

Welcome to Higher Politics!!



Course Structure

This course consists of three units:

- **Political Theories**
 - ✓ Direct and Representative Democracy
 - ✓ Conservatism and Socialism
- **Political Systems**
 - ✓ Legislatures in the UK and the USA
 - ✓ Executives in the UK and the USA
- **Political Parties and Elections**
 - ✓ Political campaigning
 - ✓ Theories of voting behaviour
 - ✓ Political ideas

1: Political Theories

In this unit we will study and compare different types of democracy. We will also consider the ideas of two political ideologies - **Conservatism** and **Socialism** - and ask how much these ideologies affect British politics today.



2: Political Systems

In this unit we will study and compare the political systems of the **UK** and the **USA**. After studying both constitutions we will consider the strengths and weaknesses of Parliament and Congress, the Prime Minister and the President.



3: Political Parties + Elections

In this unit we will think about how elections are won. We will examine some of the main campaign methods used today, as well as some of the main theories that explain how people vote. Lastly we will consider the role of ideas. Ultimately we will ask, what makes a person vote the way they do?



Exam Structure

Question Paper 1 (essays)	52 Marks	1 hr 45 (SQA exam)
Question Paper 2 (skills)	28 Marks	1 hr 15 (SQA exam)
Assignment	30 Marks	1hr 30 (done in class)

The Question Papers

Paper 1:

- Two 20 mark essay
- One 12 mark essay (Political Parties Unit)

Paper 2:

- One 8 mark question comparing & contrasting 2 sources
- One 20 mark question interpreting, synthesising & evaluating up to 7 sources

Is Higher Politics Different?

There are some similarities to Higher Modern Studies:

- ✓ Some crossover topics - US political systems and voting behaviour, political parties etc.
- ✓ Independent research and reading required.
- ✓ Knowledge Questions are 20/12 mark essays.

But there are some differences too:

- ✓ No time period constraints (can use older case studies)
- ✓ Focus on the "why" rather than just the "how" of politics.
- ✓ Different skills questions.

Homework and Key Dates

Homework: mainly in the form of essays/source questions; preparing for timed essays/ Unit Assessments in class; past paper questions. Also, missed work due to absence. Extra reading is provided for each unit.

Assignment:

November - two weeks of prep followed by a write up on the topic of your choice.

Prelim(s):

January - Political Theory and Political Systems

March - Political Parties

Final Exam: Date tbc

Additional Support

Staff: Mr McMordie is always ready to help and can be contacted in person, via e-mail or via Teams. All course notes are accessible through One Note and supported study is available one afternoon per week.

SQA: past papers/marking instructions available online at [SQA Politics Homepage](#) and [SQA Understanding Standards](#)

Parents: can encourage students by encouraging news watching, discussing topics studied in class and by reading essays. Detailed written reports will also be issued and feedback sheets will be shared via showbie.

Useful Resources

