



AS/A Level Government and Politics

(Available for teaching from September 2008)

This specification examines the structures of authority and power in the UK – legislature, executive and judiciary – and how these differ from those of other political systems. Candidates develop a critical awareness of the nature of politics and the relationship between political ideas, institutions and processes.



What are the benefits to me and my students of delivering this OCR specification?

- It's up to the minute – based on consultation between QCA, senior OCR Government and Politics examiners, feedback from existing centres and market research
- The ethos and strengths of OCR's previous specification have been maintained in a new four unit (two at AS level, two at A2) format
- The assessment burden is cut by removing the examined coursework element
- Candidates gain a thorough knowledge of democracy and participation, the rights and responsibilities of the individual, ideologies, political theories and traditions
- Candidates are encouraged to engage with contemporary politics and current political debates
- Candidates require a basic working knowledge of concepts like democracy, participation and representation as well as being aware of current political developments.

AS Level

Unit title	Description	Mandatory/Optional?
Contemporary Politics of the UK	Candidates gain an understanding of parties, party systems and pressure groups in the UK as well as electoral systems, parliamentary elections, voting behaviour and party ideology.	Mandatory
Contemporary Government of the UK	Candidates will explore the composition, role and power of the legislative and executive branches of government in the UK as well as the judiciary, constitution, rights of the individual and the EU.	Mandatory

A2 Level

Unit title	Description	Mandatory/Optional?
Contemporary US Government and Politics	Candidates will gain an understanding of the government and politics of the US. They will examine the US constitution, legislature, executive and judiciary of the federal government as well as issues concerning representation and participation.	Optional (but if chosen both units in the option must be taken)
Political Ideas and Concepts	Candidates will explore and compare a range of political ideas, democratic theories and systems. They will explore the role of the state, the processes of government and the relationship between individual and state in society. Candidates will be able to refer to a range of political thinkers.	Optional (but if chosen both units in the option must be taken)
US Government and Politics	In this unit candidates apply skills and knowledge gained in other areas of the Advanced GCE course to compare and contrast UK, American and EU political systems. Candidates are expected to supplement formal study with close attention to world political events via relevant media. Candidates are encouraged to make references beyond the UK, US and EU.	Optional (but if chosen both units in the option must be taken)
Political Ideas and Concepts in Practice	In this unit candidates apply their knowledge and understanding of political ideas and concepts to the practice of politics in the UK and the EU. They will study a range of political theories, thinkers and systems. Candidates are expected to pay close attention to world political events via the relevant media.	Optional (but if chosen both units in the option must be taken)

How is this qualification assessed?

All units are assessed through a timetabled written examination.

Examination series are available every January and June.

What support will I receive?

Training

A series of events run annually to support teachers and to provide feedback on recent examinations. There will also be events to launch and introduce the new specification.

Resources

You can download all the following resources from the OCR website – www.ocr.org.uk.

- Sample candidate answers are available for both AS units in the AS level Teacher Support Materials
- Sample answers for A2 will be available in the A2 Teacher Support Materials
- Schemes of Work will be available for AS and A2 levels
- Sample Assessment Materials are available for all units.

For more information please contact the OCR Customer Contact Centre on **01223 553998**, or visit www.ocr.org.uk where you can also join the thriving A Level Government and Politics e-community.