (state threat to individual/individual responsibility/freedom, hence minimal state, but individualism can justify the state – social contract theory). • Freedom – link between individualism and freedom; link between reason and freedom; freedom ‘under the law’ rather than absolute freedom; ‘negative’ freedom (absence of external constraints) versus ‘positive’ freedom (personal growth/fulfilment); implications of ‘negative’ and ‘positive’ freedom for the state. • Classical liberalism – egoistical/atomistic individualism (natural rights theory, utilitarianism, pursuit of self-interest/pleasure etc); ‘negative’ freedom (freedom of choice, privacy, harm principle); minimal/‘nightwatchman’ state (necessary evil, maintenance of domestic order etc); economic liberalism (laissez-faire, self-regulating market etc); individual responsibility/self-help (moral and economic case for anti-welfarism). • Modern liberalism – developmental individualism (human flourishing, heightening of sensibilities, ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ pleasures, etc); ‘positive’ freedom (realisation of individual potential); enabling state (enlarges freedom, does not merely diminish it); social reform and welfare (equality of opportunity, freedom from social evils etc); economic management (state rectifies imbalances of capitalism, Keynesianism etc); tensions within modern liberalism (qualified endorsement of rolled-forward state – intervention can be ‘excessive’). • Limited government – corrupting nature of power (individualism plus power equals corruption); external/legal checks on government (constitutions, especially ‘written’ ones), bills of rights, rule of law etc); internal/institutional checks on government – fragmentation/dispersal of power creating checks and balances (separation of powers, parliamentary government, cabinet government, bicameralism, territorial divisions etc). • Liberalism and democracy – liberal arguments in favour of democracy (individualism implies political equality, franchise as protection against tyranny, political participation as means of personal development, constrains pressures of pluralist society); liberal arguments against democracy (democracy as collectivism, tyranny of the majority, political wisdom not equally distributed, democracy results in over-government and economic stultification).

**Conservatism – 15 hours**

- **Tradition** — conservative arguments in favour of tradition (natural law, accumulated wisdom of the past, stability and rootedness); New Right departures from traditionalism (neo-liberal radicalism based on reasoned analysis, reactionary tendencies); neo-conservatism and traditional values.
- **Human imperfection** — psychological imperfection (limited, dependent and security-seeking creatures, implications for tradition, authority etc); moral imperfection (base and non-rational urges and instincts, implications for law and order and sentencing policy); intellectually imperfect (world largely beyond human understanding, implications for reason, tradition).
- **Property** — property supported because: it provides security in an insecure/unstable world; it is the exteriorisation of individual personality; it breeds positive social values (eg respect for law); property traditionally viewed as a duty (to preserve for the benefit of future generations) but New Right advanced a liberal, rights-based justification.
- **Organic society** — the whole is more than a collection of its individual parts (clash between organicism (organic communitarianism) and individualism); duty and obligation as social cement; hierarchy (rejection of social equality as undesirable and impossible); importance of shared values and a common culture (fear of diversity and pluralism).
- **One nation conservatism** — Tory origins (neo-feudalism, tradition, hierarchy, organicism etc); reform is preferable to revolution (pragmatism, enlightened self-interest, qualified case for welfare); paternalism — duty as the price of privilege (noblesse oblige, the 'deserving' poor); 'middle way' stance (pragmatic rejection of free market and state control, cautious social democracy).
- **Liberal New Right** — classical liberal roots; free market economics (natural dynamism of market, anti-statism, monetarism, rejection of Keynesianism, privatisation, deregulation and tax cuts, supply-side economics, 'trickle-down'; atomistic individualism as basis for libertarianism (individual/property rights, individual responsibility/self-help, anti-welfarism — dependency culture, impact on taxation, welfare as legalised theft).
- **Conservative New Right** — roots in pre-Disraelian conservatism; restoration of order and authority (social and state authoritarianism — 'punishment works' etc); moral revivalism (anti-permissiveness, 'new' Puritanism, traditional/family/Christian values); resurgent nationalism (national patriotism as a source of security and stability, insularity and xenophobia).

Socialism – 15 hours

- **Collectivism** — social basis of human nature (common humanity); 'nurture' emphasised over 'nature' (implications for person/social development, utopianism etc); co-operation (moral and economic benefits); collectivism in practice (statism, common ownership, economic management, welfarism).
- **Equality** — socialist view of equality (equality of outcome/reward, social equality); divisions over desirable extent of equality (absolute versus relative social equality, common ownership versus redistribution); arguments in favour of social equality (social stability and cohesion, social justice, happiness and personal development — needs-based distribution).
- **Revolution versus evolution** — revolutionary socialism (theory of class state, rejection of bourgeois parliamentarianism); revolution as a modernisation project (pre-democratic origins, links to under-development, modernisation 'from above'); implications of revolutionary 'road' (violence/force as a political means etc); evolutionary socialism (state neutrality, interventionism as means of social change/reform); socialism and democracy (the inevitability of gradualism); implications of 'ballot-box' socialism (electoralism, 'catch-all' socialist parties, corruption of power/bourgeois state etc).
- **Marxism/communism** — historical materialism ('base/superstructure' analysis, scientific theory of history/society); dialectical change (change results from internal contradictions in society, 'laws' of history, historical inevitability); class analysis (class based on economic power, conflict as motor of history, surplus value, class consciousness); stages of history; collapse of capitalism (proletarian revolution); transition from capitalism to communism (dictatorship of proletariat, 'withering away' of state); fundamentalist socialism and politics of ownership (capitalism irredeemably corrupt — should be abolished and replaced, socialism qualitatively different from capitalism).
- **Social democracy** — revisionist Marxism (failure of Marx's predictions, resilience of capitalism); ethical socialism (absence of theoretical 'baggage'); socialist revisionism (socialism equals reformed/'humanised' capitalism); equality displaces common ownership (politics of social justice); pillars of social democracy (mixed economy, Keynesian economic management, welfare state).
- **Neo-revisionist social democracy** — retreat from social democracy (globalisation and the end of national Keynesianism, changing class structure and electoral appeal of Thatcherism, collapse of communism etc); Third Way — rejection of 'top-down' socialism/social democracy and market individualism, liberal communitarianism; Third Way value framework (opportunity, responsibility, community); Third Way world view (connectedness, consensus model of society, knowledge economy, 'asset-based egalitarianism'/meritocracy, 'workfare state', governing through culture); Third Way and socialism (modernised social democracy or post-socialism?).

**Anarchism – 15 hours**

- **Anti-statism** — moral dimension of anarchism (absolute freedom, political equality, personal autonomy); state as concentrated evil (absolute corruptibility of human nature); all states are evil (rejection of the proletarian state); government power cannot be tamed (constitutionalism and consent (liberal democracy) as tools used by ruling class to render masses quiescent).
- **Stateless society** — utopian themes in anarchism (absolute freedom can co-exist with social order/harmony, perfectibility of human nature); collectivist basis for spontaneous social harmony (nurture not nature, sociability and co-operation, role of common ownership); individualist basis for social harmony (individual rationality, self-regulating markets); rival views of future stateless society; rival views of future stateless society (collectivist versus individualist models, eg anarcho-communism versus anarcho-capitalism).
- **Political practice** — political failure of anarchism; rejection of conventional means of political activism (winning state power is corrupt and corrupting, opposition to hierarchical organisation, eg political parties); spontaneous revolution (popular thirst for freedom/autonomy, viability); terror/violence ('propaganda of the deed', revolutionary justice); direct action; moral example and gradualism.
- **Individualist anarchism** — roots in liberal individualism (parallels with classical liberalism, 'ultra-liberalism'), egoism (moral autonomy of individual); libertarianism (reconciling individualism with natural order — consistent Manchesterism); anarcho-capitalism (laissez-faire economics taken to its extreme, privatising the minimal state); differences between liberalism and anarchism (minimal statism versus statelessness, constitutional government versus anarchy).
- **Collectivist anarchism** — roots in socialist collectivism (human sociability, mutual aid, 'ultra-socialism'); self-management and decentralisation (direct/participatory democracy); mutualism (possessions as independence from the state, fair and equitable exchange); anarcho-syndicalism (revolutionary trade unionism); anarcho-communism (parallels with Marxism, class system and state as interlocking enemies); differences between anarchism and Marxism (over proletarianism, vanguardism, proletarian dictatorship, 'withering away' etc).

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours

Unit 3: Topic C, Representative Processes in the USA

Overview

The impact of 9/11 and the subsequent prominence of the USA in world affairs has generated enormous interest in the government and politics of the USA. However, there is a more enduring motivation for in-depth study of American politics. As the first country in the modern age, documented by history to have been set up according to a set of ideals/standards, its political system is held up by many, at home and abroad, as the model liberal democracy.

It is seen by admirers as providing liberty for Americans and the world's 'huddled masses, yearning to breathe free'¹. It is also seen as a framework for equality of opportunity — a genuine meritocracy in which everyone can develop their true potential if they try hard enough. From this perspective, the US system of government is seen as a 'beacon on the hill' to be widely emulated.

Yet as this political culture was being moulded, even as the Declaration of Independence was proclaiming that 'all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights', the USA permitted slavery and, later, legalised segregation. As a former slave, Frederick Douglass, put it: 'liberty and slavery — opposite as heaven and hell — are both in the Constitution'. With racism and oppression as much a feature of mainstream US politics as liberty and opportunity, the 'beacon on the hill' perspective has long been questioned. Furthermore, the mechanisms for holding those in power to account, such as elections, have been criticised for becoming tools for the already powerful to reinforce their political, social and economic dominance.

The debate on the application of American political values domestically and abroad is likely to impinge on the professional life of today's students regardless of the path they choose. This topic provides them with the tools to be informed participants.

There are four topic areas in Unit 3, Topic C. Three of the topic areas consider the mechanisms that may be expected to ensure that power is fragmented, preventing any group of people from becoming politically dominant and using their power oppressively. The fourth topic area examines the debate on whether there is a constitutional and moral duty on political authorities to redress the impact of oppressive use of power in the past.

1 Emma Lazarus, 1889, from *The New Colossus*, a poem written for the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty.



Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Elections and Voting – 15 hours

Exploring issues related to concerns in the USA that elections do not fulfil their role of effectively holding those in power to account.

- **How the electoral system works** – understanding of different types of primaries/caucuses including invisible primaries, the national conventions, presidential debates and the electoral college (this may include congressional elections and major propositions/initiatives).
- **Concerns about the electoral system/initiatives to address these concerns** – incumbency advantage; redistricting; campaign finance; levels of participation.
- **The outcome of recent elections** – analysis of the factors shaping the outcome of the most recent election (including mid-terms); changing patterns of participation; the implications for the next election.

Political Parties – 15 hours

Exploring issues related to concerns that parties are not effective vehicles for ensuring that the concerns of all groups are properly considered in policy making, and that they promote the interests of a wealthy, influential minority.

- **What the parties stand for** – the evolution of the main political parties from 'umbrella' parties to increasingly ideological/partisan parties; analysis of the changes in the two main parties; the strands of opinion within each party and the balance of power between the strands.
- **Patterns of support for the main parties** – which groups of voters are reliable supporters for the two main parties and why; reasons why patterns of support have changed; which groups of voters 'float' and why.
- **The role of minor parties** – reasons why the minor parties have been unable to break the dominance of the Democrats and Republicans; the influence they have been able to exert despite a lack of electoral success.

Pressure Groups – 15 hours

Exploring issues related to concerns that, like political parties (and sometimes in conjunction with them), pressure groups are not effective vehicles for ensuring that the concerns of all groups are properly considered in policy making, and that they promote the interests of a wealthy, influential minority.

- **How and why pressure groups exploit the political landscape** — why pressure groups exist and why the US political system provides so many 'access points' for them to exert influence; why each of the federal branches of government offer different opportunities for pressure groups to advance their agendas and the different methods used to influence each branch.
- **The impact of pressure groups on the democratic system** — analysis of whether pressure groups enhance democracy by stimulating political participation, or damage democracy by providing excessive influence for some (mainly wealthy) groups at the expense of the common good measures taken to limit the influence of pressure groups and their effectiveness.

Racial and Ethnic Politics – 15 hours

Examining conflicting views on whether, after centuries of officially sanctioned racial discrimination, the USA is now a genuine meritocracy and debates surrounding strategies for promoting racial equality.

- **Why racial divisions have come to play such a major role in US politics** — awareness of the historical experience of racial and ethnic minorities ways in which and the extent to which they were denied the protections guaranteed by the constitution the continuing effects of these experiences including physical segregation and being locked into a cycle of poverty and deprivation.
- **Strategies for promoting racial equality** — analysis of the view that the government has a moral and constitutional responsibility to redress the consequences of past (and continuing) racial discrimination through affirmative action and/or reparations analysis of the view that racial inequality is best addressed through traditional American values of self-reliance and taking advantage of opportunities provided by the free market; supporting these viewpoints with evidence of continuing or diminishing racial divisions; the stance of the main parties on these issues; the work of pressure groups to set the political agenda on racial issues and build coalitions to advance their viewpoint.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours



Unit 3: Topic D, Structures of Global Politics

Overview

This topic aims to provide students with an introduction to and overview of contemporary global politics. The title *Global Politics* has been chosen rather than *International Politics* or *International Relations* because it reflects the contemporary post Cold War world which is distinct to earlier periods, largely because of globalisation. Current interests tend to be moving towards global politics and political patterns, rather than just between single nation states. Non-state actors, such as terrorist groups, human rights groups and transnational corporations, are becoming increasingly important in global politics, making the term 'international' seem too restrictive for this topic.

By taking this topic, students will gain an understanding of politics on a global scale. They will study the interaction of nation states and non-state actors. They will understand the importance of power, of how power is used, and of political structures and organisations developed to promote peaceful co-operation and prevent the escalation of disputes into military conflict.

Examination questions that will be asked about Unit 3, Topic D broadly address the following themes:

- state sovereignty and the relationships between nation states, IGOs (intergovernmental organisations) and NGOs (non-governmental organisations)
- the role, development and operation of global (such as the United Nations) and regional (such as the EU) organisations.

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues raised in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Approaches to Global Politics – 15 hours

- **Sovereignty** — the fundamental characteristic of a nation state is sovereignty. Sovereignty implies that not only do states enjoy ultimate authority within their territory, and so have supreme decision making and enforcement powers, they also enjoy legal equality with other nation states. Thus sovereign states do not recognise the authority of any supposedly supreme international body.
- **Theories** — for centuries, political theorists have attempted to explain the origins of international conflict. Since Machiavelli, political realism has dominated policy makers and academics alike. Realists believe that politics is a constant struggle for power and nation states operate to serve their own national interests. Realists also believe that political struggle between humans and international conflicts between nation states are inevitable as they inevitably seek to gain more power and influence. Realists argue that state sovereignty ensures that the global system is anarchical. Thus states cannot rely on organisations such as the UN or concepts such as international law because powerful states will either ignore bodies such as the World Court or seek to use their power to influence the workings of the UN etc. In contrast, liberalism stresses that governments, not people, cause war. As democracies promote ‘government of the people, by the people, for the people’, it is argued that peace can only be secured if democracy is spread throughout the world. Moreover, free trade will ensure mutually compatible aims of economic growth and prosperity and states will not wish to make war because economic growth, harmony and peace ensure that the national interest is served. If disputes do occur, international law and legal bodies will enable disputes to be settled without military conflict. Finally, collective security will ensure that aggressive states will find the cost of war to be too great, with the prospect of victory too small, and so military conflicts will be avoided.
- **Globalisation** — the increasing interconnectedness of states and societies and a multifaceted concept involving economics, culture, sociology and communications. As well as being aware of the different facets of globalisation, students will also examine the implications of globalisation for the nation state and the traditional state-centric global system.



World Order – 15 hours

- **Power** — the importance of power (hard and soft) in the global system. Concepts such as 'superpower' should be understood as well as an awareness of existing and future/former superpowers. Analysis of the role of balance of power in maintaining global security is also necessary.
- **Polarity** — multipolarity, bipolarity and unipolarity. Awareness of the impact of polarity on global security with examples is fundamental to an understanding of polarity, as well as analysis of the post-Cold War global system and US hegemony.
- **Nationalism** — the concept that the nation state is the ultimate base for political loyalty and that nations should be independent and self-governing.

Global Governance – 15 hours

- **International organisations** — knowledge of the origins, development and role of the major global institutions from 1945, including the United Nations, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organization (WTO), North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the Group of Eight (G8).
- **Intergovernmentalism** — this refers to a structure of IGO where state sovereignty is protected as decisions are made by the heads of member states. The Council of the European Union (known informally as the Council of Ministers) is an intergovernmental body for this reason. Intergovernmentalists prefer a confederal structure because it is state-centric. However, an underlying principle of IGOs, that they are governed by the states that join them, means that they rarely are able to rise above the rivalries and competition between member states.
- **Supranationalism** — the term 'supranational' refers to laws or institutions that are above the state. For example, the power and authority of the European Union (EU) is not confined to a single state but to all 27 member states. Supranationalism therefore refers to decision-making bodies that override the sovereign authority of individual member states. Supranationalism is part of a process of international relations in which institutions formally recognise the process of closer integration. It is controversial because it entails the erosion of the traditional bastion of state sovereignty.

European Union and Regionalism – 15 hours

- **European Union** — knowledge of the origins and development of the European Economic Community (EEC)/European Community (EC)/European Union (EU) and specifically of economic, monetary and political union. EU enlargement and the 'widening versus deepening' debate, together with the significance of the EU as an international body, are important topics.
- **Regionalisation** — knowledge of other regional bodies and the relevance of regionalism in global politics, eg the EU, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR), the Australia–New Zealand Closer Economic Trade Relations Agreement, and so on. Currently only one WTO member, Mongolia, is not party to a regional trade agreement. The surge in these regional agreements has continued unabated since the early 1990s. Of specific importance is whether regional organisations are a necessary response to globalisation and the subsequent threat to state sovereignty, and whether regionalisation helps or hinders the global trade system.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours

Unit 4: Extended Themes in Political Analysis

Structure of examination

- *Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes*
- *Answer three short-answer questions from a choice of five*
- *Answer one essay question from a choice of three*
- *Short answer questions are marked out of 15 (15 minutes each)*
- *Essay questions are marked out of 45 (45 minutes)*
- *Total marks for paper = 90 marks.*

Unit 4: Topic A, EU Political Issues

Overview

Since the end of the Second World War, the way European governments relate to and communicate with one another has been transformed. A fundamental priority was to establish lasting peace and prosperity, which led to the creation of the European Community (EC) – later renamed the European Union (EU) – in 1957. In the past 50 years, the EU has become the world's biggest economy with over 450 million people living under its jurisdiction. The pace of change, especially since the 1990s, has been staggering. This topic covers the origins, development and future prospects of the EU.

The bipolar power system collapsed with the end of the Cold War. It was replaced by a unipolar system where the US was acclaimed the only superpower. Today, it is expected that the future will be one of several power blocs: China, India, the EU etc. The forces of globalisation, interdependence and technology have altered international political and economic relationships and reduced the significance of national borders and the power of nation states. The post-modern concept of power has seen 'soft' power, on which the EU relies, alongside traditional military power. An overview of this development is essential background but detailed history before the 1990s is not required. It is essential to keep up to date with current developments such as areas of increased policy integration, the drafting of a European constitution, future enlargement, movement towards ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy), social cohesion etc.

The questions that will be asked on Unit 4, Topic A broadly address the following four main themes:

- the impact of the EU on the UK
- European integration
- EU institutions and their relationships
- domestic policy issues.



Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with 2 hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Impact of the EU on the UK – 15 hours

• Political parties

- **Labour** — divided opinion in the 1970s, the European Economic Community (EEC) was viewed by the majority as a 'capitalist club' against the aspirations of socialism. From 1974 to 1983, the official Labour Party line was withdrawal from the EU. Modernisers have taken an increasingly positive line, reappraising the UK's place in the global economy – that the EU was preferable to the harsh deregulation of Margaret Thatcher's free market ideals. Electoral defeat denied Labour progress in the UK, but the party began to see the merits of the EU, eg the Social Chapter, Tony Blair's 'to be at the centre of Europe' attitude.
- **Conservatives** — joined the EEC for pragmatic economic benefits; consequences of Single European Act and integration dividing the party; right-wing free market nationalists versus the pro-EU wing of the party; deep ideological convictions – especially on the single European currency (the Euro) – hence demand for a referendum before the Euro is adopted; David Cameron's background — anti-EU and dissatisfied with Conservative Members of the European Parliament in the European People's Party (EPP), but sees the importance of the EU in the future.
- **Liberal Democrats** — wholeheartedly pro-EU federalism and pro-single currency in the past, becoming less keen now but still remaining positive.
- **Nationalist parties** — see the viability of greater independence from Westminster within the EU.
- **United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)** — strongly in favour of withdrawal from the EU.
- **Public opinion** — public enthusiasm never deep but increasingly acceptant of membership; Eurobarometer 66 report; role of media in shaping public opinion; pro EU groups, eg Britain in Europe, less vocal than numerous and well-financed sceptic groups.
- **Pressure groups** — pressure groups go where power goes; many see the necessity of supplementing domestic lobbying in Europe; multi-foci for pressure: access Commission as it initiates policy and consults interest groups at planning stage, also committees of the European Parliament in Brussels, etc; umbrella groups like BusinessEurope: The Confederation of European Business (formerly known as The Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederation of Europe (UNICE)), the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union (COPA); global public interest groups active in the EU, eg Friends of the Earth, WWF (World Wildlife Fund).

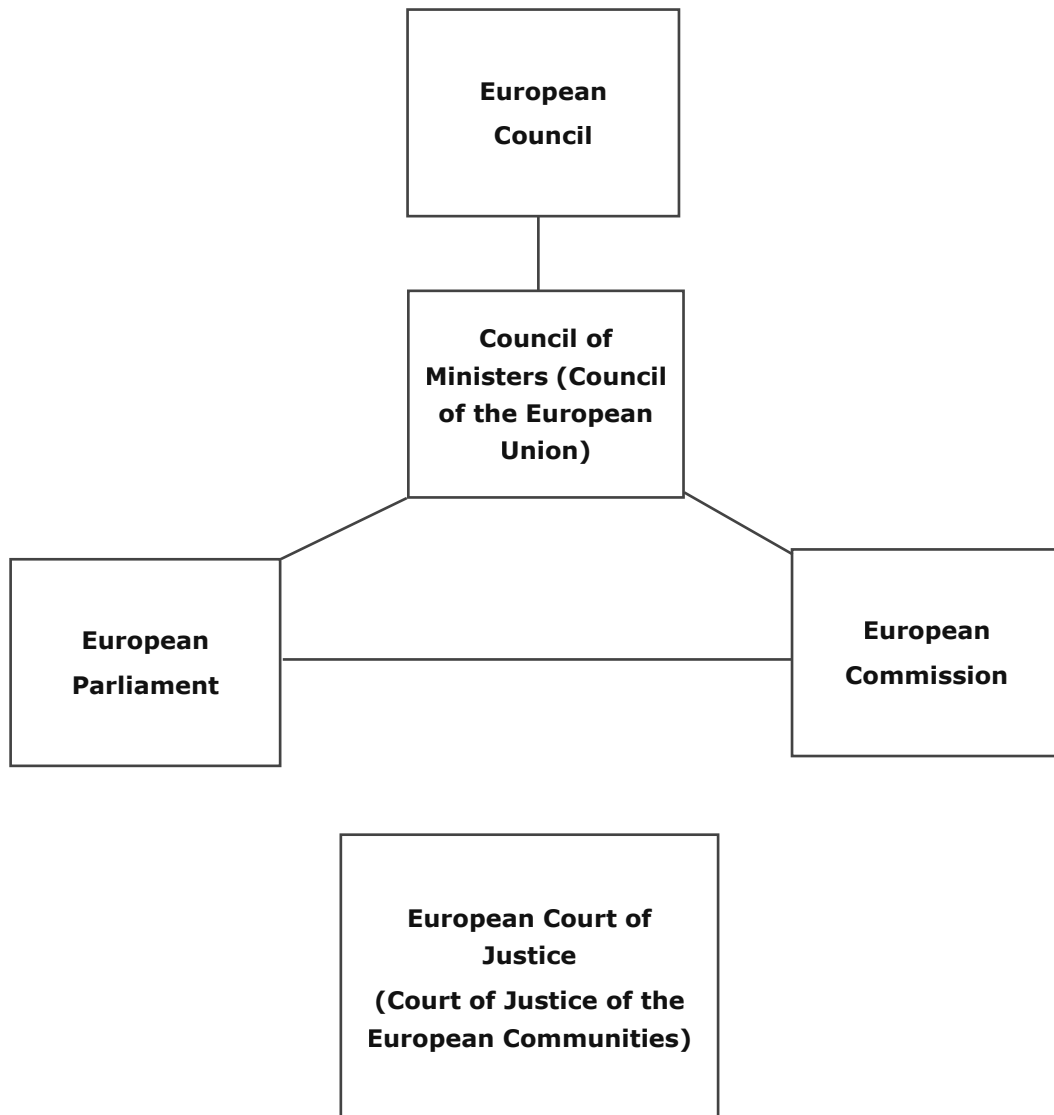
European integration — 15 hours

• Theories of integration

- **Neo-functionalism** — incrementalist, concept of spillover; initial interconnection of modern economies leads to pressure for further integration in other areas, eg central plank of Maastricht settlement leads to integration in Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) and European Social and Defence Policy (ESDP); economic decision making generates demand for political control and accountability at supranational level.
- **Intergovernmentalism** — the view that nation states hold key political power, pace and direction of integration controlled by state governments, defends sovereignty, preaches 'logic of diversity', subsidiarity.
- **Interdependency** — a perspective rather than a theory, interdependency views international interdependence as result of global factors – these control pace and direction of integration.
- **Key phases of integration** — goals and motives underlying the process; key treaties, eg Nice, the Single European Act (SEA); controversy due to diverse ambitions of member states; optimum level of integration; prediction of progress; relationship between integration and future enlargement; up-to-date developments such as the fate of the European Constitution.
- **Effects of integration on national sovereignty** — seen as positive (pooled sovereignty), eg vital for success in environmental protection, multinational company trade; negative view; loss of national control as states must accept EU jurisdiction; issue of widening or deepening.
- **Levels of governance:**
 - **Super state** — complete political integration (final goal of founders Jean Monnet and Robert Schumann).
 - **Supranational** — Euro federal would imply most power given to central authority, eg foreign policy; individual states downgraded to less important functions, eg transport.
 - **National** — power centre centred on member states; intergovernmental.
 - **Regional/local.**

EU Institutions and their Relationships – 15 hours

The diagram below shows the links between the five main EU institutions.



Study of these institutions focuses on the relationships between them and how they fit into the policy process.

- **The European Council** — made up of the heads of state/government of member states and the President of the European Commission.
- **Role** — an intergovernmental institution making broad policy decisions to direct progress of EU. Since the acceptance of the subsidiarity principle at Maastricht, the European Council remains the most powerful of all EU institutions.
- **Council of Ministers** — formally known as the Council of the European Union, members of this institution are accountable to their own nation but not to Europe as a whole. Economic and finance ministers attend the Economic and Financial Affairs Council of the European Union (ECOFIN) and foreign ministers attend the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC).
- **Role** — an intergovernmental institution that makes final decisions on proposals from the European Commission – since co-decision procedure increasingly requires the approval of European Parliament. Operates on consensus and controversially uses qualified majority voting (QMV) when necessary.
- **European Parliament (EP)** — accountable to European voters as this is the only democratically elected EU institution.
- **Role** — originally a debating chamber, today an increasingly powerful body, it represents the interests of EU citizens. The EP cannot initiate legislation but via co-decision procedure it works with the Council of Ministers in accepting or rejecting proposed legislation. It operates via transnational party groups, eg the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the European People's Party (EPP).
- **European Commission** — nominated by member states, it is the crux of democratic deficit in EU.
- **Role** — a supranational institution, this is the only institution with the power to initiate legislation. It represents the EU interests to the world and develops proposals for new laws and policy.
- **European Court of Justice (Court of Justice of the European Communities)** — independent of governments (see diagram on page 28), judges of the ECJ are nominated by member states, with one judge per state.
- **Role** — a supranational institution, the ECJ ensures conformity of national and EU laws with treaties. A positive view of the ECJ is that it guarantees individual freedom and equality, whereas a negative view is that foreign judges are interfering in domestic affairs.
- **Other institutions** — Committee of the Regions (CoR), European Central Bank (ECB), European Court of Auditors; their authority and role and position in the power structure of the EU.

**Domestic Policy Issues – 15 hours**

- The policy process is complex and multi-dimensional. Some policies are heavily reliant on legal regulation, eg trade, agriculture, fisheries, while others have considerable reliance on interstate co-operation, eg social welfare, justice and home affairs (JHA).
- Economic issues dominated initially by goal of free-trade single market problems and progress; debate on policy reform where integration strong, eg Common Agriculture Policy, Common Fisheries Policy, extension of Eurozone.
- Reasons why, and how, when the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 extended to two outer pillars: the JHA and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).
- Extent to which economic integration demands reduction in social differences among Europeans.
- **European social models (ESMs)** – analysis of existing ESMs, eg Nordic, Central European, Anglo-Saxon, Mediterranean; catch up; desirability/feasibility of creating a single ESM; paradox in balancing ESMs and social justice.
- **Lisbon Agenda** – aim to cope with challenge of global economy, employment insecurity (20 million unemployed), climate change; help the EU become competitive in knowledge based industries; elites in unanimous agreement but problems in implementation – little progress.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours

Unit 4: Topic B, Other Ideological Traditions

Overview

The ideologies that are addressed in Unit 4, Topic B (nationalism, feminism, ecologism and multiculturalism) have each, in their different ways, extended ideological debate and shifted political argument in new and sometimes challenging directions. Although nationalism has been a major political ideology since the early 19th century, feminism, ecologism and multiculturalism have gained growing prominence since the late 20th century, albeit sometimes drawing on many earlier ideas and theories.

The questions that will be asked on Unit 4, Topic B broadly address the following four main themes.

- The distinctive features of each ideological tradition — the ideas, doctrines and theories that distinguish one ideology from all others.
- Relationships between and among political ideologies — the extent to which ideologies have influenced one another.
- Internal divisions within each ideology — the nature, extent and significance of disagreements within an ideology and between sub-traditions.
- The changing nature of an ideological tradition — the process through which ideologies adapt and change over time in an attempt to remain politically relevant.

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Nationalism — 15 hours

- **Nations** — cultural dimension of national identity (language, religion, traditions etc, organic community, distinction between nations and races); political dimension of national identity (aspiration to statehood, political community, distinction between nations and states); psychological dimension of national identity (national consciousness, patriotism as lower/weaker form of nationalism).
- **Liberal nationalism** — nations as moral entities (national rights, parallels between nations and individuals); national self-determination (intrinsic link between nationhood and statehood, national sovereignty); nation state ideal (only legitimate basis for political rule, recipe for international peace and order); liberal objections to nationalism (human rights override national sovereignty, fear of international state of nature – hence liberal internationalism).
- **Conservative nationalism** — national patriotism as basis for political order and stability (psychological tendency to be drawn to one's own people); nations as historical communities (common heritage, exclusiveness of national identities); insular and inward-looking nationalism (defence of organic unity/identity, implicit racialism/xenophobia).
- **Expansionist nationalism** — national chauvinism (national superiority/inferiority, explicit racialism); reactionary character (myths of past national greatness); militarism and aggression (conquest and expansion as proof of national greatness, social Darwinian view of international politics); parallels between expansionist nationalism and fascism (integral nationalism, 'palingenetic ultranationalism').
- **Anticolonial/postcolonial nationalism** — nationalism as a vehicle for political liberation and social development (colonialism as cause of under-development); Marxism–Leninism as guide for developing countries' nationalism movements (revolutionary 'road', national liberation as an overthrow of capitalist exploitation); postcolonial nationalism (anti–Westernism, religious fundamentalism); links to conservative nationalism.

Feminism – 15 hours

- **Sex and gender** — biological and social/cultural distinctions between men and women (gender is not destiny, possibility of sexual equality); patriarchy as systematic subordination of women (sexual politics, institutionalised gender oppression); the public/private divide (confinement to domestic/private sphere, exclusion from public/political life and therefore from power).
- **Patriarchy** — emphasis placed on gender divisions (society characterised by gender oppression); gender inequalities are rooted in, and reflect, sexual (and generation) division of labour/power within the family; radical feminists' view of patriarchy (systematic, institutionalised and pervasive oppression); liberal feminism and patriarchy (unequal access to public realm); socialist feminism and patriarchy (links between gender and class oppression).
- **Liberal feminism** — individualism as basis for gender equality (personhood, gender identity secondary); concern with the equal distribution of rights and entitlements (legal and political equality, no restructuring of society); equal access to the public realm (defence of the public/private divide, 'private woman' natural); reformist approach (gender imbalance can be overturned through constitutional and democratic pressure).
- **Socialist feminism** — economic basis of gender inequality (reserve army of labour, reproducing next generation of capitalist workers, training and incentivising male workers etc); orthodox Marxism (priority of class over gender, patriarchy is a consequence of private property, socialism/social revolution as a means of bringing about women's liberation); modern Marxism (patriarchy and capitalism as interlocking systems of oppression, patriarchy can survive the collapse of capitalism).
- **Radical feminism** — gender as the most politically significant of political divisions (priority over class, race etc); patriarchy as a systematic and pervasive form of oppression (operating in all spheres of society and all societies); 'the personal is the political' (gender oppression can be traced back to the structure of domestic/private life); sexual revolution (qualitative social change, not merely redistribution of rights or wealth); pro-woman feminism (essential differences between women and men, feminist separatism, political lesbianism).
- **Antifeminism** — an organic critique of feminism (sex is destiny – women are naturally designed for domestic, family-based role); traditionalist critique of feminism (patriarchal structures have been tried and tested by history); different but equal (women should be respected in terms of their natural role and position); social cohesion ('private' woman as source of nurturing and stability within the family).

**Ecologism – 15 hours**

- **Ecology** – the relationship between humankind and natural world; anthropocentrism and its implications for nature; ecology (ecosystems and natural equilibrium) and the implications of ecocentrism; differences between 'shallow' or humanist ecology and 'deep' ecology; holistic perspective on political understanding versus mechanistic world view; holistic theories (eastern religion, quantum mechanics, Gaia etc).
- **Sustainability** – industrialism and the ecological critique of industrial society (entropy, resource depletion, tragedy of the commons etc); economics of sustainability ('light' green economic thinking, government regulation, green taxes etc); radical ecological approaches ('dark' green solutions, anti growth, post-industrialism, back-to-nature movements etc).
- **Environmental ethics** – ecological critique of conventional ethical thinking; ecological ethical theories (future generations, animal rights and animal welfare, biocentric equality, intrinsic value of nature etc); post-materialism and ethical thinking; freedom as self-actualisation; environmental consciousness (no-self, being or having modes of living, etc).
- **Right-wing ecologisms** – Nazi 'blood and soil' doctrines; reactionary pastoralism; conservatism and conservations (social and natural traditionalism); green capitalism (market-based environmental solutions); limitations of right-wing ecologism.
- **Left-wing ecologisms** – ecosocialism; socialist pastoralism (small-scale, egalitarian craft communities etc); ecosocialist critique of market capitalism; conflict between green and red priorities; limitations of ecosocialism (record of communist states and social democracy etc); eco-anarchism; social ecology.
- **Ecofeminism** – ecofeminist critique of patriarchal society (males divorced from nature and natural instincts); essentialism feminist critique ('cultured' males and 'natural' females etc); limitations of ecofeminism.

Multiculturalism – 15 hours

- **Culture** – post-colonialism and the recognition of the legitimacy of non-Western political traditions; identity politics (communitarian roots of multiculturalism, cultural embeddedness); particularism (importance of factors such as ethnicity, religion and language in shaping personal and social identity).
- **Minority rights** – nature of minority/multicultural rights (special rights, positive discrimination etc); basis for minority rights (including compensation for present or past disadvantage); criticisms of minority rights (drawbacks of positive discrimination, implications for freedom of speech, tensions between group and individual rights).
- **Diversity** – nature and extent of diversity; compatibility between cultural diversity and political unity; benefits of diversity (for the individual and for society); cultural exchange and cultural mixing (implications for cultural embeddedness and social stability).
- **Liberal multiculturalism** – toleration and forbearance (restraint from imposing one's own views upon others); liberal justifications for toleration (individualism, individual freedom (guaranteed by toleration)); social progress (truth prevails in free market of ideas); features of liberal multiculturalism (intolerance of illiberal views, diversity confined to 'private' sphere); republican multiculturalism.
- **Pluralist multiculturalism** – pluralism as post-liberalism; value pluralism and its political implications; pluralist multiculturalism and liberation politics; pluralist multiculturalism as a critique of liberalism (tainted by colonialism, racialism etc); particularist multiculturalism.
- **Cosmopolitan multiculturalism** – cosmopolitanism and cultural diversity (global consciousnesses etc); endorsement of cultural mixing (multiple identities and hybridity); contrasts with liberal multiculturalism and pluralist multiculturalism.
- **Criticisms of multiculturalism** – universalist liberalist critique (threat to individuality, human rights etc); conservative critique (threat to national identity, social cohesion etc); feminist critique (threat to women's rights, etc); social reformist critique (threat to politics of redistribution, welfare etc).

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours



Unit 4: Topic C, Governing the USA

Overview

For the purpose of this scheme of work, this topic has been divided into five topic areas. The first topic area examines the Constitution of the USA. The scheme of work suggests that federalism is then examined as a device for fragmenting power that is considered by many Americans to be the greatest bastion against tyranny. The remaining three areas consider whether, the three branches of the federal government have been held in check in the ways envisaged by the founding fathers when they devised the constitutional framework.

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues addressed in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

The Constitution – 15 hours

This topic area examines the core principles that underpin the US political system, the key features of the constitution designed to ensure that these principles are realised, and viewpoints on the effectiveness of the constitution.

- **The principles of separation of powers and the system of checks and balances** – understanding why separation of powers and checks and balances are central to the founding father's constitutional design; how they operate; analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of these constitutional features.
- **Entrenched rights** – understanding why a bill of rights was added to the constitution; the rights that they protect; why the amendment process is so difficult; analysis of whether the constitution is too inflexible as a result.
- **Perspectives on the constitution** – analysis of the viewpoint that the constitution has (largely) protected liberty and promoted equality of opportunity as intended; analysis of the viewpoint that the constitution has never protected liberty for marginalised sections of the population and has not been robust enough when the country has been at war.

Federalism — 7.5 hours

This topic area examines the importance of federalism in the USA, the historical fluctuations in the relationship between the two tiers of government, the role of federalism in the 21st century, and whether it fulfils its original purposes.

- **The significance of federalism in the constitutional design** — understanding the fear, both historical and current, of the federal government accumulating too much power.
- **The growth of central power** — understanding the factors which led to the drift of power towards the centre, including the inability of the states to cope with domestic crisis (the Great Depression); the need for central control and co-ordination in wartime; the abuse of power by the states (Jim Crow); the political priorities of presidents, especially Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programme.
- **Attempts to redress the balance of power** — analysis of the range of strategies, categorised as New Federalism, to arrest and reverse the flow of power to the centre and the impact of the 'war on terror' on this process.

Congress — 15 hours

This topic examines the constitutional roles of the two houses of Congress, their roles in the system of checks and balances and how effectively they fulfil them.

- **The roles of the House of Representatives and the Senate** — understanding the constitutional powers and checks on the two houses.
- **The power centres in Congress** — understanding the structure of Congress, including the role of committees, chairmen and party leaders.
- **The legislative process** — understanding how laws are passed, including the obstacles that bills have to overcome and ways in which these obstacles may be overcome.
- **Scrutiny of the executive** — understanding of the ways in which either or both of the two houses scrutinise the executive branch (appointments, treaties, declaring war etc); analysis of the effectiveness of each form of scrutiny.
- **Representation** — understanding of how members of Congress promote the interests of constituents and analysis of their effectiveness.
- **The use of legislative power** — analysis of whether Congress uses its powers in ways which advance or undermine the principles embodied in the constitution.



Presidency — 7.5 hours

This topic examines the constitutional roles of the presidency, its role in the system of checks and balances, how effectively it fulfils them and whether the powers of the executive branch have been constrained in the ways intended by the founding fathers.

- **The roles of the executive branch** — understanding the constitutional powers and checks on the presidency, including the vice president.
- **The effectiveness of the checks and balances** — analysis of which checks on presidential power are effective and which are ineffective, explaining why. This may include analysis of why the presidency has periodically grown in power relative to the other branches of government ('imperial presidency') and periodically seen its power diminish in relative terms ('imperial presidency').
- **The use of executive power** — analysis of whether presidents use their powers in ways which advance or undermine the principles embodied in the constitution.

Supreme Court — 15 hours

This topic examines the constitutional role of the federal judiciary, its role in the system of checks and balances, and whether it has too much power for an unelected institution.

- **The changing role of the Supreme Court** — understanding the constitutional powers and checks on the judiciary; the impact of *Marbury v Madison* in establishing the power of judicial review.
- **The use of judicial power** — understanding the concepts of judicial activism and judicial restraint, how they are applied and the significance for US society; analysis of whether the use of judicial power advances or undermines the principles embodied in the constitution.
- **The appointment of federal judges** — understanding the appointment process and why the appointment of federal judges has become a political battleground.

Revision and examination practice — 15 hours

Unit 4: Topic D, Global Political Issues

Overview

In Unit 4, Topic D students will examine a range of current political issues such as conflicts, poverty, human rights and the environment. Global/international politics is currently one of the most increasingly popular university courses — it is expected that this topic will be equally popular with A2 students.

Questions that will be asked on Unit 4, Topic D broadly address the following two themes.

- Conflicts, particularly the so-called 'war on terror' and clash of civilisations, but also nationalist conflicts and the implications of such conflicts for the various international institutions and for the global political system.
- Significant global political issues such as global poverty, human rights and the environment.

Scheme of work and clarification of content

This scheme of work is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. Its purpose is to provide:

- further guidance on the content explanation found in the specification
- a possible structure for the delivery of the issues raised in this unit.

This scheme of work is based on a structure of 30 weeks of teaching with two hours 30 minutes of tuition per week for each unit.

Conflict, War and Terrorism – 15 hours

- **Conflicts** — knowledge of the key conflicts in the modern world and an awareness of the sources of global conflict with particular relation to concepts studied in Unit 3, Topic D.
- **Terrorism** — the 'clash of civilisations' and the 'war on terror'; conflicts linked to the 9/11 attacks and the alleged spread of Islamic extremism and global terrorism; the politics of fear and the use of terror to provoke changes in policy making.
- **Weapons of mass destruction (WMDs)** — nuclear proliferation and other WMDs; knowledge of international agreements and their effectiveness in controlling the proliferation of WMDs and nuclear weapons in particular; understanding of the threat of proliferation to global security as well as awareness of the role WMDs may have in promoting peace, eg mutually assured destruction (MAD) plans.

**Poverty and Development – 15 hours**

- **Poverty and the North South divide** — knowledge of the nature, causes and extent of global poverty; awareness of conflicting arguments in the poverty debate. Many regard the relationship between the global South and the North as still being one of dependency. The South is dependent on the North for foreign direct investment, manufactured goods, skills and technology, and developing countries are forced to sell primary products such as coffee or cocoa at prices which do not reflect their true value. International aid is given in order to obtain political concessions and financial institutions from the North provide highly conditional loans or use debt to force states to open their economies to trade and multinational firms.
- **Neocolonialism** — understanding needed of the impact of international financial institutions in developing countries and awareness of the neo colonialism debate; analysis of the development debate, eg trade versus aid. Colonialism involved political and legal domination, economic exploitation and racial and cultural inequality. Inequality and exploitation are themes which also apply to neocolonialism, which describes the continued domination of the former colonies by the global North.
- **Corruption** — understanding of the role of governance in promoting or hindering development. Bad governance typically results for example, in limited growth and economic stagnation. However, it is argued that corruption is merely the oil necessary to 'lubricate the squeaky wheel'.

Environmental Issues – 15 hours

- **Environmental crisis** — knowledge of the nature and development of the global environmental crisis, and climate change in particular; awareness of the environment debate, including the view that recent global warming is caused by increased solar activity and not by carbon dioxide emissions which arise from pollution.
- **The global commons** — the 'tragedy of the commons' shows how communities over-exploit shared environmental resources; the depletion of common resources will occur as long as people are self-serving, and unilateral acts of restraint such as reducing CO2 emissions are insufficient to tackle the problem.
- **Sustainability** — awareness of competing views on how best to tackle the environment problem.

Human Rights – 15 hours

- **Human rights** – knowledge of the role and significance of human rights in global politics and the role of international courts in promoting human rights; awareness of infringements of human rights and notably the impact of the ‘war on terror’.
- **International law** – the system of rules that are regarded as binding on states and non-state actors in their interrelations. Idealists believe that international law and international institutions such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) could provide the basis for an orderly society of states, where international law could solve disputes before they escalate into military conflict. Realists refer to the lack of authority, legislature, police force and judiciary. However, for centuries, international law has developed to promote such a society of states with rules and procedures to regulate the everyday interaction of states. Almost all states abide by these rules almost all of the time.
- **Humanitarian intervention** – knowledge of the growth of humanitarian intervention since 1990; awareness of the relevant arguments concerning military intervention for the purpose of defending human rights.

Revision and examination practice – 15 hours



Ideas for synopticity

Synoptic assessment is incorporated into Units 3 and 4 through the assessment of synoptic skills. These skills are based on the essential character of politics as an arena of debate, discussion and contending belief. In short, politics exists because people disagree. Political analysis therefore focuses on the nature, scope and sources of conflict and the mechanisms through which conflict resolution is sought, whether or not these are successful.

The synoptic skills that are assessed by the essay questions in Units 3 and 4 are:

- the ability to identify alternative viewpoints or perspectives on an issue or question
- an awareness of the nature and extent of rivalry between these viewpoints
- an awareness of the significance of the viewpoints for an understanding of the issue or question.

Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis

Unit 3: Topic A, UK Political Issues

Synopticity in this context refers mainly to a student's ability to understand the various different political perspectives which can be brought to bear on issues. In practice, this refers to three main aspects. The first is the nature of party attitudes and the characteristics of party conflict. The second concerns 'ideological approaches' to issues (liberal, conservative, social democrat and moderate socialism). This implies that students should demonstrate understanding of how individuals who hold such ideological views might have their attitudes to issues influenced. Thirdly, it involves knowledge of the political context within which issues have been played out and resolved.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Economic Policy — the nature of ideological conflict in the 1980s and how this conflict influenced the transformation of Labour into New Labour; the influence of neo-conservatism, socialism and liberalism on economic policy and how the conflict was played out in the 1980s; the gradual emergence of a new consensus on economic policy in the 1990s; the discrediting of Conservative failed policies and the emergence of the Third Way; after 1997, the development of economic policy under Brown and Blair, the Conservative response and the building of a new post-Blair consensus. In examining this latter period, Brown's policies should be viewed in the context of the emergence of New Labour and the discrediting of Labour's more socialist policies of the 1970s and 80s; the development of Conservative policy under Cameron in the light of the new consensus.

Social Welfare, Health and Education — understanding the fundamental conflicts over welfare policy in the 1980s; the neo-liberal agenda of the New Right versus the traditional Labourite philosophy; the development of a Third Way under New Labour and the political background to this development. The Conservative response to this changed environment can be examined in terms of the fundamental reform of the Conservative movement. Throughout the period an understanding should be shown of how the principles of the welfare state have been modified, challenged and defended by the parties.

Law, Order and Criminal Justice — knowledge and understanding of the changing attitude to law and order and the political philosophies lying behind them. In practice this involved liberal, neo-conservative and traditional attitudes to law and order. The nature of Third Way policy, led by Blair, needs to be understood and explained.

Environmental Policy — concerns about environmental issues can be seen in terms of liberal principles, while counter arguments can also be seen in the neo-liberal agenda. These ideological differences were played out briefly in the UK before a growing consensus emerged. The conversion of the Conservative party to a green agenda is especially important.

Unit 3: Topic B, Introducing Political Ideologies

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because political ideologies constitute an arena of competing values, theories, doctrines and beliefs. A large part of the value of following this topic is that it encourages students to develop an understanding of competing political ideologies in order to become aware of how far they shape political argument and understanding. The study of political ideologies is not synoptic only for those with fundamentalist beliefs and those who are unwilling to acknowledge that rival political traditions may contain legitimate, worthwhile or valuable ideas or theories. The main viewpoints and perspectives encountered in Unit 3, Topic B are therefore as follows:

- the major ideological traditions encountered in Unit 3, Topic B
- the main sub-traditions within each of these ideologies.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Liberalism — the key perspectives on liberalism are provided by liberalism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably conservatism and socialism, although radical feminists and pluralist multiculturalists have also been critical of liberalism. The main perspectives on liberalism that have been generated from within liberalism are classical liberalism and modern liberalism.

Conservatism — the chief perspectives on conservatism have been provided by conservatism itself and its main ideological rivals, notably liberalism and socialism. The key viewpoints on conservatism that have been generated within conservatism are traditional conservatism (including its paternalistic manifestations, such as one nation conservatism and Christian democracy) and the New Right, although the New Right also contains rival viewpoints in the form of the liberal New Right (or neo-liberalism) and the conservative New Right (or neo-conservatism).

Socialism — the key perspectives on socialism are provided by socialism itself and its main ideological rivals, notably liberalism and conservatism. The main perspectives on socialism that have been generated from within socialism are fundamentalist socialism (Marxism or communism) and revisionist socialism (social democracy).

Anarchism — the chief perspectives on anarchism have been provided by anarchism itself and its main ideological rivals, notably liberalism, conservatism and socialism (including Marxism). The key viewpoints on anarchism that have been generated from within anarchism are individualist anarchism (including anarcho-capitalism) and collectivist anarchism (including anarcho-communism).



Unit 3: Topic C, Representative Processes in the USA

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because the debate on whether US political system provides all of the diverse population with liberty and equality of opportunity, that the Founding Fathers aimed to guarantee, permeates every topic.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Elections and Voting — do the number and frequency of elections ensure that those in power are held effectively to account? Alternatively, does the cost of elections, together with their frequency, ensure that representatives are more concerned with the interests of their financial donors than the interests of the voter?

Political Parties — to what extent have US political parties played the traditional roles of policy formulation, recruitment, nomination, fundraising and campaigning to provide vehicles for all sections of the population with opportunities to influence policy? To what extent have political parties abdicated these traditional democratic policies, allowing the interests of a wealthy, influential minority to control policy making? To what extent have parties become more ideologically cohesive, providing meaningful alternatives for different sections of society?

Pressure Groups — to what extent do pressure groups diffuse power, in a manner consistent with the designs of the Founding Fathers? Is US society so open with multiple opportunities for everyone to be heard that all groups may make a contribution to shaping their society? To what extent do pressure groups tend to concentrate power, contrary to the aims of the Founding Fathers? Are pressure groups with large memberships, effective lobbyists, effective lawyers and considerable wealth able to exert disproportionate influence, entrenching their privileges?

Racial and Ethnic Politics — has the USA produced the appearance, but not the reality, of a meritocracy? Do the political authorities have a moral and constitutional responsibility to redress the continuing consequences of past discrimination? Is such action needed to ensure that there is genuine equality of opportunity?

Unit 3: Topic D, Structures of Global Politics

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because global politics constitute a range of competing values, theories, doctrines and assessments. Synopticity is tested through the understanding and analysis of such contrasting arguments. Students will be expected to show awareness of the different interpretations of global politics when writing essays for Unit 3.

Examples of synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Global Theories

Liberalism — the key perspectives on liberalism are provided by liberalism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably realism and idealism.

Realism — the key perspectives on realism are provided by realism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably liberalism and idealism.

Idealism — the key perspectives on idealism are provided by idealism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably liberalism and realism.

Sovereignty — understanding and analysing the extent to which sovereignty is still the dominant theme in global politics. Some argue that the nation state is still the dominant actor. Others suggest that nation states are being undermined by non-state actors, such as MNCs (multinational corporations), IGOs (intergovernmental organisations), NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and globalisation.

Globalisation — knowledge and understanding of differing globalisation theses, such as the extent to which globalisation is occurring at all and the extent to which globalisation is a new phenomenon or simply an extension of colonialism. The impact of globalisation on the nation state is a key issue. Arguably, globalisation has hastened the development of regional institutions, and the nation state has been undermined by a process of glocality, whereby the nation state is weakened while global or regional governance has developed, and citizens become more concerned with global issues such as the environment and local issues.

Power — the extent to which power and influence is still determined by hard power or whether soft power is becoming increasingly relevant.

Balance of power — understanding of the balance of power arguments, including that peace exists when there is power equilibrium; that is, if power is equal then neither side will risk war because the costs of fighting the war will outweigh the likely benefits. Others argue that the balance of power is merely the current status quo, and that if one state increases its military power, or if a state becomes considerably weaker, then power becomes imbalanced and conflict is more likely. So, Iraq in the 1990s did not want neighbouring states to believe that it no longer had WMDs (weapons of mass destruction) because that would leave Iraq vulnerable to an attack. Similarly, the balance of power in Israel - Palestine favoured the Israelis and so open war did not occur. However, should the Palestinians be rearmed or develop WMDs then the balance of power would be disrupted and conflict would become more likely.

Polarity — knowledge of the various debates regarding the relative stability of multipolarity, bipolarity and unipolarity. Does multipolarity promote security or instability? Is bipolarity a stable global structure? To what extent does unipolarity provoke resistance against the global hegemony or does it allow a global hegemony to police the international system?

Governance — the extent to which global institutions promote the idea of global governance, and whether global institutions promote the security and prosperity of all states or promote the development of the rich states but not the poor. Arguments regarding neo-colonialism would be particularly relevant.

The European Union — the debates concerning sovereignty (pooling or surrendering), EU expansion, the Euro, QMV (qualified majority voting), taxation, foreign policy and supranationalism versus intergovernmentalism must be understood.



Unit 4: Extended Themes in Political Analysis

Unit 4: Topic A, EU Political Issues

Since the European Union (EU) was created, its very existence has been controversial. It has evolved beyond recognition and each step has been highly contested, none more so than the present challenges as to the future of the EU.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Impact of the EU on the UK — the chief perspectives are generated by the changing attitudes of the political parties towards the EU and the impact of EU policies on the UK.

European Integration — the key perspectives involve the nature, extent and disagreement about the optimum levels of EU integration and the costs and benefits.

EU Institutions and their Relationships — the chief perspectives rest on the nature of the relationship between the main EU institutions and the balance of power between the institutions and the governments of member states.

Domestic Policy Issues — main perspectives include:

- sensitive ideological policy reform, eg Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the Growth and Stability Pact
- the balance between social protection and global competitiveness
- perspectives on the idea of a European social model.

Unit 4: Topic B, Other Ideological Traditions

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because political ideologies constitute an arena of competing values, theories, doctrines and beliefs. Studying Unit 4, a large part of the value of following Topic B is that it encourages students to develop an understanding of competing political ideologies in order to become aware of how far they shape political argument and understanding. The study of political ideologies is not synoptic only for those with fundamentalist beliefs those who are unwilling to acknowledge that rival political traditions may contain legitimate, worthwhile or valuable ideas or theories. The main viewpoints and perspectives encountered in Unit 4, Topic B are:

- the major ideological traditions encountered in Unit 4, Topic B
- the main sub-traditions within each of these ideologies.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Nationalism — the key perspectives on nationalism are provided by nationalism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably internationalist doctrines such as liberalism and socialism. The main perspectives on nationalism that have been generated from within nationalism are progressive nationalism (including liberal nationalism and anticolonial nationalism) and reactionary nationalism (including conservative nationalism and expansionist nationalism).

Feminism — the chief perspectives on feminism have been provided by feminism itself and its main ideological rivals, notably conservatism. The key viewpoints on feminism that have been generated within conservatism are liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism, although important distinctions also exist between egalitarian feminism and difference feminism.

Ecologism — the key perspectives on ecologism are provided by ecologism itself and its other ideological traditions in general, which are characterised by anthropocentrism. The main perspectives on ecologism that have been generated from within ecologism are 'deep' ecology and 'shallow' ecology, although rival viewpoints have also been developed by reactionary ecologism, ecosocialism, ecoanarchism, and ecofeminism.

Multiculturalism — the chief perspectives on multiculturalism have been provided by multiculturalism itself and its chief ideological rivals, notably conservatism (or conservative nationalism), universalist liberalism, feminism and social reformism. The key viewpoints on multiculturalism that have been generated from within multiculturalism are liberal multiculturalism, pluralist multiculturalism and cosmopolitan multiculturalism.

Unit 4: Topic C, Governing the USA

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because the debate on whether US political system provides all of the diverse population with liberty and equality of opportunity that the Founding Fathers aimed to guarantee permeates every topic.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

The Constitution — how successful has this been in ensuring, as the Founding Fathers intended, that no single person, or group of people, could acquire enough power to threaten the liberties provided? To what extent has it provided a framework for equality of opportunity, a genuine meritocracy in which everyone can develop their true potential if they try hard enough?

Congress — does it have more or less power than envisaged by the Founding Fathers, and what is the political significance of its use of power? How effectively does the legislature fulfil its constitutional responsibilities?

Presidency — does it have more or less power than envisaged by the Founding Fathers, and what is the political significance of its use of power? How effectively does the executive branch fulfil its constitutional responsibilities? Does the federal structure of the USA provide an effective mechanism for ensuring that excessive power is not concentrated in the hands of the Central Government? Alternatively, in view of the record of local government being used as an instrument by dominant groups to oppress minorities, is the national government the most effective defender of constitutional liberties?

Supreme Court — does it have more or less power than envisaged by the Founding Fathers, and what is the political significance of its use of power? How effectively does the judiciary fulfil its constitutional responsibilities?

Unit 4: Topic D, Global Political Issues

This topic lends itself particularly well to synoptic assessment because global politics constitute a range of competing values, theories, doctrines and assessments. Synopticity is tested through the understanding and analysis of such contrasting arguments. Students will be expected to show awareness of the different interpretations of global politics when writing essays for Unit 4, Topic D.

Advice on synopticity in different subject areas

The synoptic themes outlined below are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Conflict, War and Terrorism

- **Conflicts** — students must understand and be able to analyse arguments concerning the causes of conflicts and their impact on the global system and organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and international courts.
- **Clash of Civilisations** — awareness of the thesis and of reaction to it, including awareness that the 'war on terror' can be used by nation states and by non-state actors to increase their powers and win popular support.
- **Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)** — an understanding of the threat of WMDs and particularly of nuclear proliferation, but also of contrasting arguments that nuclear weapons actually make the world more stable because the horror of nuclear conflict ensures that no such conflict will take place.

Poverty and Development — knowledge and understanding of arguments explaining poverty, including the dependency argument, neo-colonialism, corruption, unfair trade practices and protectionism. Awareness is also needed of the 'trade versus aid' debate.

Environmental Issues — knowledge of the global environment crisis and of the competing views on how to tackle it, including through international agreements such as Kyoto, or by greater individual awareness and responsibility. Awareness is also needed of arguments that the environment is not under threat, that global warming is only temporary and is partially correcting previous global cooling, that global warming simply reflects growing solar activity and is unrelated to CO₂ emissions, or that CO₂ emissions from volcanoes and the oceans are much more significant than those from combustion engines and so the politics of fear is using the environment to help politicians win support and political power.

Human Rights — the growing significance of human rights in global politics must be understood, as well as the corresponding increase in humanitarian intervention. Students must be aware of debates over the legitimacy of such action, particularly in relation to state sovereignty, and that action could be taken on a false premise. Analysis must include the legitimacy of human rights legislation and international law in general, given that it is mainly written by the West and reflects Western values, as opposed to Eastern values.

Appendix 1: Changes in the new specification

AS Level

Unit 1: People and Politics

The theme of democracy has changed in two ways. Firstly, there is a wider emphasis on the ways in which democracy in the UK can be enhanced or strengthened. The advantages and disadvantages of referendums have previously been examined in this context but the issue of enhancing democracy now extends to other possible reforms, such as introducing compulsory voting and reducing the voting age. Secondly, there is a greater emphasis on political participation and in particular on the nature and extent of the so-called 'participation crisis' in UK politics. These two changes are in fact linked, as many of the proposals for enhancing democracy in the UK focus on ways in which participation in political life could be increased.

The theme of political parties has changed in that it now focuses much more on contemporary developments in the major UK parties in terms of their policies, ideas and ideological orientation. This has been done to encourage students to more closely follow party political developments in UK politics during the period of their study. In the previous specification, the political parties' theme straddled, on the one hand, issues of participation and representation and, on the other hand, policies and ideas. Questions will now only be asked on the former insofar as it is relevant to issues relevant to the theme of democracy and participation. The thrust of questions on policies and ideas will remain broadly the same as it has previously been, with the central issue being the (possibly changing) policy and ideological identity of the major parties in relation to the UK's main political traditions, notably liberalism, conservatism and socialism.

The theme of elections has changed through the incorporation of the electoral reform debate, which used to feature only in the 'old' Unit 3. This makes the theme more coherent as students will be encouraged to understand not only how the UK's different electoral systems work, and how each affects party representation and the formation of governments, but also the advantages and disadvantages of these various systems. Particular attention will focus on the benefits or otherwise of changing the Westminster electoral system.

Unit 2: Governing the UK

The constitution theme has changed through the incorporation of the issue of constitutional reform, which had previously featured in the 'old' Unit 3. This makes the theme more coherent as students will be encouraged not only to develop an awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of the UK constitution, but also to consider proposals for its reform and the strengths and weaknesses of these proposals. Particular attention will focus on the idea of codifying the UK constitution. Another change is that greater emphasis is placed on understanding the nature and location of sovereignty within the UK in the context of devolution and European Union membership.

The Parliament theme has changed through the incorporation of the issue of parliamentary reform which had, once again, previously featured in the 'old' Unit 3. This will allow students to link an evaluation of Parliament's performance and effectiveness with a consideration of how these could be improved or strengthened. Students should therefore understand possible reforms, such as the introduction of an elected second chamber and the strengthening of select committees, and be aware of their advantages and disadvantages.

The issue of the Prime Minister and the executive has changed in that questions will now focus on two main issues: the nature and extent of prime ministerial power and the roles of, and relationships between, the Prime Minister and the cabinet and other ministers. Separate questions will not now be set on the civil service, although some awareness of the civil service is necessary to understand the role of a minister and the nature of individual ministerial responsibility. Students should also have an awareness of the idea of the 'core' executive.

The judiciary theme has only changed insofar as there will be a greater emphasis on the issue of civil liberties and on the extent to which civil liberties are, or can be, protected by the courts, particularly in the context of the Human Rights Act. This emphasis increasingly featured in the 'old' specification.



A2 Level

Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis

Topic A: UK Political Issues

In Unit 3, Topic A, the theme of environmental policy has been included and the themes of Northern Ireland and race and ethnicity have been removed. This has been done to achieve parity across all units by ensuring that each of them features four main topics. Moreover, it takes account of the growing importance of environmental issues. Questions on the environment will focus on party positions and developing public policy on the issue. Students should be aware that this extends across a range of policy areas, including climate change, pollution, resource depletion and the environmental aspects of other policy areas such as transport, food, planning and rural affairs. Students should also have an understanding of the impact of the EU and other policies and treaties on UK environmental policy.

Topic B: Introducing Political Ideologies

In Unit 3, Topic B, two changes have been made. Firstly, in the socialism theme, less emphasis is placed on 20th century communism and questions about Leninism and Stalinism and their relationship to classical Marxism. An understanding of Marx's theory of history, and a general awareness of the nature of orthodox communism, nevertheless remains relevant in relation to understanding revolutionary and fundamentalist tendencies within socialist ideology. Secondly, the theme of anarchism has been added, although the topic remains the same as in the 'old' Unit 5B. This brings the number of themes addressed to four. Anarchism, furthermore, links well to the other themes in Topic B as it is largely fashioned out of liberal and socialist ideas.

Topic C: Representative Processes in the USA

Unit 3, Topic C is closely based on the 'old' Unit 3C. Where there are changes of emphasis within the themes, these are indicated by additional key concepts that have been identified.

Topic D: Structures of Global Politics

Unit 3, Topic D has been restructured to take account of the fact that international politics now places more emphasis on global rather than regional relationships. A new theme on approaches to global politics has been included. This encourages students to develop an understanding not only of 'traditional' approaches to international politics, such as rival realist and idealist views of sovereignty and the state system, but also introduces them to the issue of globalisation in its various forms. This theme therefore addresses issues such as the implications of globalisation for the nation state and the benefits and drawbacks of globalisation. In relation to the latter, it incorporates issues that previously featured in the 'old' Unit 4D in relation to the global economy. The themes of world order, global governance and the European Union and regionalism are largely based on themes that appeared in the 'old' specification with minor changes, such as the emphasis in relation to world order on the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' power and on the significance of so-called 'emerging powers'.

Unit 4: Extended Themes in Political Analysis

Topic A: EU Political Issues

Unit 4, Topic A has been restructured but still contains many of the core themes of the 'old' specification, such as European integration and EU institutions and their relationships (previously called 'political systems of the EU'). The main changes are as follows. Firstly, a theme on the impact of the EU on the UK replaces 'European co-operation and the UK'. This new theme considers not only the impact of the EU on UK policies and political parties but also looks more widely at its impact on the constitution, on institutional relationships and on pressure groups. Concepts such as functionalism and neo-functionalism remain relevant but are now considered, more appropriately, in relation to European integration. Secondly, a theme on the European economic and social model replaces 'EU policy areas' from the 'old' specification. This new theme is more clearly focused on the development of EU economic and social policies, such as monetary union, tariffs and trade and those associated with the Social Chapter, whereas the 'old' theme was more wide-ranging.

Topic B: Other Ideological Traditions

In Unit 4, Topic B, the theme of fascism has been removed and two new themes appear: ecologism and multiculturalism. This has been done to keep the option up-to-date and to reflect the contemporary significance of these new ideas. In relation to ecologism, students should demonstrate an understanding of the range of ecological traditions and differences between them, and they should be aware of both sub-traditions within ecologism and what distinguishes ecologism from conventional political ideologies. In relation to multiculturalism, students should recognise it as an 'area' of ideological disagreement rather than, necessarily, a coherent ideology in its own right. Nevertheless, multiculturalist political thinking is characterised by a number of distinctive ideas and a range of sub-traditions can be identified within multiculturalism. An awareness should also be demonstrated of how and why multiculturalism has been criticised.

Topic C: Governing the USA

In Unit 4, Topic C, the themes of federal bureaucracy and federalism no longer feature as separate themes, while the Supreme Court now features as a theme in its own right, separate from the constitution. This brings the unit into line with the other units in that it has four main themes. Nevertheless, the issues of federalism and federal bureaucracy remain relevant to this unit; for instance, they are relevant to questions about the nature of the US constitution and to issues about the nature and extent of presidential power.



Topic D: Global Political Issues

Unit 4, Topic D has been substantially restructured to focus on four major issues in global politics: conflict, war and terrorism, poverty and development, environmental issues, and human rights. Although students should be encouraged to demonstrate a contemporary understanding of global political issues, the previous emphasis, which restricted knowledge to major or newsworthy events that occurred in the three years preceding the date of the examination, has been dropped.

The theme of conflict, war and terrorism was previously largely addressed in 'developments in international politics' in the 'old' Unit 5D. The theme on poverty and development was previously addressed as part of the 'global economy' theme in the 'old' Unit 4D, although it has been expanded, for example, to take account of attempts to reduce poverty through programmes of development and international aid and to consider the impact on development of corruption and other governance issues. The theme on environmental issues encourages students to develop an understanding of the nature of the global environmental crisis, especially linked to the issue of climate change, and to show an awareness of competing views about how this and other environmental issues can best be tackled.

The issue of human rights requires students to develop an understanding of the nature of human rights and of the extent to which human rights are protected by international law and the international courts. However, it also incorporates the issue of humanitarian intervention which previously featured in the 'old' Unit 5D.

Appendix 2: Mapping of content from old specification to new

AS Units	
Old	New
Unit 1: People and Politics	
Why are political participation and democracy important?	Unit 1 – Democracy and Political Participation
Do elections guarantee democracy?	Unit 1 – Elections
What is the role of political parties?	Unit 1 – Party Policies and Ideas
How important are pressure groups?	Unit 1 – Pressure Groups
Unit 2: Governing the UK	
What is the nature of the UK constitution?	Unit 2 – The Constitution
What is the role and significance of Parliament?	Unit 2 – Parliament
Who has power within the executive?	Unit 2 – The Prime Minister and Cabinet
Do judges deliver justice and defend freedom?	Unit 2 – Judges and Civil Liberties
Unit 3: The Changing UK System	
Do elections change anything?	Unit 1 – Elections (debating electoral systems)
Is there a need for constitutional reform?	Unit 2 – The Constitution (reforming the constitution)
How united is the UK?	Unit 2 – The Constitution (devolution) Unit 2 – Parliament (relation to devolved assemblies)
How has EU membership affected the UK political system?	Unit 2 – Parliament (its relationship with the EU)

A2 units	
Old	New
Route A: Key Political Issues	
Unit 4A: UK Political Issues	
The economy	Unit 3, Topic A — Economic Policy
The welfare state	Unit 3, Topic A — Social Welfare, Health and Education
Law and order	Unit 3, Topic A — Law, Order and Criminal Justice
Race and ethnicity	—
Northern Ireland	—
Unit 5A: The EU and European Issues	
European co-operation and the UK	Unit 4, Topic A — European Integration (functionalism, neo-functionalism, Euro-federalism)
Political systems of the EU	Unit 4, Topic A — EU Institutions and Their Relationships
European integration and economic policy	Unit 4, Topic A — Impact of EU on UK Unit 4, Topic A — Domestic Policy Issues (monetary union, open economies)
EU policy areas	Unit 4, Topic A — Domestic Policy Issues (social and economic policies)
Unit 6A: Policy Making in the UK	
	Synopticity is now assessed within the essay questions of Units 3 and 4, where students will be required to draw on skills needed to analyse conflicting political viewpoints.
Institutions and policy making	Unit 4, Topic A — Domestic Policy Issues (social and economic policies)
Impact of EU membership upon institutions and the policy process	Unit 4, Topic A (partial) — Impact of the EU on the UK

Old	New
Route B: Political Ideologies	
Unit 4B: Introducing Political Ideologies	
Liberalism	Unit 3, Topic B – Liberalism
Conservatism	Unit 3, Topic B – Conservatism
Socialism	Unit 3, Topic B – Socialism
Unit 5B: Other Ideological Traditions	
Nationalism	Unit 4, Topic B – Nationalism
Anarchism	Unit 3, Topic B – Anarchism
Fascism	–
Feminism	Unit 4, Topic B – Feminism
Unit 6B: Ideological Development in the UK	Synopticity is now assessed within the essay questions of Units 3 and 4, where students will be required to draw on skills needed to analyse conflicting political viewpoints.
Route C: Politics in the USA	
Unit 4C: Representation in the USA	
Elections and voting	Unit 3, Topic C – Elections and Voting
Political parties	Unit 3, Topic C – Political Parties
Pressure groups	Unit 3, Topic C – Pressure Groups
Racial and ethnic politics	Unit 3, Topic C – Racial and Ethnic Politics
Unit 5C: Governing the USA	
Constitution and Supreme Court	Unit 4, Topic C – The Constitution Unit 4, Topic C – Supreme Court
Congress	Unit 4, Topic C – Congress
Presidency	Unit 4, Topic C – Presidency
Federal bureaucracy	Unit 4, Topic C – Presidency
Unit 6C: Comparative UK and US Politics	Synopticity is now assessed within the essay questions of Units 3 and 4, where students will be required to draw on skills needed to analyse conflicting political viewpoints.

Old	New
Route D: Introducing International Politics	
Unit 4D: Introducing International Politics	
Changing world order	Unit 3, Topic D — Approaches to Global Politics (partial) Unit 3, Topic D — World Order (partial)
International organisations	Unit 3, Topic D — Global Governance
European integration	Unit 3, Topic D — European Union and Regionalism
Global economy	Unit 4, Topic D — Poverty and Development
Unit 5D: Issues in International Politics	
Developments in international politics	—
Regional conflict	Unit 4, Topic D — Conflict, War and Terrorism
International intervention	Unit 4, Topic D — Human Rights (partial)
Impact of international organisations	Unit 3, Topic D — Global Governance
International Politics and the UK	Synopticity is now assessed within the essay questions of Units 3 and 4, where students will be required to draw on skills needed to analyse conflicting political viewpoints.

Appendix 3: Student guide

GCE in Government and Politics

What do I need to know, or be able to do, before taking this course?

You may not have studied government and politics before, but this does not matter! What is more important is that you have an interest in the society in which you live and enjoy discussion, debate and argument. However, most schools or colleges will expect you to have achieved at least a Grade 'C' in GCSE Maths and English.

What will I learn?

AS

At AS you will gain an understanding of how the UK political system works, and how it is linked to contemporary concerns and events.

Unit 1: People and Politics looks at how people in the UK are linked to the government, through the themes of democracy and political participation, party policies and ideas, and pressure groups.

Unit 2: Governing the UK focuses on the main institutions of UK government such as Parliament and the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Its core themes are distribution of policymaking power and the effectiveness of the key bodies in carrying out their roles and functions.

In Units 1 and 2 you will have the opportunity to debate and discuss current issues in UK politics.

A2

Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis

You will study one of the following topics. Your teacher will be able to advise you which topic is offered at your school or college.

Topic A: UK Political Issues — in this topic you will look at key policy issues in the UK, particularly those that have affected the outcomes of general elections or stimulated public debate such as social welfare, law and order and environmental policy.

Topic B: Introducing Political Ideologies — in this topic you will look at the ideas and doctrines behind the political ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, socialism and anarchism.

Topic C: Representative Processes in the USA — in this topic you will look at the representative processes of the US political system, and the mechanisms in place to ensure that no one group of people should become politically dominant.

Topic D: Structures of Global Politics — this topic will give you an understanding of politics on a global scale, including the importance of power and how political structures and organisations have developed to promote co-operation and prevent disputes.

Unit 4: Extended Themes in Political Analysis

Again, you will study one of the following topics and your teacher will be able to advise you which topic is offered at your school or college.

Topic A: EU Political Issues — this topic you will examine the political issues that have arisen as a result of the process of European integration and the impact of the EU on the UK.

Topic B: Other Ideological Traditions — in this topic you will examine the ideas and doctrines behind the ideologies of nationalism, feminism, ecologism and multiculturalism, which gained prominence in the late 20th century.

Topic C: The Government and Politics of the USA — in this topic you will examine the institutional framework of US government, consider the interrelationships between its legislative, executive and judicial processes and the health of US federalism.

Topic D: Global Political Issues — in this topic you will examine key issues in recent global politics such as conflict, poverty, human rights and the environment and how these issues are dealt with at a global level.

Is this the right subject for me?

Government and Politics is the right subject for you if:

- you have an interest in the world around you, want to know more about the society in which you live, how it works, and how it could work
- you enjoy debate, discussion and argument and are comfortable with the idea that in politics there is no right or wrong
- you enjoy weighing up and evaluating evidence in order to assess and communicate ideas and arguments
- you like thinking for yourself and want to develop your own views rather than accept the views of others.

How will I be assessed?

You will take four units, two at AS and two at A2. Each unit will be externally assessed.

AS units	
Unit 1: People and Politics	Unit 2: Governing the UK
1 hour and 20 minutes You will be required to answer two questions out of a choice of four, each structured a), b) and c).	1 hour and 20 minutes You will be required to answer one structured question from a choice of two based on given stimulus material and one extended question from a choice of two.
A2 units	
Unit 3: Key Themes in Political Analysis	Unit 4: Further Themes in Political Analysis
1 hour and 30 minutes You will be required to answer three short questions out of a choice of five and one essay out of a choice of three.	1 hour and 30 minutes You will be required to answer three short questions out of a choice of five and one essay out of a choice of three.

**What can I do after I've completed the course?**

Taking the Edexcel Advanced GCE in Government and Politics will give you adaptable skills which will enable you to understand and assess ideas and arguments, and to construct and communicate clear answers to problems based on well-validated evidence.

With a GCE in Government and Politics, you can progress to higher education courses such as honours degrees in politics, international politics/relations and political science as well as to degrees in related subjects such as history, geography, economics and social policy. You will also be able to progress to vocational qualifications such as BTEC Higher National Certificates/Diplomas in subjects such as Public Services, Business or Media (Journalism).

The study of politics can lead to a variety of careers within areas such as journalism and broadcasting, management, publishing, local government, public policy and policy research, interest groups, local government and the voluntary sector, as well as within politics itself.

Next steps!

To find out more, discuss with your subject teacher at your school or college. Also you can find further details on our website, www.edexcel.org.uk.

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