

Edexcel Politics A-Level: How to study independently effectively and hit the higher grades.

(5 hours per subject, per week)

Resources for revision:

- Lesson notes and workbooks
- Politics textbooks
- Carousel quizzes available on MS Teams
- Additional textbook handouts, articles, and website (available on MS Teams folder)
- Past papers and examiners reports
- Exam related podcasts and YouTube channels as recommended in the Politics Induction Booklet given out in September
- Regular access to news: BBC, Channel 4, ITV, Sky, Guardian, Financial Time, The Times, LBC, Private Eye, Economist, Prospect, Spectator, New Statesman

Step one- Transform the information from the listed resources and put them into a condensed format. Consider creating flashcards, mind maps, knowledge organiser, interleaving of political examples (you will be given a resource to help with this) from the news to apply to questions or summarise detailed notes. BUT keep it consistent and SIMPLE!

Step two- Active recall- This is a crucial aspect of the revision process and is often missed out. You need to ensure you actively test your memory and ability to recall, you must struggle, you cannot simply rely on the textbook. Further to this FOLLOW THE NEWS to get examples that you can use in your essays. Therefore, without notes it is worthwhile trying to write what you remember on a mini whiteboard, or even apply the information to an exam question or engage with the carousel quizzes.

Step three- Plan essay questions- If you do not do this as part of the 'active recall' it is important you draft plan essay questions, you can also use this as a checkpoint to check your plan with your teachers and peers. Use the planning structures that you are given. The more you use these, the easier you will find it will be to write your answers and you will find that you will write more in the time given. Remember to establish a clear line of argument – you must take a side - for your essay!

Step four - Complete essay questions – Politics is almost totally assessed by essays in the exam. Exam technique can only be developed through real life practice. Complete extra essay questions and we will happily provide feedback.

Step five- Engage with feedback- Feedback is pointless without students actively engaging with the advice given, clarify anything you are unsure about with your teacher. This may involve redrafting your essay question in response to feedback.

Other important guidelines:

- 5 hours per subject per week outside of your classroom lessons is the minimum recommended. This can involve revision, research, reading etc.
- Plan your revision, create a revision timetable, and ensure you allocate a reasonable amount of time for yourself. Research shows students often fail to do this and therefore do not stick to the timetable.
- Minimise any distractions, particularly mobile phones/television. Ensure they are on silent or DND. Put them in a drawer or use apps like Forest or Flora.
- Ensure you develop a healthy sleeping routine that fits with the school day (we should not be getting messages on Teams or emails that are being sent at 2am!
- Eat healthily to improve your ability to maintain focus.
- Exercise: run, cycle, walk, gym, swim, stretches, yoga. Ensure you take breaks to ensure a work life balance.
- Practice breathing and meditation – there are loads of great Podcasts, clips on YouTube or Apps you can use.