

Politics A-Level

Revision booklet



Component 1 – UK Politics

- a. Democracy and participation
- b. Political parties
- c. Electoral systems
- d. Voting and the media

Core political ideas

- e. Liberalism
- f. Conservatism
- g. Anarchism

Component 1 – UK Politics

2-hour paper

1 x 30-mark Source question – (choice of 2)

1x 30-mark none Source question – (choice of 2)

1 x 24 ideology – (choice of 2)

Total 84 marks

Questions

Democracy and participation:

Key themes – How healthy is UK democracy? Is there a participation crisis? What is the role of pressure groups in democracy and what makes one successful? Are rights protected well enough in the UK?

1. To what extent is representative democracy superior to direct democracy?
2. Is the UK experiencing a democratic deficit?
3. Is the UK experiencing a participation crisis?
4. Should voting be made compulsory?
5. Should the voting age be lowered to 16?
6. Do pressure groups promote democracy and participation?
7. To what extent is pressure group success down to large membership?
8. Does the UK now have a 'rights- based' culture?
9. Rights are not sufficiently protected in the UK. Discuss.

Political parties:

Key themes – What do the parties stand for and how have they changed? How important are the minor and major parties? Should party funding be reformed? What makes a party successful?

1. Should parties be state funded?
2. To what extent is the Labour Party true to its core policies and ideas?
3. To what extent is the Conservative Party true to its core policies and ideas?
4. To what extent is the Liberal Democrat Party true to its core policies and ideas?
5. To what extent is the Labour Party united?
6. To what extent is the Conservative Party united?
7. To what extent is the UK a multi- party system?
8. To what extent are the minor parties becoming more powerful in the UK?
9. To what extent do political parties still dominate UK politics?
10. To what extent is the influence of the media the most important factor in determining the success or failure of political party?

Electoral systems:

Key themes – What are the advantages and disadvantages of the different voting systems and how are they used? Would more referendums be good for democracy?

1. Do the advantages of the FPTP outweigh the disadvantages?
2. Should the FPTP system for Westminster be replaced by STV?
3. Do the positives of the alternative electoral systems in the UK outweigh the negatives?
4. Do referendums create more problems than solutions?
5. Do referendums improve democracy in the UK?

Voting Behaviour and the Media:

**Key themes – What makes people vote the way they do? How influential is the media?
Knowledge of at least 3 elections**

1. Evaluate the view that the newspaper press has major impact on voting behaviour?
2. Evaluate the view that class is no longer important in determining voting behaviour?
3. Evaluate the view that social factors are crucial in determining elections?
4. Evaluate the view that elections are won on wider political events rather than party manifestos?
5. Evaluate the extent to which general elections in the UK are lost by the government rather than won by the opposition.
6. Evaluate the extent to which social factors determine voting behaviour.
7. Evaluate the extent to which 'new' forms of media changed voting behaviour?

Conservatism

1. To what extent do conservatives agree about paternalism?
2. To what extent do conservatives agree about liberty?
3. To what extent do conservatives agree about human nature?
4. To what extent do conservatives agree about the state?
5. To what extent do conservatives agree about the economy?
6. To what extent do conservatives agree about society?

Liberalism

1. To what extent do liberals agree about freedom?
2. To what extent do liberals agree about human nature?
3. To what extent do liberals agree about the state?
4. To what extent do liberals agree about the economy?
5. To what extent do liberals agree about society?
6. Is modern liberalism a continuation of classical liberalism?

Socialism

1. To what extent do socialists agree about collectivism?
2. To what extent do socialists agree about equality?
3. To what extent do socialists agree about common ownership?
4. To what extent do socialists agree about human nature?
5. To what extent do socialists agree about the state?
6. To what extent do socialists agree about the economy?
7. To what extent do socialists agree about how to achieve socialism?
8. Is the Third Way socialist?

Politics check list Component 1

	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Democracy and participation			
Define representative and direct democracy			
Describe core features of representative and direct democracy			
Know examples of representative and direct democracy			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of representative and direct democracy			
Describe democratic features of UK system with examples			
Describe undemocratic features of UK system with examples			
Assess the state of democracy (democratic deficit) in the UK			
Give examples of good participation in UK			
Give examples of lack of participation in UK			
Assess whether there is a participation crisis			
Assess whether compulsory voting should be introduced (know arguments)			
Assess whether voting should be lowered (know arguments)			
Be able to describe history of the franchise in the UK			
Describe sectional, cause pressure groups and social movements			
Describe difference between insider and outsider groups with examples			
Describe different methods used by different groups and how effective they are			
Know case studies of at least 2 groups (i.e. BMA and Occupy)			
Assess why some groups have more influence than others and what this means for democracy			
Describe think tanks, lobbyists and corporations with examples			
Describe some rights that we have in the UK			
Describe the major milestones in development of rights (e.g. Magna Carta)			
Describe how rights are protected in the UK			
Examples of rights being well protected			
Examples of rights not being well protected			
Assessment of how well rights are protected in the UK			

Key terms

- Legitimacy, Direct democracy, Representative democracy, Pluralist democracy, Democratic deficit, Participation crisis, Franchise/suffrage, Think tanks, Lobbyists

Political parties	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Define political parties and how they differ from pressure groups			
Describe core functions of political parties			
Describe how funding of political parties works			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of reforming funding of political parties			
Describe the establishment and traditions of the Conservative party with policies			
Describe Thatcherism with policies			
Describe the current policies of the Conservative party and if they are one nation or Thatcherite			
Describe the establishment and traditions of the Labour party with policies			
Describe New Labour with policies			
Describe the current policies of the Labour party and if they are socialist or not			
Describe the establishment and traditions of the Liberal party with policies			
Describe the Lib Dem experience of the coalition government			
Describe the current policies of the Liberal Democrats			
Describe the minor parties in the UK and what they stand for – SNP, Plaid Cymru, Green and UKIP			
Assess arguments over whether minor parties are significant in UK politics			
Assess whether we still have a two party system in the UK and how this affects government			
Describe party systems in devolved assemblies			
Assess the different factors that affect party success			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)

- Old Labour (social democracy), New Labour (Third Way), One Nation, New Right, Classical liberals, Modern liberals, Party systems, Left-wing, Right-wing

Electoral systems	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Describe the functions of electoral systems			
Describe the criteria of a good electoral system (Jenkins Report)			
Understand the difference between plurality, majoritarian and proportional systems			
Describe how FPTP works			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of FPTP with examples			
Describe how AMS works			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of AMS with examples			
Describe how STV works			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of STV with examples			
Describe how SV works			
Assess advantages and disadvantages of SV with examples			
Understand whether each system is plurality, majoritarian or proportional and be able to compare them			
Be able to describe why the different electoral systems were chosen throughout the UK			
To be able to understand how an electoral system can affect government (example – coalitions)			
Describe the effect of different systems on voter choice and party representation			
What is a referendum and how are they conducted with examples			
Describe the circumstances in which referendums are held			
Assess the arguments for and against referendums			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)

- First-past-the-post (FPTP), Additional Member System (AMS), Single Transferable Vote (STV), Supplementary Vote (SV), Safe seat, Marginal seat, Minority government, Coalition government

Voting behaviour and the media	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Define the key words outlined in the specification (attached)			
To understand how class can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how age can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how gender and ethnicity can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how media can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how government competency can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how region can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how policies can effect voting behaviour with examples			
To understand how events can effect voting behaviour with examples			
Describe and assess the importance of key factors influencing the 1979 election			
Describe and assess the importance of key factors influencing the 1997 election			
Describe and assess the importance of key factors influencing the 2017 election			
To describe opinion polls and why they can important			
Describe the different types of media and how this changing			
To assess how much the media can effect voting behaviour with examples and to explain why this is an important debate			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)

- Class dealignment, Partisan dealignment, Governing competency, Disillusion and apathy, Manifesto, Mandate

Core political ideologies

Liberalism	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Understand the historical context of emergence of liberalism			
To understand how core principles of liberalism relate to:			
Individualism			
Liberty			
State			
Rationalism			
Equality and social justice			
Liberal democracy			
To describe what classical liberals are with policies and examples			
To describe what modern liberals are with policies and examples			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of John Locke			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Mary Wollstonecraft			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of John Stuart Mill			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of John Rawls			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Better Friedan			
To describe what unites all liberals			
To be able to apply differences across a range of questions and themes			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)

- Foundational equality, Formal equality, Equality of opportunity, Social contract, Meritocracy Mechanistic theory, Tolerance, Limited government
- Egoistical individualism, Developmental individualism, Negative freedom, Positive freedom Laissez-faire capitalism, Keynesianism
- Harm principle, Minimal state, Enabling state

Conservatism	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Understand the historical context of emergence of conservatism			
To understand how core principles of conservatism relate to:			
Pragmatism			
Tradition			
Human imperfection			
Organic society/ state			
Paternalism			
Libertarianism			
To describe what traditional conservatives are with policies and examples			
To describe what one nation conservatives are with policies and examples			
To describe what new right conservatives are with policies and examples (including difference between neo-liberal and neo-conservative)			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Thomas Hobbes			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Edmund Burke			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Michael Oakeshott			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Ayn Rand			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Robert Nozick			
To describe what unites all conservatives			
To be able to apply differences across a range of questions and themes			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hierarchy, Authority, Change to conserve, Atomism • Noblesse oblige, Anti-permissiveness, Radical, Human imperfection • Laissez-faire, Empiricism

Socialism	Poor	Good	Excel lent
Understand the historical context of emergence of socialism			
To understand how core principles of conservatism relate to:			
Collectivism			
Common Humanity and human nature			
Equality			
Social class			
Workers control			
Libertarianism			
To describe what revolutionary socialists are with policies and examples			
To describe what social democrats are with policies and examples			
To describe what Third way socialists are with policies and examples			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Karl Marx			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Beatrice Webb			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Rosa Luxemburg			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Anthony Crosland			
Know and apply the key principles of the work of Anthony Giddens			
To describe what unites all socialists			
To be able to apply differences across a range of questions and themes			

Key terms (key principles/ Tensions/ Thinkers)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraternity, Cooperation, Capitalism, Common ownership, Communism, • Evolutionary, socialism, Marxism, Revisionism, Social justice • Class consciousness, Historical materialism, Dialectic, Keynesian economics