

# GCSE Citizenship Knowledge Organiser

## Theme 3: Politics and Participation



### Types of Government

**Monarchy** - government by a family who have inherited the title of monarch.

**Dictatorship** - rule by an individual or group with no democratic aspects, total control by one person or group.

**Democracy** - rule by the people

**Communist** - government by one party- ultimate power to the state which 'looks after' its citizens (China).

**One Party State** - A state where only one political party exists and runs the country and is often associated with communist forms of government, e.g. Syria/ North Korea.

**Anarchy** - a state without any form of government/control. There could be a total breakdown of in society e.g. during Civil War.

**Theocracy** - Where the religious leaders run the country e.g. Iran

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. The Concept of Democracy

## Key Words:

**Democracy:** A system of government by the entire population or a majority of eligible citizens, usually through elected representatives. country.

**Liberal Democracy:** a system of government based on representative democracy and linked to freedoms and rights for citizens. USA, UK and EU follow this type of democracy.

**Direct Democracy:** a system of government where all citizens take part in decision making. A modern example of this is the use of referendums.

**Representative Democracy:** A system of government where citizens are elected to represent others in an assembly. A UK example would be an MP or a councillor.

**What does democracy mean?** A system of government by the entire population or a majority of eligible citizens, usually through elected representatives.

## It includes the following aspects:

- Regular and fair elections
- An electoral system where there is a secret ballot and where the results reflect the views of the people. The results are also accountable.
- There are regular elections which makes the Government accountable.
- Any citizen can stand for election.
- Candidates can campaign equally without any fear of intimidation or bribery.
- The media can freely report on the work of Government.
- The judiciary is separate from government and citizens can use the legal process to hold government to account.

## The Values underpinning democracy

- **Rights** - These are our legal, social and ethical entitlements and all citizens enjoy them equally. This structures how government operates, the law and morality of society e.g. Human Rights, children's rights.
- **Responsibilities** - the state or fact of having to do something. We have duties as citizens of a society. E.g. pay taxes, obey the law, be called for jury service, conscription during war, These are not optional and underpinned by the law.
- **Freedom** - the ability to act, speak or think as one wants. E.g. freedom of choice, freedom of the press, freedom of movement.
- **The Rule of Law** - everyone must obey the law not matter who they are e.g. gender, class, wealth, religion.
- **Equality** - This is how society treats its members. There should be equal treatment for all. There is legislation protecting different groups e.g. Sex Discrimination Acts 1975 and 1986; Race Relations Act 1965, 1968, 1976, 2000; Sexual Offences Act 2003, Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013; Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005.

These now fall under the name of **The Equality Act 2010** which is overseen by **The Equality and Human Rights Commission**.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation.

# The Institutions of the British Constitution

## Keywords:

**Devolution:** a process where power is shared between different bodies. IN the UK there are separate elected bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Devolved Bodies:** National assemblies, parliaments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

**Government:** The individuals who run the state. In the UK we refer to 'central government', which is made up of the political parties that won the general election. The prime minister leads the government and appoints ministers.

**Parliament:** elected representatives who meet and debate and pass new laws. In the UK it is made up of: the House of Commons, House of Lords and the Monarch (Queen).

**Political Literacy:** have the political knowledge and understanding to take part in the political process e.g. to vote.

**House of Commons:** 650 Members of Parliament (MPs) – elected by people at a general election. The party which has the majority of MPs forms the government. MPs represent the electorate for a given area e.g. **constituency**.

**House of Lords:** Made up of appointed Life Peers (who have areas they are experts in e.g. Lord Sugar advises on business matters), and Hereditary Peers (families have held the titles and pass it down).

**Monarch:** Most of his/her powers has been given to the Prime Minister and other ministers, but does sign off all laws passed by Parliament – Royal Assent' and must agree if the Prime Minister wishes to call a general election.

## Role of Parliament

The major function of Parliament is to pass laws (legislation). There are 3 major types of laws:

1. Those proposed by the Government (**Public Bills**).
2. Those proposed by Individual MPs (**Private Member's Bills**).
3. Those proposed on behalf of organisations e.g. Local government (**Private Bills**).

**Government Bills** (proposals for new laws) account for *most* of the laws passed.

Parliament also holds the government to account for its actions – MPs of any party can call for debates on topical issues,. Committees of MPs and Lords can **scrutinise** (**examine/analyse**) proposed legislation in detail.

**Political Party** – group of people who share the political ideas and work together to achieve power at local or national level e.g. The Labour Party or the Conservative Party.

**The Cabinet** – senior members of the Government who hold ministerial jobs.

1. The law limits the number of ministers in the Cabinet.
2. Ministers receive more money than MPs.
3. The most senior ministers are the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary and the Foreign Secretary.
4. Cabinet meets regularly at 10 Downing Street.
5. The Prime Minister chairs Cabinet meetings.
6. The Prime Minister decides who is in the Cabinet and can sack them at any time.

## The Opposition

– all parties not in government – who are 'in opposition' to the Government.

The largest opposition party = Her Majesty's Official Opposition'.

UK – currently Conservative Party form the Government, the Labour Party are the Official Opposition

**General Elections – held every 5 years!**



How laws are made – UK.

## Theme 3: Politics and Participation. The Institutions of the British Constitution

### Key Words:

**Prime Minister:** the Head of Government. The monarch is the Head of State (In the USA, the President holds both posts). The Prime Minister is the leader of the largest party in the House of Commons and is an elected MP.

**Legislature:** a body normally elected that decides upon the laws that apply to a state. In the UK, Parliament is the legislature (in the USA, Congress is the legislature).

**Civil Service:** employees of the state who administer our public policy.

**Political Parties:** a group of people who share a common ideology and political beliefs and wishes to win elections in order to carry out their ideas.

### The institutions of the British Constitution:

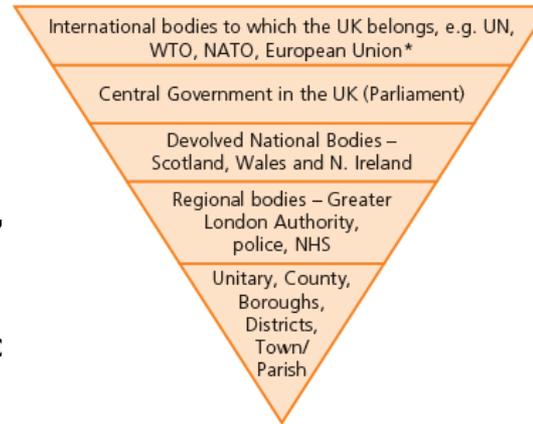
- **The Power of government** - government which is a body that makes, proposes and carries out the policy and laws.
- **The Prime Minister and Cabinet**
- **The sovereignty of Parliament** - Only Parliament can make and change laws.
- **The roles of the legislature** - Another name for Parliament which can make laws. This can be done through the House of Commons or House of Lords.
- **The Opposition** - the 'official opposition' is the name given to the largest party in the Commons not in power. The opposition are MPs representing parties not in government.
- **Political Parties**
- **The Monarch**
- **Citizens**
- **The Judiciary**
- **The Police**
- **The Civil Service:** The Civil Service is based upon three core principles:
  1. **Impartiality** - Civil Service serves the Crown and not a specific government.
  2. **Anonymity** - They should not be identified or associated with specific policies.
  3. **Permanence** - the stay in post when a government leaves office. They serve whichever government is in power.

The UK Constitution is described as being **unwritten** and **uncodified**.

	Comment	Advantages	Disadvantages
<b>Unwritten</b>	There is no single written document that is called the British Constitution. There are constitutional laws and conventions.	This makes changing aspects of constitutional law easy, no different than any other type of law.	Gives power to the government of the day to make any changes it wishes. Other countries like the USA have formal written documents and have laid out ways to make changes that involve each state.
<b>Uncodified</b>	There is a range of documents containing aspects of constitutional arrangements. They are not linked or identified as being constitutional.	It enables changes to be made easily, for example lowering the voting age can be looked at in isolation from, say, changing the parliamentary boundaries.	It enables changes to be made piecemeal that could undermine existing constitutional rights when taken together.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Local and devolved government

The term government refers to a range of structures that operate within a state. They are usually prefixed by words such as central, national, regional or local. These refer to the geographical reach of the powers of these bodies. These different levels of government are often referred to as **tiers** of government.



## Key Words:

**Tiers:** another term for levels of government.

**Central Government:** term used to describe the government of the UK.

**Devolved government:** name given to the bodies created under the policy of devolution, such as the Scottish Parliament.

**Devolved Powers:** decisions now being made by the devolved bodies e.g. Welsh Assembly.

**Reserved Powers:** still taken by the UK Parliament on behalf of all parts of the UK e.g. defence and foreign policy.

Some authorities elect majors e.g.  
In London Sadiq Khan (Labour) is the  
Lord Mayor



# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Local and devolved government

## What is devolution?

The transfer of law-making powers and/or funding from central government (in London) to other regional bodies in the UK.

### Where?

- Scottish parliament
- Welsh, Northern Ireland, or London assemblies
- regions with an elected mayor
- councils.

Local councils are the most basic form of devolution. They have control over spending on things like education and bin collection in their area.

Next come the various mayoral regions such as in London or Greater Manchester. They may have various extra powers such as over policing or housing.

The Scottish parliament is the most powerful devolved administration. It has power to change income tax rates, along with powers over health and education budgets like the Welsh and Northern Ireland assemblies.

Powers least likely to be devolved are those related to defence and international relations

## HOW DOES ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WORK?

Devolution involves transferring powers over specific policy areas from central government to local government or regional areas.

Following devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which created regional parliaments or assemblies in 1998, these areas have had control over a range of policy areas. However, England has not had the same, with MPs from the devolved areas still being able to vote on "English" issues.

In order to allow more decisions in England to be made regionally, devolution deals have been struck with large cities or urban areas.

Devolution has been agreed with 12 areas, including Greater Manchester, West Midlands, and Cornwall. Deals are under negotiation with other regions.

The London Assembly was created in 2000, in a first attempt to devolve powers to local government in England.

The devolved powers can make decisions on areas such as agriculture, education, health and social care, housing and local government

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How powers are organised

## Key Words:

**Local Elections:** elections held for councillors to local councils, held on a fixed date in May after the fixed term of office has expired.

**Lords Spiritual:** the 26 bishops of the Church of England who are members of the House of Lords.

**Voter Turnout:** the percentage of voters who actually vote against the total number who are registered to vote.

**Voter Apathy:** a lack of interest by citizens in the electoral and political process.

**Electoral Commission:** a government-established body that monitors and oversees all UK elections and referendums.

## Who can stand for election?

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- British Citizen, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the Republic of Ireland.
- You cannot stand for more than one constituency.

## You cannot stand for election if you are:

A Civil Servant; police; in the armed forces; a government nominated director of a commercial company; a judge; peer in the House of Lords (including bishops known as the Lords Spiritual).

## Candidate Selection:

This varies between political parties. The usual method is as follows:

- Local party will advertise in party journal for people to apply.
- They have to be on a list approved by the National party.
- Local party workers will then draw up a short list after interviewing potential candidates.
- A 'returning officer' (a member of another local branch) will oversee the procedure for the party.
- The potential candidates are invited to attend a meeting of party members.
- They send a leaflet to all party members asking for their vote.

## Who can vote in elections?

- A British Citizen or a member of the EU or Commonwealth living in the UK.
- Anyone 18 and over can register to vote.
- Not suffering any legal incapacity to vote.

## Who cannot vote in elections?

- Members of the House of Lords.
- People in prison
- Anyone found guilty in the last 5 years of illegal practices in connection with an election.
- Been detained under certain sections of the Mental Health Act.

In Scotland the voting age for local and Scottish Parliament elections is 16.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How powers are organised

## Keywords:

**Participation:** to take part in something.

**Apathy:** lack of interest, enthusiasm, or concern e.g.

**Voter Apathy** is a lack of interest in voting, not casting your vote.

## How can citizens participate in a democracy:

There are other ways to participate in a democracy other than voting – you can get involved in campaigning for a local or national pressure group to bring about change for example.

Participation may be quite limited, such as making a donation, or more active, such as:

1. Taking part in a campaign.
2. Raising funds.
3. Raising awareness.
4. Collecting names on a petition.
5. Lobbying or writing letters.
6. Meeting those you wish to convince/influence to help you make a change/improvement.
7. Taking part in direct action/protests.
8. Joining a political party.
9. Standing for election.

## Barriers to participation:

Language, access to education, poor housing, employment/unemployment, state of health, disability.

## Voter Apathy – so what?

There is concern about the lack of citizen involvement in political process.

1. Membership of political parties is in decline – particularly amongst young people.
2. Young people often don't vote in elections.
3. If young people don't become engaged what is the future of democracy?
4. A 'healthy' democratic can be judged on the degree to which citizens are involved in society.
5. Number of people who vote in elections has declined since WWII.
6. Political parties have difficulty raising funds.
7. This can all mean small groups or individuals have too much influence on the political process.

## Young People & Participation

Citizenship Education – introduced as a curriculum subject in 2003.

Many young people are involved in political protests via a range of groups and organisations.

A large number of young people do voluntary work and raise money for people in need.

Young people often interested in 'single issues' e.g. University fees.

## Responses to Voter Apathy?

Make it easier to get a postal vote or consider use of on-line voting (concerns over fraud here).

Having voting over several days – including a Saturday when people have more time to vote.

Education about importance of voting and also policies of different parties.

Changing the voting system e.g. Proportional Representation.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How powers are organised

## Barriers to participation in the democratic process:

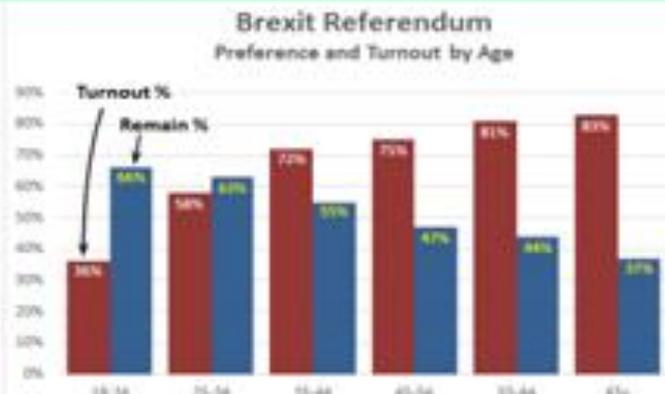
People who do not participate give a range of reasons such as:

1. Lack of interest or Apathy
2. A belief that their participation will not make a difference
3. A lack of faith in politicians and the political process
4. A lack of information or understanding about how to participate
5. The issues are not important to them
6. They lead busy lives.

Some attempts have been made to make voting and registering easier, including making Citizenship compulsory in schools. Other suggestions include;

1. Compulsory voting
2. Lowering the voting age to 16
3. Allowing online voting. Allowing weekend voting
4. Changing polling hours
5. Opening polling stations in different locations
6. Encouraging postal voting or telephone voting.

It has been seen that young people will vote on issues they feel are relevant to them. 109,000 16-17 year olds registered to vote for the Scottish referendum, making the final turnout 84%



# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How powers are organised

## Membership of UK political parties:

As of July 2016:

- Labour has 515,000 members
- Scottish National Party 120,000
- Liberal Democrats 76,000
- Green Party (England and Wales) 55,500
- UKIP 39,000
- Plaid Cymru (Wales) 8,300
- Conservative Party had 149,800 members – this was as of December 2013 (latest published figure)

The SNP is now the UK's second largest political party, but overall party membership in the UK remains tiny when compared to other countries in Europe. Several parties in the EU have more members than Labour, the Conservatives and the Lib Dems combined.

Figure 1: Membership of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat\* party 1928-2013  
Membership, millions



\* Including predecessor parties.

Full data on membership levels 1928-2013 and on data sources available within Appendix Table 1.

## Reasons FOR Lowering the Voting Age to 16.

Scotland's positive experience of including 16- and 17-year-olds in the 2014 independence referendum led to the lowering of the voting age for local and Holyrood elections.

Young people should have a say in matters that directly affect them, such as tuition fees.

After the Scottish Referendum a study by the University of Edinburgh during the referendum found that some teenagers were initially doubtful of their own abilities to make the right decision, but that this led them to actively seek out information to help inform their judgement.

Lowering the limit will encourage civic-mindedness at an earlier age and establish an interest in the political system, which will be continued throughout a person's life.

## Reasons AGAINST Lowering the Voting Age to 16.

16-year-olds haven't yet entered the world of home ownership, employment, tax or pensions but these economic issues are often at the forefront of election campaigns. They are not relevant to 16 year olds.

Lack of experience in the matters above prevents young people from making a considered judgement at the ballot box.

18- to 24-year-olds have the lowest turnout of any age group in elections, reflecting an apparent lack of interest in politics so why would a 16 year old be any better?

Teenagers who do want to cast their votes would be impressionable and easily influenced by radical politics, or would not fully think things through and would blindly vote for the same party as their parents.

**Electoral Reform Society:** The Electoral Reform Society is a founding member of the Votes at 16 coalition. Votes at 16 are not just supported by the SNP, Labour, Liberal Democrats and the Greens – but also by the leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Ruth Davidson

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Government spending

## Key Words:

**Command Economy:** a national economy where all elements of the economic system are controlled by the government.

**Market Economy:** a national economy where most of the economy is run by the private sector and the state owns and runs limited elements.

**Mixed Economy:** a national economy that has elements run and owned by the state and others run by the private sector.

**Budget:** an annual statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the House of Commons about the taxation and spending policy for the forthcoming year.

**Nationalised:** where the state owns and runs a part of the economy.

**Real Government spending:** the change in the amount government spends after taking account of inflation.

**Manifesto:** a document provided by a political party at the time of an election outlining the policies it would like to introduce.

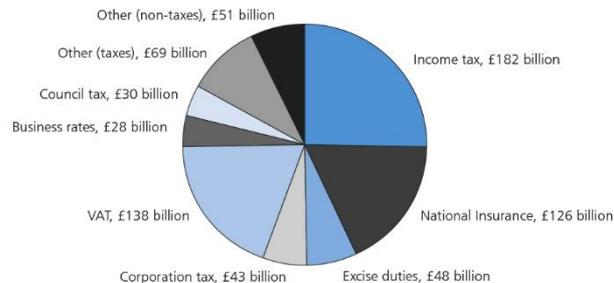
**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** the value of all the goods and services created in a country, normally measured on an annual basis.

## Government Spending:

The Government spends its money on things such as:

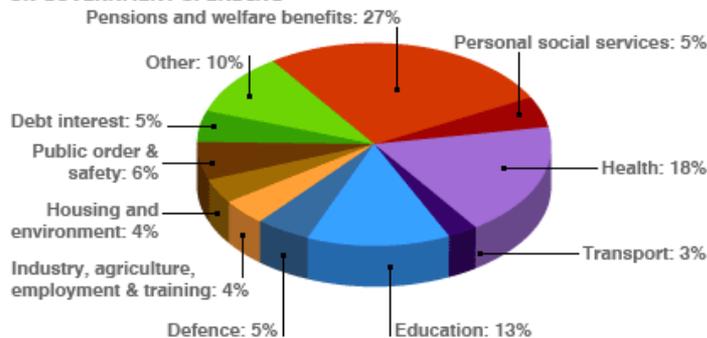
Paying interest on its debts,  
Public order and safety,  
Housing and Environment,  
Industry, Agriculture and Employment,  
Defence,  
Education,  
Transport,  
Social Services  
Health

Chart 2: Public sector receipts 2016-17



Source: Office for Budget Responsibility, 2016-17 forecast. Figures may not sum due to rounding. Other (taxes) includes capital taxes, stamp duties, vehicle excise duties and other smaller tax receipts. Other (non-taxes) includes interest and dividends, gross operating surplus and other smaller non-tax receipts.

## UK GOVERNMENT SPENDING



SOURCE: HM Treasury

## Government Income:

Council Tax  
Business Rates  
VAT  
Corporation Tax  
Income Tax  
National Insurance  
Excise Duty (e.g. Tax on alcohol, cigarettes)

## Impact of Government Spending/Cuts:

Ways in which governments raise and spend money have a huge impact on citizens e.g. Raising university fees, raising the rate of VAT, introducing a 'bedroom tax', cutting certain benefits can mean some people have less income.

If more money is being spent the Government has to decide whether to raise taxes or increase the money it borrows (public debt).

In 2008 the UK economy went into **recession** - there was a FALL in the number of things Britain made or sold, like food, cinema tickets and cars.

That meant that for the first time in years, our economy was shrinking instead of growing. This led to a period of **austerity** - government measures to reduce public spending.

Government can increase public spending by raising money the following ways:

1. Increase tax.
2. Borrow money (from World Bank)

Areas potentially needing more money:

Welfare; education; health; the elderly;

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Where does Political Power reside?

**Key Words:**

**Constituencies:** a named geographical area consisting on average of about 65,000 voters which elects a single MP to the UK Parliament.

**First Past the Post:** an election system based upon the candidate with the highest number of votes cast being elected.

**Proportional:** a system of voting whereby the number of people elected relates to the number (percentage) of votes cast.

**Supplementary voting:** a voting system used in the UK where voters have a second vote which is used in the election process if no candidate gets 50 percent of the first choice votes.

**UK Voting Systems:**

**First Past the Post –(FPTP) -** used for electing MPs in a General Election in the UK and for electing local councillors in local council elections in England & Wales.

Example, for the General Election the country is divided into constituencies (General Election) and each one elects an MP. Each person registered to vote gets one vote and casts their vote by placing a single X on their ballot paper against the candidate of their choice. The candidate with the most votes wins.

**Single Transferable Vote (STV) –** used in Northern Ireland to elect Members of the European Parliament, Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and local councillors & since 2007 in Scotland to elect local councillors. Voters place candidates in rank order i.e. 1,2,3,4 and so on (1 being your first choice), each electoral are elects several people so political parties have several candidates, a candidate is given a specific number of votes they need to be elected (*quota*), if they have more than the required number of votes required their extra votes are allocated to the second choices on ballot papers, after all the extra votes are used up the candidates with the smallest total of votes are eliminated and their votes get redistributed.

**Additional Member System (AMS) –** used for Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and Greater London Authority. Each elector has 2 votes, the first vote uses the FPTP system, the second vote is for a party list of candidates, each body using this system has a certain amount of members elected by FPTP and certain number chosen from the list.

**Party List System:** used to elect Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) in England, Scotland and Wales with each country split into regions which elect several MEPs.

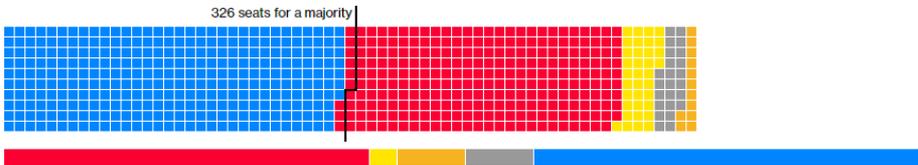
**Supplementary Vote System (SV) –** used to elect directly elected mayors including the Mayor of London.

Some people want the voting system changed in the UK from First Past the Post because the number of seats won does not reflect the number of votes (see the table on the right for the results of the 2017 election)

## 2017 National Results

Conservative lead by 55 seats | 650 of 650 seats declared

<b>Labour</b> 262 seats (+32) 12,874,284 votes (40.0%)	<b>SNP</b> 35 seats (-19) 977,568 votes (3.0%)	<b>Liberal Democrat</b> 12 seats (+3) 2,371,762 votes (7.4%)	<b>Other parties</b> 24 seats (-3) 2,339,678 votes (7.3%)	<b>Conservative</b> 317 seats (-13) 13,632,932 votes (42.3%)
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# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Where does Political Power reside?

## "democracy"

/di'mɒkrəsi/

noun:

a system of government by the entire population or a majority of eligible citizens, usually through elected representatives

## First Past the Post

[www.simplepolitics.co.uk](http://www.simplepolitics.co.uk)

"First Past the Post" is the electoral system used to elect the UK Parliament.

The UK is split into 650 constituencies - in each one voters put a cross in the box next to their preferred candidate

The candidate with the most votes becomes the MP for that constituency.

The party with the overall majority of seats becomes the party of government.

First Past the Post is supposed to give clear majorities, although this has recently been challenged by the 2010 General Election - where no party had an overall majority.



This is the constituency map from the 2015 General Election. The Conservative party had a 12 seat majority over Labour, but other parties - such as the SNP, Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru, Green and UKIP - also won seats.

Sources: [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk), [parliament.uk](http://parliament.uk), Electoral Reform Society.

## Single Transferable Vote (STV)

STV is a form of Proportional Representation, and aims to ensure that as little votes as possible get wasted.

Voters rank candidates on the ballot paper in order of preference - their favourite as number 1, second favourite as number 2, etc. They do not have to rank every single one.

Candidates need a set amount of votes in order to be elected. This means that if someone's first-choice candidate does not meet this requirement and will not get elected, their votes gets moved to their second choice.

In the end, rather than just sending one MP, constituencies are able to send a 'team' of MPs that best represents the spread of votes in that area.

STV is used to elect the Northern Ireland Assembly, in Scottish local elections and in most elections in the Republic of Ireland.

## The Alternative Vote System (AV)

AV is one of the most common majority systems - it is not Proportional Representation.

AV is a preferential voting system - voters put a "1" but their first choice candidate, a "2" by their second choice, etc.

In 2011, a referendum was held to change the electoral system in the UK to AV - but only 32% voted in favour.

If one of the candidates immediately wins an overall majority - over 50% of the votes - then they are automatically elected. However, this is not always the case!

### Ballot Paper

Candidate A 4  
Candidate B 2  
Candidate C 1  
Candidate D 5  
Candidate E 3

If no-one gets a majority, the candidate with the **fewest** first-choice votes is eliminated, and their votes move to the second preference. This process continues until one candidate has the majority of votes.

[www.simplepolitics.co.uk](http://www.simplepolitics.co.uk)

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. Where does Political Power reside?

## FPTP

Produces 'strong' government through majorities

Retains strong link between constituency and MP

Easy to understand

## AV

Produces 'strong' government through majorities

Retains strong constituency link and ensures 50% support of the elected candidate

## AMS

Can produce 'strong' majority government

Retains constituency link

Gives more voice to minor parties

## STV

Far fewer votes wasted

Retains constituency link

Gives voice to minor parties

## Full PR

Very few votes wasted

Easy to understand

Gives full voice to minor parties (but this could mean for extremists, too)

Some people believe the advantages are:

Some people believe the disadvantages are:

A lot of wasted votes

Makes it hard for new parties to emerge and is often not representative of the public vote

Can produce results that are even less representative

Requires knowledge of all parties

Can create ultra-safe seats

Creates two-tier representatives

Can mean very minor party in government

Difficult to understand

Leads to large constituencies

Hard to produce a 'strong' majority government

No constituency link and creates ultra-safe seats

Likely to produce coalitions with lots of post-election deals needed

We don't know for certain but the 2015 could have looked like

Con 331 Lab 232  
LD 8, SNP 56  
UKIP 1, Gr 1  
Plaid 3, DUP 8  
UUP 2, Sinn Fein 4

Con 337 Lab 227  
LD 9, SNP 54  
UKIP 1, Gr 1  
Plaid 3, DUP 8  
UUP 2, Sinn Fein 4

Dependent on proportion of constituency to list seats

Con 276 Lab 236  
LD 26, SNP 34  
UKIP 54, Gr 3  
Plaid 4, DUP 5  
UUP 3, Sinn Fein 4

Con 242 Lab 208  
LD 47, SNP 30  
UKIP 80, Gr 20  
Plaid 4, DUP 5  
UUP 3, Sinn Fein 3

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. The Political Parties in the UK.

**Key Words:**

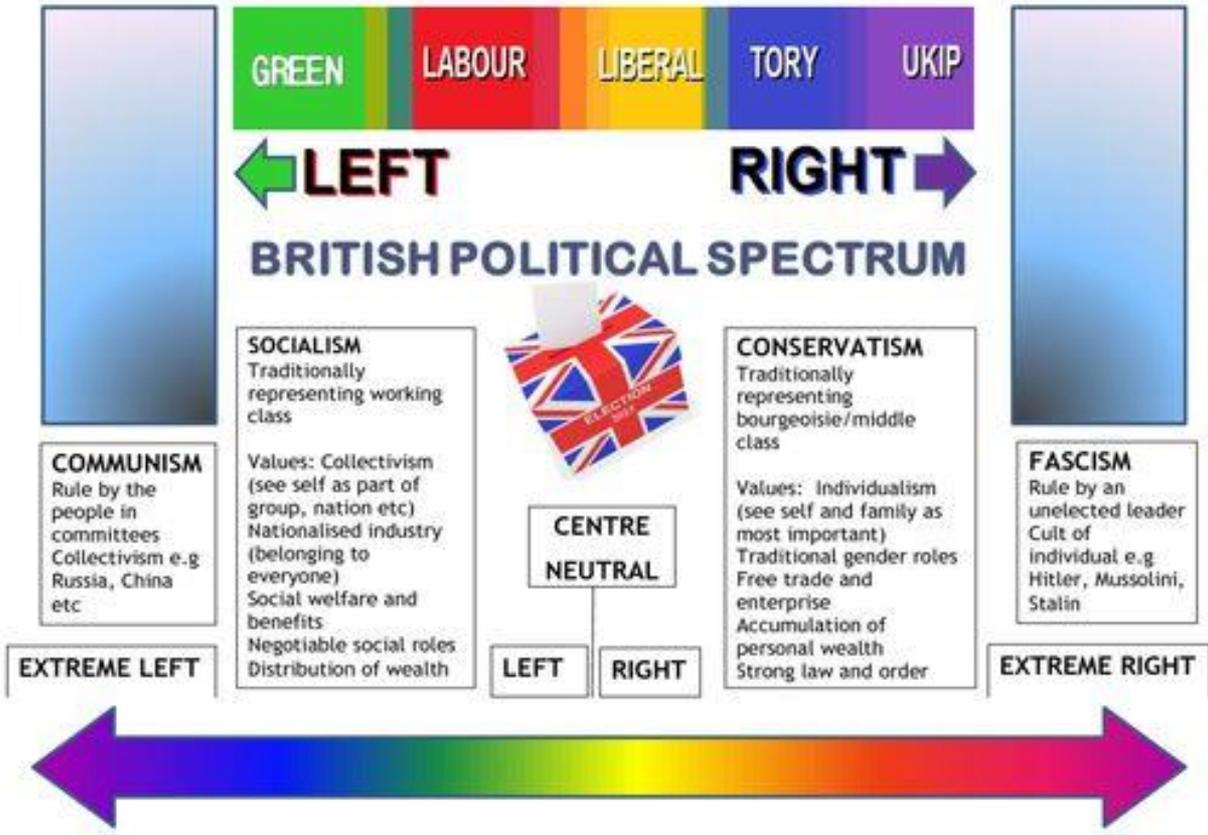
**Two Party System:** a political system that is dominated by two political parties, each of which may at some time form a government.

**New Right:** a view of conservatism (linked to Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s) that limiting the impact of the state on business and lowering taxation and what services the state provided was the best means of increasing national wealth and allowed for personal empowerment and increased social mobility.

**Individual Liberty:** the concept that in a modern democracy people have the freedom to make their own choices and decisions.

**Tolerance:** a concept based upon the idea that in a modern society people show understanding of others with differing views and opinions.

**Political Ideology** - This is the different ideas and policies that political parties have and the values that help a political party decide on any political issue. Traditionally political parties have been labelled as being to the right, left or centre.



# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. The Political Parties in the UK.

Policy area	Conservatives	Labour	Liberal Democrats
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase the overall schools budget in England by £4bn by 2022</li> <li>● No school will have its budget cut as a result of the new funding formula</li> <li>● End the ban on new selective schools</li> <li>● Introduce T-Levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Abolish university tuition fees and reintroduce maintenance grants</li> <li>● 30 hours of free childcare for two-year-olds in England</li> <li>● End the public sector pay cap for teachers</li> <li>● Restrict primary class sizes to 30 and introduce free school meals for primary school children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Spend £7bn extra on education, increasing school budgets and the Pupil Premium</li> <li>● Oppose grammar schools</li> <li>● End the 1% cap on teachers' pay rises</li> <li>● Reinstate maintenance grants for the poorest students</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● £8bn increase to NHS England budget compared to current level by 2022-23</li> <li>● Include value of family home in means test for people receiving social care at home</li> <li>● Cost of care to be capped and people guaranteed to keep £100,000 of assets once care bill paid</li> <li>● Allow deferral of care bills until after death to ensure no one is forced to sell family home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Commit to more than £30bn in extra funding for the NHS in England over the next five years</li> <li>● Reverse privatisation and return health services into public control</li> <li>● Guarantee access to NHS treatment within 18 weeks and A&amp;E within four hours</li> <li>● Lay the foundations of a National Care service and put an extra £8bn into social care over the next five years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Add 1p onto each rate of income tax and ring-fence the money for NHS and social care</li> <li>● Ensure mental health care waiting time standards match those in physical health care</li> <li>● Ensure that there are more nurses on hospital wards and in the community</li> <li>● Introduce a Welsh NHS whistle-blowing hotline</li> </ul>
Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reduce net migration to tens of thousands</li> <li>● Double the Immigration Skills Charge on companies employing migrant workers</li> <li>● Increase minimum earnings threshold for family visa sponsorship</li> <li>● Toughen requirements for student visas and rules allowing them to stay and work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Freedom of movement will end when Britain leaves the European Union</li> <li>● Reinstate the Migrant Impact fund in areas where immigration has placed a strain on public services</li> <li>● Take students out of immigration numbers</li> <li>● Recruit 500 more border guards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support the principle of freedom of movement between the UK and EU</li> <li>● Allow high-skilled immigration to support key sectors of the economy</li> <li>● Remove students from official migration statistics</li> <li>● Welcome 50,000 Syrian refugees over five years and re-establish the 'Dubs' child refugee scheme</li> </ul>

Examples of how the Manifestos differ between the different Political Parties.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How Parliament works.

## Key Words:

**Scrutinise:** examine and inspect closely and thoroughly the work of government.

**Private Members Bill:** a bill, a draft for law, that is proposed by an MP.

**Public Bills:** bills proposed by government ministers.

**Private Bills:** bills promoted by organisations e.g. local authorities or private companies.

**Hybrid Bills:** these mix the characteristics of public and private bills. These would affect the general public as well as specific groups and individuals e.g. the construction of the HS2 rail line.

**NDPBs:** non-departmental public bodies, formerly quangos.

**Quangos:** quasi autonomous non-government organisations. These are bodies that work with the government, sometimes carrying out services on behalf of the government and funded by government.

The Civil Service and its employees play an important role in British life by making sure that the Government policy is carried out. Although it serves the Government of the day, it is politically independent by which it ensures the functioning of the system, stability and security.

## Ways in which Parliament can hold the government to account?

- **Questions** – MPs can ask ministers and the Prime Minister questions; Prime Ministers Questions (PMQs) – these are questions answered by the PM every Wednesday. The Leaders of the Opposition get first opportunity to ask questions then the back bench MPs can.
- **Work of committees** – Committees work for Parliament and draft laws. Select committees investigate the work of each government department. These committees can demand answers to questions. Backbench Business Committees can select motions for debate such as e-petitions that have had over 100,000 signatures.
- **Debates** – MPs can also take part in Parliamentary debates. They can allow MPs and Lords to discuss government policy, propose new laws and current issues. At the end of the debate a vote is taken.

## The Legislative Process (How laws are made)

In order to become a law, an idea must be set out in writing. It then goes through various parliamentary stages before it is signed into law by the monarch. These stages are shown in Figure 7.3.

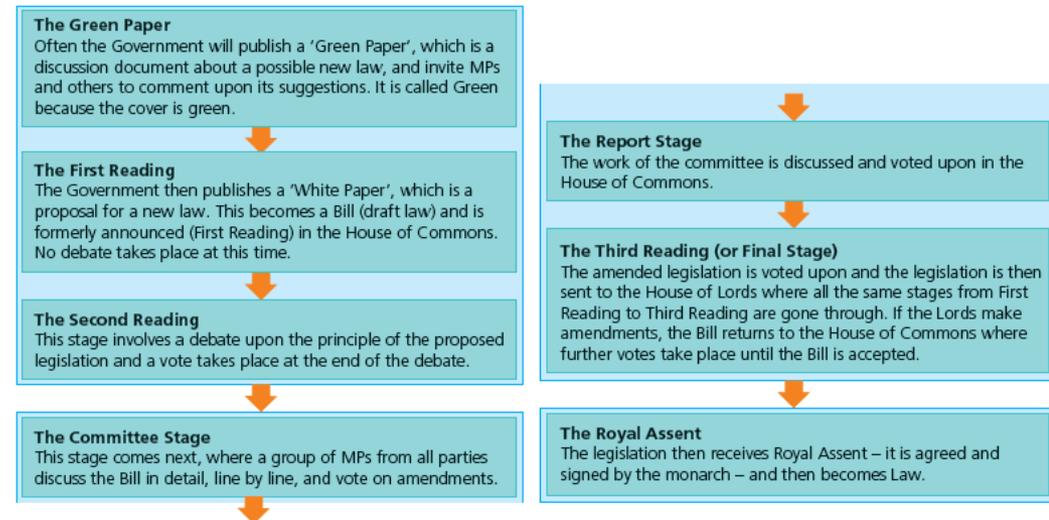
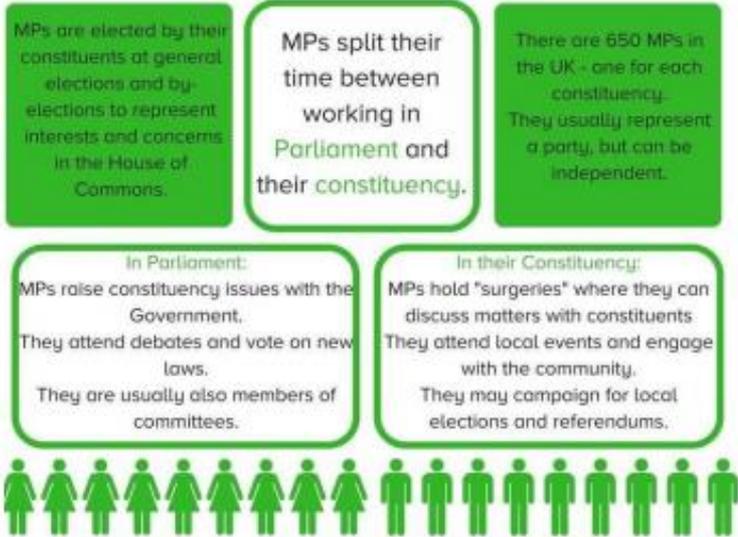


Figure 7.3 How laws are made by Parliament

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How Parliament works.

## What is the role of an MP?



## How an MP may vote

With conscience	With constituents	With the whip
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MPs are representatives and not delegates so should vote according to their beliefs</li> <li>The whips may ask an MP to vote against a position they've always held or campaigned on</li> <li>If the MP believes the position that they are asked to take will cause such harm to the country.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a referendum, a decision was made by constituents so an MP should vote according to the wishes of the people that they represent</li> <li>To maintain popularity in constituency and to keep the job!</li> <li>If the position they are asked to take has a negative impact on their constituency e.g. HS2 bill</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To show loyalty to party - after all MPs are usually elected because they belong to a particular party rather than because of who they are.</li> <li>To vote with the party in the hope of a future promotion.</li> <li>To avoid the collapse of a party- there needs to be unity to get bills passed.</li> </ol>

## Powers of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Prime Ministers have certain constitutional powers.

Although there is Cabinet government in the UK, the Prime Minister's power is assured through 'primus inter pares': first among equals.

How well they use these powers depends on their personality and political style.

The Prime Minister does not have the constitutional authority a US President has. The Prime Minister is not directly elected by the voters. A governing party can replace the Prime Minister without consulting the voters, as Labour did when it elected Gordon Brown to replace Tony Blair in 2007.

Most MPs seek promotion. The PM can use this ambition to ensure loyalty. Sometimes a Prime Minister will appoint rivals into the Cabinet. Prime Ministers can use the protocol of 'collective responsibility' to silence Cabinet critics. Once a cabinet meeting, chaired by the Prime Minister makes a decision, all cabinet Ministers must support it, whether they agree with it or not. If they speak out in public, they must resign. Examples of ministers who spoke out against the war in Iraq were Clare Short and the late Robin Cook.

The Prime Minister can re-shuffle Cabinet Ministers to different Cabinet posts. He has the power of appointment of junior ministers, senior civil servants, bishops and judges.

## Special advisers

Prime ministers, and other ministers, often appoint special advisers.

They are an additional resource for the Minister, providing assistance from a standpoint that is more politically committed and politically aware than would be available to them from the Civil Service.

Some are critical of how much special advisers are consulted compared to Cabinet colleagues.

# Theme 3: Politics and Participation. How Parliament works.

## Ceremonial Roles and key parliamentary roles

Parliamentary role	Commentary
<b>The Speaker</b>	<p>The Speaker of the House of Commons is elected to the post by their fellow MPs. They chair debates in the Commons Chamber. The Speaker is the chief officer and has the highest authority in the Commons. The Speaker interprets the rules of the House. They can bar members, decide who speaks and can call ministers to the House to make statements.</p> <p>There are three Deputy Speakers who can also chair sittings of the House. They are also elected by their fellow MPs. They are known as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the Chairman of Ways and Means</li> <li>● the First Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means</li> <li>● the Second Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means.</li> </ul> <p>Once elected, these MPs withdraw from any active political role.</p> <p>The Lord Speaker is elected by members of the House of Lords. Politically impartial, they are responsible for chairing the debates in the Lords chamber and offering advice on procedure.</p>
<b>Whips</b>	<p>Whips are MPs or Members of the House of Lords appointed by each party in Parliament to help organise parliamentary business and to ensure that their party's MPs turn out and vote according to the party's wishes.</p> <p>Every week, whips send out a notice (called 'The Whip') to their MPs and Lords detailing parliamentary business for the week and giving instructions on how to vote.</p>
<b>Frontbench MPs</b>	<p>Frontbenchers sit on the front green benches nearest to the Speaker in the House of Commons. On the government side this is where ministers sit, and on the opposition benches is where the shadow ministers representing the official opposition party sit.</p>
<b>Backbench MPs</b>	<p>A backbencher is an ordinary MP who holds no government or opposition post so therefore sits behind the front bench on the backbenches.</p>
<b>Black Rod</b>	<p>Black Rod is a senior officer in the House of Lords. They are responsible for its security. Black Rod is also the Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain and is responsible for and participates in the major ceremonial events at the Palace of Westminster, for example during the State Opening of Parliament.</p>

## Theme 3: Politics and Participation: Bringing about political change (Active Citizenship)

### Key Words:

**Lobbying:** a campaigning method whereby traditionally members of the public spoke to their MP in the central lobby at the House of Commons to enlist their support for their cause.

**House of Commons:** the first chamber of Parliament made up currently of 650 elected members. The government is formed based on the composition of this chamber. It is a legislative chamber that also holds the government to account.

**E-petitions:** a means whereby petitioning can take place online. The government has introduced its own system and many campaign groups have set up their own systems to gather support.

**Human Rights:** these are basic rights and freedoms to which all people are entitled. Since the end of the Second World War, these rights have been written into a large number of international charters.

**E-petitions** are an easy way to have concerns heard by Government and Parliament. E-petitions enable members of the public to petition the House of Commons and press for action from the government. E-petitions have to ask for a specific action from the government or the House of Commons and should be about something which the Government or the House of Commons is responsible for. A petition will need to be supported by at least six people before it is published on the petitions site for other people to sign.

An e-petition will stay open on the e-petitions website for six months. If the Petitions Committee decides that a petition should be debated in the main House of Commons Chamber, it would take that request to the Backbench Business Committee. The Petitions Committee will take the threshold of 100,000 signatures as a starting point when it considers which petitions should be debated.

But sometimes the Committee might not put forward a petition for debate if it's got over 100,000 signatures - for example, if the same subject has recently been debated or if a debate is going to happen soon. If that's the case, we'll tell you how you can find out more about parliamentary debates on the issue raised by your petition.



## Theme 3: Politics and Participation: Practice Exam Questions

1. How does a monarchy differ from a theocracy? (4)
2. Evaluate whether it is important to have a 'free press'? (8)
3. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of an unwritten constitution (6)
4. Examine why the three principles of impartiality, anonymity, and permanence important in regard to the civil service in the UK? (8)
5. How does a county council differ from a district council? (2)
6. How does the Budget differ from the Autumn Statement? (2)
7. Justify the creation of more unitary councils (8)
8. Evaluate whether welfare spending is a political issue in the UK (8)
9. Examine why low voter turn out is an issue (8)
10. 'devolution will lead to the break-up of the United Kingdom.' to what extent can this statement be justified? (8)
11. Suggest two possible ways in which voter turn out can be improved (2)
12. Make a case for all local councils having a directly elected mayor (8)
13. What is a coalition government? (2)
14. Outline how three different election systems operate in the UK (6)
15. Justify the following view 'the UK has a presidential government rather than a prime ministerial government' (8)
16. Explain why the House of Commons is more important than the House of Lords (4)
17. Discuss why departmental select committees are important (6)
18. Examine the view that there is no real ideological basis any more to the major Westminster political parties (8)
19. Describe and explain the key principles that govern the way the UK civil service operates (6)
20. Consider reasons why so few people vote in the UK for elections to the European Parliament (4)
21. Explain how the European parliament differs from the UK Parliament (4)
22. Examine the ways that the UK system of government could become more democratic (8)
23. Consider why some countries are described as being semi-democratic (8)

## Advice on Answering Exam Questions.

AO1 (1-2marks)	AO2 (4 -6marks)	AO3 (8 marks) (12 marks = AO2 and AO3)
<p><b>Define</b> Specify meaning.</p>	<p><b>Compare</b> Identify similarities and/or differences.</p>	<p><b>Analyse</b> Separate information into components and identify their characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Explain</b> Set out purposes or reasons.</p>	<p><b>Consider</b> Review and respond to given information.</p>	<p><b>Evaluate</b> Judge from available evidence.</p>
<p><b>Identify</b> Name or otherwise characterize.</p>	<p><b>Describe</b> Set out characteristics.</p>	<p><b>Examine</b> Consider carefully and provide a detailed account of the indicated topic.</p>
<p><b>Name</b> Identify using a recognised technical term.</p>	<p><b>Discuss</b> Present key points about different ideas or strengths and weaknesses of an idea.</p>	<p><b>Justify</b> Support a case with evidence.</p>