



# Politics A Level: Developing Cultural Capital, Diversity and Equality

Cultural capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a student can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge, and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a student will draw upon to be successful in a diverse society, their career and the world of work. In the Sixth Form, we aim to build our student aspirations and expose them to a range of experiences to help them achieve goals and become successful individuals who understand and support diversity and equality.

We recognise that for students to aspire and be successful academically and in the wider areas of their lives, they need to be given diverse, rich, and sustained opportunities to develop their cultural capital. We do this in many ways, for example, through our curriculum, extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, careers activities, and PSHE/RSE programme.

There are nine key realms to cultural capital in the Sixth Form at Samuel Whitbread Academy:

## Cultural Capital

provides health, well-being and growth



## Cultural Capital

lets us share our histories, our memories, the people, the places and the things that matter to us.



## Cultural Capital

creates the curiosity and confidence to make connections between the past, the present and the future.





**Cultural Capital**  
sparks generations of  
innovators.



**Cultural Capital**  
is to be found locally,  
nationally, globally -  
**everywhere.**



**Cultural Capital**  
nurtures inclusive  
communities.



**Cultural Capital**  
enriches today and  
inspires tomorrow.



**Cultural Capital**  
is ours to discover,  
ours to create,  
ours to share.



**Cultural Capital**  
belongs to me,  
belongs to you,  
belongs to us all.



These nine realms can be broken down further into the following sub-categories: **Personal development, Social development (including political and current affairs awareness), physical development, spiritual development, moral development, and cultural development.**

What is now outlined are the key areas of both academic and enrichment that take place within and outside of this course area to enhance and develop these diverse elements of cultural capital:



### **Personal Development:**

Personal development consists of activities that develop a person's capabilities and potential, build human capital, facilitate employability, and enhance the quality of life and the realisation of dreams and aspirations.

Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment

The specification content for Politics A level gives students the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of our political landscape, the ways in which politics can shape our world view, our opportunities, and the range of ways in which we can have an impact on politics and decision making in this country and the USA. This knowledge and skills of selecting and using knowledge to evaluate and reach a judgement creates an individual with key skills for employment in a range of fields from journalism and law, to parliamentary researcher or even becoming a politician.

#### **Intrapersonal skills:**

Independent learning and resilience are part of managing the depth and breadth of information studied in A Level Politics. Students need to be able to manage their time effectively, self-motivate and self-monitor their progress. These are all important employability skills. Students need to be willing to learn and develop new skills, be adaptable and willing to acquire new information.

### **Social Development:**

The process by which a child learns to interact with others around them. As they develop and perceive their own individuality within their community, they also gain skills to communicate with other people and process their actions.

Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment

Politics A Level students need to understand important features of our political system, how it is important to all aspects of our lives and can have a broad impact on us personally, but also the people around us. The Politics specification requires students to develop a good understanding of how people and political parties have shaped our culture, social and economic landscape. They are also gaining understanding of how this develops, how it works, and how and why some people see the need for change and reform. Students are also required to study political ideology and how this has shaped our political landscape, including how far our current system allows the government to hear minority voices, as well as that of the majority.



Within each section of the politics course is a debate that needs to be addressed. Through working through these debate questions through planning and argument, written answers, but also verbal debating skills, our students are developing and honing the ability to communicate complex ideas, and carefully thought out view points with others. This will improve their knowledge and ability to interact with others in a way that will show awareness of values and attitudes such as respect, equality, empathy and personal integrity.

Communication skills are vital to their academic and social development in Politics. This is also developed through the option to become involved in the enrichment options we provide, such as debate club. Debate club and involvement in international competitions gives students the opportunity to hone their communication skills. They are also learning how to develop and justify a clear argument based on fact, rather than just opinion. It also gives them the chance to interact with other students from schools in Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Scotland and England.

Use of individual and group tasks, where appropriate, during lessons allows students to learn about team work skills, how to develop their ability to discuss and take on board others opinions, as well as how to question others, and question information provided or available to them to develop critical thinking skills to evaluate the information they are being given.

### **Physical Development:**

These are the major motor or physical achievements a student enhances and develops. Physical development is a vital part of growing up as students learn to master control of their body

Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment



## **Spiritual Development:**

The development of the personality towards a religious or spiritual desired better personality.

Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment

Politics and religion have a difficult history together, the USA trying to keep the two elements separate. However, politics and religion are linked on many levels, our political organisations, pressure groups, clicktivism that now shapes many political debates can link to political, religious and spiritual ideas and other matters of concern. This provides contextual knowledge from which students can develop their own views and understanding of important issues.

## **Moral Development:**

The development of attitudes and behaviours toward other people in society, based on social and cultural norms, rules, and laws.

Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment

### **Politics Units of study**

Politics and moral values in both the UK and the USA are considered as part of the Politics course. In recent times the morality of politicians, their attitudes and behaviours have been subject to a great deal of public and media scrutiny. This is all considered as part of the UK Politics component of the course. The unit on UK Politics in particular, refers to the development of political parties, the concerns about politician's decision making and morality. It considers elements including concerns raised around politicians and corruption linked to lobbying scandals, for example, that have been subject to much press attention and public concerns. The moral values of our own Prime Minister having come into question.

In governing the UK, students' study where our rules, laws and constitution have come from and how they have developed giving students a clear idea of expectations in today's society.

The course also allows students to develop an understanding of political ideas and how they can impact attitudes and behaviours in society. From the Communism suggested by Marx, to the development of feminism and the advance of Socialism. These allow our students to understand attitudes, behaviours, social and cultural norms and moral values have developed and been critically altered over time. We also cover multiculturalism that shows social and cultural divisions in our society and the moral questions that are linked to this important issue.

The study of, and comparison with, US politics allows our students to see a broader, and more international picture of the development of politics, society, attitudes, norms and cultural behaviours. They have the chance to review and debate how that has been shaped by political developments, particularly in recent years.



## Cultural Development:

Cultural Diversity is at the heart of the Sixth Form and students will learn about themselves and relationships with others from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

### Element of the curriculum and/or enrichment

Each of the units studied at key stage 5 for Politics leads to greater understanding of cultural development. It also allows students to consider the reality of cultural diversity through the medium of politics and how politics can shape and define cultural relationships.

#### **Politics Units of study**

Through looking at how our political system has developed, through considering how political parties' ideas are formed, and the makeup of their supporters we consider cultural background and its impact on people's views and experiences. We look at how people can shape politics and influence decision making, how the government system works and key political ideas that can shape views on cultural diversity. The unit on UK Politics in particular, refers to the development of political parties, the concerns about a developing culture of voter apathy and the continued evidence of a participation crisis. It considers elements including concerns raised around politicians and corruption linked to lobbying scandals, for example, that have been subject to much press attention and public concerns. The culture of MPs in parliament and at Westminster is also called into question.

In governing the UK, students' study where our rules, laws and constitution have come from and how they have developed giving students a clear idea of expectations in today's society. It considers the how our culture of a constitution based on precedent. The discussion as to whether this culture needs to change a clear written constitution take its place is discussed and analysed.

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Debate club has also provided great opportunities to engage with students from other countries and learn about aspects of their life and education as well as their culture. Particularly those from Zimbabwe and Nigeria. Debate topics with the competitions we organised with the Fair Justice for Society in Scotland group are always linked to the overarching theme of equality. Our politics students have the chance to play an active part in this.

