

Summer transition work: Politics

Course outline

<u>Year 12</u>	<u>Year 13</u>
<u>Component 1 UK Politics</u> - o Democracy and participation - o Political parties - o Electoral systems - o Voting behaviour and the media You will also study the following political ideas: liberalism, conservatism, and socialism <u>Component 2 UK Government</u> - o The constitution - o Parliament - o Prime Minister and executive - o Relationships between the branches You will also study one of the following political ideas: feminism or nationalism	In Year 2 you will be studying US Politics and Government and will also focus on comparative features and synoptic tasks in relation to UK and US politics <u>US Politics</u> Electoral process and direct democracy, Political parties and Pressure groups. <u>US Government</u> The Constitution, Congress, The Presidency, The Supreme Court and Civil Rights.
<u>There are three exams (2 hours each) and no coursework.</u> 1. UK Politics 2. UK Government 3. Comparative Politics: The Government and Politics of the USA	



Please complete the following tasks in preparation for A-Level Politics

You will need to download the following booklet: <https://assets-learning.parliament.uk/uploads/2019/12/How-it-Works-booklet.pdf>

Read through the booklet and complete the following activities:

Task one: in your own words, define the following keywords/phrases

<u>Keyword or phrase</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Politics	
Suffrage	
Political participation	
Democracy	
Direct democracy	
Representative democracy	
Member of Parliament (MP)	
General election	
Devolution	
Devolved Assemblies/Parliament	
By-election	
Referendum	
Manifesto	

First-Past-The-Post (FPTP)	
Constitution	
Uncodified constitution	
Parliamentary sovereignty	
Legislature	
Executive	
Judiciary	

Role of Parliament	
Parliamentary Reform Acts 1911 and 1949	
Human Rights Act 1998	
Constitutional Reform Act 2005	
Fixed Term Parliament Act 2011	
Bicameral legislature	
House of Commons	
Constituency	
Frontbencher	
Backbencher	
The Speaker	
The Opposition	

House of Lords	
Crossbencher	
Life Peer	
Hereditary Peer	
Select Committee	
Legislative Committee	
Government Bills	
Private Members Bills	
Political Party	
Party Whips	
Party Rebel	
Coalition Government	
Partisan	
Dealignment	
Pressure group	
Sectional Pressure group	
Causal Pressure group	
Insider Pressure group	
Outsider Pressure group	
Lobbying	

Petition	
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Task two: investigate the role of an MP

- a) Research your local MP, who are they; which party do they represent; which constituency do they represent; what have they recently shown an interest in; research their voting history to see where they stand on key issues (not just Brexit!) <https://members.parliament.uk/>
- b) Investigate the role of an MP by playing the game in the link: <https://learning.parliament.uk/resources/mp-for-a-week/#cta-target>

<u>What I have found out about my local MP</u>	<u>What I have discovered about the role of an MP</u>

Task three: watch the news over the summer break. Write down 10 political stories below including a summary of the event, outcome and date. This can be about both UK politics and USA politics.

1.

2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Task four: research one pressure group that currently exists in the UK and create a fact file on them. Use the following checklist to keep you on track.

	Name
	Logo
	What type of group are they? (causal, sectional, insider, outsider...)
	What are they campaigning for and why?
	What methods have they used for campaigning?

	Do you think they have been successful so far?
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Task five: one of the biggest issues in politics is whether 16-year-olds should have the right to vote!

Read the source below and answer the following questions.

In the UK, the minimum voting age is 18, except in Scotland, where 16-and-17-year-olds have been given the right to vote in local and Scottish parliamentary elections. By and large, 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. The main argument against lowering the voting age is that a lack of experience in these matters prevents young people from making a considered judgement at the ballot box.

Opponents also point to the fact that 18 to 24-year-olds have the lowest turnout of any age group in elections, reflecting an apparent lack of interest in politics. These critics question whether an even younger generation would be any different. And there are concerns that 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.

But calls to lower the voting age come from a range of sources- adults as well as teenagers themselves, backed up by youth organisations, pressure groups and politicians. 16-and-17-year-olds in the Isle of Man, Jersey, Guernsey, Brazil and Austria already have the vote. They can also vote in some elections in Germany, Malta and Norway. Evidence from the Scottish Independence Referendum, substantiated by research from Austria and Norway, shows aided by encouragement from families and schools- 16-and-17-year-olds have higher rates of turnout than 18 to 24-year-olds.

For supporters, it's about giving young people a say in matters that directly affect them, such as tuition fees. It's also thought that 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. 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.

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. In some cases, teenagers even influenced their parents' voting intentions with their new-found knowledge.

But as there are no immediate plans for the UK Government to debate lowering the voting age for general elections, it is unlikely that all 16-year-olds will get the chance to put that to the test any time soon.

Sources: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zsbtbk7> and <https://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/campaigns/votes-at-16/>

1) Define the following political and non-political words from the source.

Parliamentary elections	
Forefront	
Ballot box	
Turnout	
Impressionable	
Radical politics	
Blindly	
Pressure groups	
Substantiated	
Tuition fees	
Civic mindedness	
Referendum	
Holyrood	
Voting intentions	

2) Using two different coloured highlighters, indicate:

- a) The arguments in the source that support the view that 16- to 18-year-olds should be given the vote.
- b) The arguments in the source that support the view that the voting age should remain at 18.
- c) Match up 3 arguments that support the view that 16- to 18-year-olds should be given the vote with 3 counter-arguments that support the view that they should not.

Arguments for	Arguments against

3) You are now going to practice **analysing** one of these arguments. You are going to use **evidence** to back up your **analysis**. You may need to do some additional research to answer these questions.

The source states that the 18-24 age group has the lowest turnout in UK elections so therefore, even younger voters are likely to have an even lower turnout.

What is turnout?

For example, what was the turnout for 18-24 year old in the recent 2019 election?

How does this compare with turnout for the age group in the 2017 and 2015 general elections?

Why, therefore, is it perhaps not a good idea to extend the vote to 16 and 17 year olds?

In the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum (the first UK election to give 16-year-olds the vote), what was the turnout for 16-18 year olds? Which age group had the lowest turnout in this referendum?

Therefore, how does this argument prove that the voting age should not be reduced to 16 years old?

We would love for you to use the time over the coming weeks and months to get interested in Politics. Developing your interest in the subject and building your general political knowledge. The following are suggestions, they are not compulsory, but we would love for you to engage in any that you find interesting.



	Stitcher – A-level politics podcast Beyond Westminster BBC politics podcasts The Westminster Hour Politics.co.uk podcasts Guardian ‘po litics w eek ly ’ po dcasts Going the way of the dodo 10 of the best podcasts Takes from the lobby Learn out loud podcasts
	iPlayer Climate Change Playlist Politics Live – BBC iPlayer The Andrew Marr Show The Politics Show Question Time BBC Parliament Cabinet Confidential