

Higher Politics (Course Code: C858 76)

SCQF Level 6 (24 Credit Points)

Why study Politics?

Politics is a process in which groups of people resolve conflicts and make collective decisions.

The aim of this course is to provide you with knowledge and understanding of political concepts and principles. You will develop skills in interpreting, analysing and evaluating political arguments and learn to debate in a critical way. The course encourages a comparative approach to politics and uses a wide range of local, national and international examples.

What will I study?

The course consists of **three** areas of study.

Political theory

You will study the key political concepts of power, authority and legitimacy, with particular reference to the work of Steven Lukes and Max Weber and analyse the relevance of these concepts today.

You will study the key ideas of two political ideologies (from Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism, Nationalism, and Fascism) including the works of relevant theorists, and draw balanced conclusions about the chosen ideologies.

Political systems

You will study the constitutional arrangements in different political systems, focusing on the roles of executive and legislative branches within each system. You will compare and contrast the respective powers of individual branches of government within the two political systems and draw balanced conclusions about these.

You will study two of following political systems: the UK political system; the Scottish political system; the political system of the United States of America; the European Union political system; or the political system of the People's Republic of China.

Political parties and elections

You will compare the electoral impact of two different dominant ideas. This can either be from within one political party or between two different political parties.

You can choose from the following: the Conservative Party, Labour Party, Liberal Democrats or Scottish National Party. These ideas are studied alongside the impact of political campaign management strategies and theoretical analyses of voting behaviour.

How will I be assessed?

The course assessment has **three** components **totalling 110 marks**:

- Component 1: question paper 1 – worth 52 marks consisting of 3 sections:
 - Section 1 - Political theory
 - Section 2 - Political systems
 - Section 3 - Political parties and elections all worth either 12 or 20 marks)
- Component 2: question paper 2 – worth 28 marks
- Component 3: assignment – worth 30 marks.

For the assignment component, you will choose a topic which allows you to analyse and evaluate a political issue which invites discussion and debate. You will research the issue, organise your findings to address it, using the Politics resource sheet to collate your evidence and references.

Both question papers are set and externally marked by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA).

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across course assessment.

The course assessment is graded A-D.

Study Materials

- [SQA Past Papers Politics Higher](#)
- [SQA Understanding Standards Politics](#)
- [Ushare Study Resources](#)