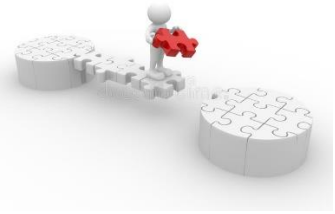


A-Level Politics – Skills Mapping and Curriculum Intent

Skill	Logo	Year 12 (Paper 1 – Government and Politics of the UK and Paper 3 – Political Ideas)	Year 13 (Paper 2 - Government and politics of the USA and comparative politics)
Knowledge and understanding AO1		Skill Demonstration: Students are required to respond to questions using political evidence to show their knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues. In relation to paper one, for example, they would need to show the who, what, why, where, when and how of an issue. E.g. WHO (which PM) / WHAT (what policy) / WHY (e.g. Labour) / WHERE (time of Premiership or domestic v foreign) / WHEN (dates) / HOW (majority – <i>this is a good time to input key vocab!</i>) . They will also begin to form evidence-based arguments and be assessed on this through written work. This will form the basis for all other topic areas to come. Bright Sparks: Include up to date data, contemporary political issues, key words and names. Might begin to draw in on perspectives as a form of evidence.	Skill Demonstration: Students continue to make conscious efforts in using and expanding their political evidence. They will learn the importance of revision to aid this skill. Half-termly assessments and regular homework (bi-weekly) on exam questions will help. Political timeline’s of the UK and US will help embed this knowledge and understanding. Bright Sparks: Being able to recite post-war governments, with dates and examples of policies is very useful here for UK and US.
Analysis AO2		Skill Demonstration: Using the knowledge and understanding they have already presented (AO1) students will then set about analysing (AO2) this information. They will make parallels to other issues and concepts, show connections between ideas and also show how ideas and concepts are similar and different to each other. For example in paper 3, political ideas, students analyse the different ideologies by making connections between key thinkers within the ideology and also contrast between the ideologies themselves. E.g. in Liberalism students will make connections between John Locke and John Rawls (within the liberalism ideology) but also show connections between John Locke and Karl Marx (between liberalism and socialism). Bright Sparks: Students can boost their analysis with additional AO1 that shows a clear comparison in the connection being made.	Skill Demonstration: Students will begin to draw parallels and comparisons between all three papers as further content about the US is embedded. The more content learned throughout this linear course, the easier it is to show off strong analysis but the tricky part is being able to recall information from year 12 to do this so again revision is very important here for this skill. Bright Sparks: Synoptic analysis that uses key vocabulary is dynamite here.
Political Vocabulary AO1		Skill Demonstration: Students can boost their knowledge and understanding by using key political vocabulary that shows they’ve understood the political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues well. Bright Sparks: Students can also use their key vocabulary to question the relevance of the information they’ve already provided – e.g. using the term parliamentary sovereignty to question just how far an elective dictatorship can take place.	Skill Demonstration: Students will challenge their base political vocabulary knowledge by expending it further with key US content. Comparing vocabulary here is crucial e.g. uncodified v codified constitution. Bright sparks: Use key vocabulary to show the historical and contextual changes that have occurred over time.
Political Judgement AO3		Skill Demonstration: Be able to evaluate aspects of politics and political information that the student presents through reasoned arguments and evidence based conclusions. Avoid “balance” by picking one side and being able to argue why this is the judgement. Seeing the importance of making a decision in an argument and avoiding apathy. This is off particular important in both introductions and conclusions and needs to be done with clarity. Bright Sparks: Come to judgments by using political ideologies and vocabulary where possible and being able to signpost credible evidence.	Skill Demonstration: Continued development of political judgement takes place in year 13 in which students should be developing the strength of their introductions and conclusions to include context and comparison with the nuance of the question being asked taken into consideration. Bright Sparks: Where possible there judgement should be threaded throughout each paragraph within the essay and should show a very clear line of judgement from beginning to end.
Connect AO2 AO3		Skill Demonstration: Showing synopticity by connecting the dots and linking the different political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues together. Bright Sparks: Show how nuance in arguments and text may have led to particular bias in connections being made.	Skill Demonstration: Whilst this skill is more difficult to show in year 12, it becomes easier in year 13 as students expand their wider contextual understanding. Essay questions in all three papers lend themselves to students expressing this skill the best which is why this becomes and increasing focus during exam technique lessons. In particular students should not pigeon hole themselves into just discussing the topic that the question identifies: For example.... ‘Bipartisanship is the cornerstone of US Politics’ - show how bipartisanship in America has historical links to the US constitution and classical liberalism that is not observed in the UK’s uncodified constitution but due to the adversarial nature of parliament it is still witnessed in British politics yet arguably is not the cornerstone of either countries politics because liberal democracy is.
Compare AO1 AO2 AO3		Skill demonstration: This is less of a focus in year 12 but students need to be aware of the basic different political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues that impact the UK in comparison the US. Bright sparks: Show how this has grown through events in each country’s history e.g. revolution v evolution.	Skill demonstration: As students’ progress their knowledge of paper 2 they will be introduced to comparative theories that are used in one 9 mark question of paper 2 to get students to think more deeply about the comparisons between the UK and US. These theories are structural theory, rational theory, cultural theory. Students often find this challenging but once each theory has been taught it becomes easier to make comparisons between them. Bright sparks – should look to use theories in their political judgement (25 markers) to show a high level understanding of comparison between the UK and US in a different context.