



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.1.1 UK Constitution

Learning about this topic is important because:

This topic lays out the basis for the framework of politics within the UK and key concepts such as legitimacy, sovereignty, rule of law and representation.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.4 UK judiciary: Role of the Supreme Court in protecting collective and individual rights

3.1.1.5 UK and devolution: Impact of devolution on government of the UK

3.1.2.2 UK referendums: the nature and use of referendums in the UK and their impact on parliamentary sovereignty. Impact of Brexit on the Constitution

3.1.2.2 UK elections: the workings and advantages and disadvantages of the electoral systems used in UK elections.

This leads to:

3.1.1.5 UK Devolution

We will learn:

- Develop awareness of the significance of the following historical documents to the development of rights in the UK:
 - Magna Carta (1215)
 - Bill of Rights (1689)
 - Act of Settlement (1701)
 - Parliaments Acts (1911 and 1949).
- Nature and sources of the UK Constitution.
- Issues and debates around recent constitutional change.
- Debates about the extent of rights in the UK.
- Areas where individual and collective rights agree and where they are in conflict.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Authoritative opinions: Influential writings or judgments by constitutional scholars or judges that help interpret constitutional principles.

Codified constitution: A single, written document defining the structure, powers and limits of government.

Common law: Laws developed by judges through court decisions and precedents.

Conventions: Unwritten practices that are followed by political institutions.

Devolution: The delegation of power from the UK Parliament to regional governments.

Individual rights: Rights held by individual people, such as free speech.

Parliamentary sovereignty: The doctrine that Parliament has supreme legal authority.

Royal prerogative: Powers historically held by the monarch but now exercised by ministers.

Rule of law: The principle that everyone, including the government, is subject to the law.

Statute law: Acts of Parliament.

Uncodified constitution: A constitution not contained in one document, based on statutes, common law, and conventions

Ultra vires: A legal term meaning 'beyond the powers', referring to actions by authorities that exceed their legal authority.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Read:

The UK constitution: key historical documents, Politics Review, volume 27, issue 1 (2017)

[Politics Review – Constitutional conventions](#)

Gallop, N, *Does the UK need a codified constitution?* Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 1, 2021.

Gallop, N, *Is the UK's constitution working?* Politics Review, Volume 32, Issue 4, 2023.

Z Hebden and L Ryall, *Should the UK have a bill of rights?*, Politics Review, Volume 30, Issue 2, 2020

[Politics update – Labour's House of Lords reform](#)

[The Constitution Unit | UCL Faculty of Social & Historical Sciences](#)

[The Constitution Unit Blog](#) (Search for relevant posts)

[Bill of Rights to strengthen freedom of speech and curb bogus human rights claims - GOV.UK](#)

[Human Rights Act reforms and the Bill of Rights Bill | The Law Society](#)

[Starmer K, *The Conservatives must accept the Human Rights Act, and move on*, The Guardian, May 2016.](#)

[Liberty Human Rights](#)

Listen:

BBC Sounds:

[David Baddiel Tries to Understand - The Constitution - BBC Sounds](#)

[The Briefing Room - Britain's constitutional dilemma: who now runs the country? - BBC Sounds](#)

<https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/poor-lord-wensleydale-beginners-guide-british-constitution-robert-saunders>

Watch:

[The Brexit Storm: Laura Kuenssberg's Inside Story - 1st April 2019 - BBC News](#)



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3.1.1.1 UK Constitution

[*The Brexit Storm Continues: Laura Kuenssberg's Inside Story - 17th December 2019 - BBC News*](#)
[*Laura Kuenssberg: State of Chaos | Episode 2 | Johnson*](#)
TDLR News (YouTube)
[*Opinionated: Should the United Kingdom Codify Their Constitution? - TLDR News*](#)
[*The UK's Constitution Explained - TLDR Explains*](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Section A (9 marks)

Section B (25 marks)

Section C (25 marks)

End of Unit Test: Knowledge Test and 9 Mark Question (unseen)



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3.1.1.2 UK Parliament

Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding of the process of devolution and its impact on UK government and Constitution.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: The role of statute law and parliamentary sovereignty, parliamentary scrutiny, reform of the House of Lords

3.1.1.4 UK judiciary: Parliament's interaction with the judiciary

3.1.2.2 UK elections: role of elections and media

3.1.2.3 UK political parties: role of political parties in parliament and suspension of the whip

3.1.2.4 UK pressure groups: Influence of pressure groups on parliamentary activity

This leads to:

3.1.1.3 UK Prime Minister/cabinet

We will learn:

Scrutiny of the executive and how effective it is in practice

Parliamentary debate and the legislative process:

- Commons
- Lords

Theories of representation

- Burkean
- Delegate
- Mandate

The roles and influence of MPs and Peers

The significance of the Commons and the Lords:

- Work of committees
- Role of the opposition
- The extent of Parliament's influence on government decisions
- Interaction of parliament with other branches of government.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

scrutiny of executive

Commons

Lords

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Read:

Rupert Dexter 'The Relationship Between the Lords and the Commons', Politics Review, Volume 33, Issue 3 (2024)



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3.1.1.2 UK Parliament

MPs and peers
delegates and trustees
Burkean theories of representation
delegate theories
mandate theories
trustees
parliamentary privilege
opposition
legislation
debate
redress of grievances
campaign
referendum

[How does a bill become law \(UK Parliament\)](#)

[The legislative process](#)

[How it works - parliament, government and democracy](#)

[Free votes - a democratic ideal?](#)

Norton P, Parliament and government in the UK, Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 4, (2022)

Salt L, Parliamentary Committees, Politics Review, Volume 30, Issue 4 (2021)

Taborda D, The House of Commons Liaison Committee, Politics Review, Volume 32, Issue 3 (2023)

A Guide to Select Committees, Politics Review, Volume 28, Issue 2 (2018)

The Backbench Business Committee, Politics Review, Volume 24, Issue 4 (2014)

Kilheaney McSherry E, Focus on: The House of Commons Petitions Committee, Politics Review, Volume 33, Issue 1 (2023)

[October 2022 United Kingdom government crisis](#)

[Listen:](#)

[BBC Sounds:](#)

[BBC Sounds - Yesterday in Parliament - Available Episodes](#)

[BBC Sounds - Today in Parliament - Available Episodes](#)

[Watch:](#)

[BBC documentaries](#) and [search TV and radio clips](#)

[Inside the commons](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:
End of unit knowledge assessment and 25 marker essay question
Homework 25 marker source question and 9 mark question.



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3.1.1.3 The Prime Minister and Cabinet

Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding of the role of the Prime Minister and their relationship with cabinet and parliament.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: Royal prerogative and the power of the executive

3.1.1.4 UK Judiciary: judicial review and checks on the power of the executive

3.1.2.3 Political parties: party loyalty and structure

This leads to:

3.1.1.4 UK Judiciary

We will learn:

- How policy is made
- The relationship between the PM and cabinet
- Difference between individual and collective responsibility
- Two examples that demonstrate the power of the PM and cabinet to dictate events and determine policy making: one example from 1945-1997 and one from 1997-present.
- Government and parliament relations – accountability and interest

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Core executive: The central part of government, including the Prime Minister, Cabinet and key advisors, responsible for decision-making and policy implementation.

Prime minister: The head of the UK government, responsible for leading the executive, making policy decisions and representing the country.

Primus inter pares: Latin for 'first among equals', describing the Prime Minister's role as a member of the Cabinet but with greater authority.

Cabinet: A group of senior government ministers, chosen by the Prime Minister, who head government departments and make key decisions collectively.

Inner cabinet: A smaller, informal group of senior ministers who provide closer advice to the Prime Minister on critical issues.

Cabinet committee: Sub-groups of the Cabinet focused on specific policy areas, allowing detailed discussion and decision-making.

Individual responsibility: The principle that ministers are accountable for the actions and policies of their department.

Collective responsibility: The convention that all Cabinet members must publicly support government decisions, even if they privately disagree.

Accountability: The obligation of ministers and officials to explain and justify their decisions and actions to Parliament and the public.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Watch: 'Yes, Prime Minister'; [pm & executive - YouTube](#); Alan History Nerd; Learning Academy etc

Read: Politics' Review; The Guardian (latest news); The Politics' Shed; [www.gov.uk \(How the Executive works\)](#); [the uks changing democracy 15 chapter 52 the core executive and government.pdf](#)

[How government works](#)

Seldon A, *British prime ministers: power and success*, Politics Review, Volume 30, Issue 1 (2020)

[History of government](#)

Seldon A, *The prime minister and cabinet: Theories and myths of executive power*, Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 2 (2021)

Seldon A & Egerton, *The UK prime minister*, Politics Review, Volume 34, Issue 1 (2024)

[The transformation of collective responsibility](#)

Bennister M, *The cabinet: is there still collective cabinet responsibility?* Politics Review, Volume 26, Number 4, April 2016 to 2017.

[Ministerial Code](#)

[Education secretary resigns](#)

Heffernan R, *Prime Ministerial power: has it changed since 1997?* Politics Review, Volume 23, Issue 2, November 2013 to 2014.

[Prime Minister of the United Kingdom](#)

Listen: Continue to access podcasts such 'The Rest is Politics' & 'News Agents'. The Rest is Politics' team also have a podcast called 'Leading' during which they interview key politicians. BBC Sounds has a range of programmes too such as [BBC Sounds - The Prime Ministers - Available Episodes](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Knowledge Test

9 mark analyse and evaluate question

25 mark essay/extract question



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3.1.1.3 The Prime Minister and Cabinet



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.1.4 The Judiciary

Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding of the creation, composition and role of the Supreme Court and its interactions and influence over policy making processes.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: Nature and sources of the UK Constitution (Sewell Convention); Parliamentary sovereignty and relationship between branches of government; Constitutional change after 1997

3.1.1.2 Parliament and 3.1.1.3 Executive: How the judiciary holds the executive to account

This leads to:

3.2.1.1 The US Constitution and Federalism

We will learn:

- The composition of the judiciary and the appointment process
- The role of the Supreme Court.
- Importance of ultra vires, judicial review and the Supreme Court's interactions with and influence over the legislative and policy making processes.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Supreme Court

The highest court in the UK, responsible for final appeals and ensuring laws are applied consistently across the country.

Judicial independence and impartiality

The principle that judges must be free from external influences and decide cases based solely on law and evidence

Separation of powers

The division of government personnel and responsibilities into executive, legislature, and judiciary.

Ultra Vires

A legal term meaning 'beyond the powers', referring to actions by authorities that exceed their legal authority

Judicial review

A process where courts assess the legality of actions or decisions taken by public authorities

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Read: [S. Lemieux, R. Hammal, P. Fairclough with A.J. Bennet AQA A-level Politics, 2nd Edition 2025, Part 1, Section 4](#)

Explore: [Educational resources from the UK Supreme Court - UK Supreme Court](#)

Watch: [Independence of the Supreme Court](#)

Read: [Kilheaney McSherry, E & Foster, S, The UK Supreme Court: A shadow of its former self? Politics Review, Volume 22, Issue 4 2024](#)

Read: [Debate: is the UK judiciary too powerful, Politics Review, Volume 25, Issue 3, \(2015/2016\).](#)

Read: [Judicial Review, Politics Review, Volume 32, Issue 1, \(2022/2023\).](#)

Read: [Judicial Review in the UK, Politics Review, Volume 26, Issue 4 \(2017\)](#)

Read: [Brexit: Supreme Court says Parliament must give Article 50 go-ahead, January 2017 \(BBC News\)](#)

Read: [The UK Supreme Court, Politics Review](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Section A (9 marks)

Explain and analyse three ways in which the UK judiciary can exercise influence over



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3.1.1.4 The Judiciary

government.

Section B (25 marks)

Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the extracts over the extent to which the UK Supreme Court has become too powerful in recent years.

Section C (25 marks)

'Socially unrepresentative and out of touch with the UK population at large'. Analyse and evaluate this view of the composition of the UK Supreme Court. (25 marks)

End of Unit Test: Knowledge Test



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3.1.1.5 UK and devolution

Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding of the process of devolution and its impact on UK government and Constitution.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: Nature and sources of the UK Constitution (Sewell Convention); Parliamentary sovereignty and relationship between devolved assembly and the Westminster Parliament; Issues and debates around recent constitutional change after 1997

3.1.1.4 UK judiciary: examples of judicial review

3.1.2.2 UK referendums: the nature and use of referendums in the UK and their impact.

3.1.2.2 UK elections: the workings and advantages and disadvantages of the electoral systems used in UK elections.

This leads to:

3.1.2.5 UK European Union

We will learn:

- The roles, powers and responsibilities of the different devolved bodies in the UK.
- Debate around devolution in England.
- Existing devolution in England.
- Impact of devolution on government of the UK.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Devolution The delegation of power from the UK Parliament to regional governments.

Conventions Unwritten practices that are followed by political institutions

Proportional system Electoral systems that allocate seats based on vote share.

Parliamentary sovereignty the doctrine that Parliament has supreme legal authority.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Read:

J Hardy, *Devolution in the UK*, Politics Review, Volume 34, Issue 4, 2025
N Gallop, *Devolution and the future of England*, Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 3, 2022

BBC News:

[Q&A: The West Lothian Question \(BBC News\)](#)

[Commons scraps English votes for English laws](#)

LSE Blog: [What next for English devolution?](#)

Institute for Government: [Sewel convention](#)

[The Constitution Unit Blog](#) (Search for relevant posts)

Listen:

BBC Sounds:

The Devolution Decades (2019) Especially Episode 3

The Kingdom to Come (2014)

Young Devolutionaries (2013)

Scotscast (Search for relevant up to date examples)

Walescast (Search for relevant up to date examples)

Political Thinking with Nick Robinson (The Eluned Morgan One, The John Swinney One, The Emma Little-Pengelly One)

Watch:

TDLR News (YouTube)

[The English Devolution Bill Explained](#)

[The SNP's New Plan for Scottish Independence Explained](#)

[Why Plaid Cymru is on the Rise in Wales](#)

[Devolution explained - The Constitution Society](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Section A (9 marks)

Explain and analyse three benefits of devolution.

Explain and analyse three ways that devolution has impacted UK government.

Section C (25 marks)

'The case against an English Parliament is overwhelming.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

'Devolution has been most successful in Scotland.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

'Devolution has made the UK into a federal state.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

End of Unit Test: Knowledge Test and Extract question: Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the extract over the creation of an English Parliament (25 marks)



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.1 UK Democracy

Learning about this topic is important because:

This topic establishes foundational knowledge of British Politics, including 'building block' key terminology

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: Constitutional changes since 1997, Individual and collective rights

3.1.2.2 UK Elections: Different electoral systems and their impact on representation and participation

3.1.1.2 UK Parliament: theories of representation, composition of House of Commons and House of Lords

This leads to:

3.1.2.2 UK Elections

We will learn:

How suffrage has changed since the Great Reform Act (1832) to the present

Debates regarding gender, class, ethnicity and age

The significance of the Chartists,

Suffragists and Suffragettes

suffrage as a human right.

The nature of democracy.

Different types of democracy:

- direct democracy
- representative government.

Patterns of participation.

Different forms of participation.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Direct democracy: Citizens directly participate in decision-making without representatives.

Representative democracy: Citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

Suffrage: The right to vote in elections.

Participation: Citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

Partisan dealignment: The weakening of voters' allegiance to political parties.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Watch:

[Is Britain REALLY democratic?](#)

[A brief history of representation, from monarchy to democracy #FLParliament](#)

Learning Academy

Read:

[The constitution explained](#)

Kilheaney McSherry E, Democracy in the UK, Politics Review, Volume 32, Issue 3 (2023)

Gallop N, Participation in the UK: is the UK experiencing a crisis? , Politics Review, Volume 34, Issue 4 (2025)

[Political disengagement in the UK – who is disengaged?](#)

Listen:

Continue to access podcasts such 'The Rest is Politics' & 'News Agents'. The Rest is Politics' team also have a podcast called 'Leading' during which they interview key politicians. BBC Sounds has a range of programmes too just search for key words such as democracy or participation

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Knowledge Test

9 mark analyse and evaluate question

25 mark essay/extract question



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.2 UK Elections and Referendums

Learning about this topic is important because:

This topic establishes foundational knowledge of British Politics, including 'building block' key terminology

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 UK constitution: Constitutional changes since 1997

3.1.1.5 UK and Devolution: referendum for devolved powers, different electoral systems used

3.1.2.3 UK Referendums: Use of referendums

This leads to:

3.1.2.3 UK Political Parties

We will learn:

Electoral systems.

Electoral systems and the party system.

Voting behaviour.

Impact on the outcome of elections of:

o media

o policy

o manifestos

o campaigns

o leadership.

UK referendums

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Majoritarian electoral systems:

Electoral systems where the winner tends to win a majority of seats in the legislature.

Proportional electoral systems:

Electoral systems that allocate seats based on vote share.

voting behaviour:

Voting behaviour is the way that different people tend to vote.

manifesto: a public, written declaration of the intentions, beliefs, or motives of an individual, group, or political party, often outlining a new vision or agenda

campaign: a planned, coordinated series of actions and activities designed to achieve a specific goal—such as winning an election, promoting a product, or creating social change—over a defined period.

referendum: A referendum is a direct public vote where all eligible voters in a country or region are asked to vote on a specific, single political or social proposal.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Watch:

Animal Voting clips (YouTube)

"Blair and Brown: the New Labour Revolution" documentary

Read:

[voting systems on the Electoral Reform Society website](#)

[why elected mayors changed from SV to FPTP and consider the impact of this here](#)

Kelly R, First-past-the-post and the 2024 UK general election: Epic failure or subtle vindication? Politics Review, Volume 34, Issue 4 (2025) Johnston R, Which electoral systems are best for Westminster? Politics Review, Volume 21, Issue 2, November 2011 to 2012.

[Factors influencing voting behaviour](#) (BBC Bitesize)

[How Britain voted in the 2024 general election](#) (yougov.co.uk)

[How Britain voted in 1997](#) (IPSOS)

[UK Election analysis 2024](#)

[1997: Labour landslide ends Tory rule, April 2005](#) (BBC News)

[The Labour Party and 1997 General Election](#)

Alcoe A, The influence of the media in UK politics, Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 3 (2022)

[EU Referendum Analysis 2016](#)

Curtice J, The EU referendum: the result explained, Politics Review, Volume 26, Issue 1, September 2016 to 2017.

Gallop N, Are referendums the best form of democracy? , Politics Review, Volume 29, Issue 1 (2019)

Qvortrup, UK referendums since 1997: How, and why, have they been used?, Politics Review, Volume 27, Issue 3 (2018)

Listen:

"What's the fairest voting system?" [BBC World Service - CrowdScience, What's the fairest voting system?](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Knowledge Test/9 mark analyse and evaluate question/25 mark essay/extract question



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.3 UK Political Parties

Learning about this topic is important because:

Leads to an understanding of the UK's political parties, their ideologies and their role in the political process. It also builds on the work carried out during the Elections unit.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.2.2 UK Elections and Referendums: Campaigns and funding, two-party and multi-party systems

3.1.1.2 UK Parliament and 3.1.1.3 Prime Minister and Cabinet: party discipline, party functions in government

Paper 3: Study of Core Ideologies

This leads to:

3.1.2.4 UK Pressure Groups

We will learn:

The origins, ideas and development of the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Democrat parties and how these have helped shape their current policies

Party structures and functions of Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties

Issues and debates around party funding

Relations with, and influence of, the media

Factors affecting electoral outcomes

Policies of minor parties and their impact on political debates and political agenda

Development towards a multi-party system in the UK and its impact on government and policy.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Ideology: A set of political beliefs and values that guide a party's policies and actions.

Party structure: The organisation of a political party, including leadership, members, and local branches.

Party systems: The way political parties operate and compete within a political system, such as two-party or multi-party systems.

Party funding: the financial resources parties use for campaigns, sourced from membership fees, donations, or public funds.

Party functions: Roles played by parties, such as representing interests, formulating policies, and selecting candidates.

Minor parties: Smaller political parties that operate outside the dominant two-party system, often focusing on niche issues.

Political agenda: The set of priorities and policies that a party promotes to influence public debate and decision-making.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Watch:

[UK Politics Component 1: The Labour Party](#)

[UK Politics Component 1: The Conservative Party](#)

[UK Politics Component 1 Liberal Democrats](#)

Read:

[Political Parties in the UK By Alistair Clark | Used | 9781137577108 | World of Books](#)

[General election 2017: Manifesto guide on where the parties stand \(BBC News\) 2024 positions on each policy area: Who should I vote for and what are the parties promising?](#)

Kelly R and Kilheeny McSherry, Electing (and ejecting) party leaders, Politics Review, Volume 32, Issue 1 (2022)

Alcoe A, Internal democracy within the Conservative and Labour parties: to what extent are political parties internally democratic and representative?, Politics Review, Volume 34, Issue 2 (2024)

[Donations and loans to political parties \(Electoral Commission\)](#)

[Rules for funding for political parties](#)

[Pandora Papers – Why are donations to political parties often so controversial?](#)

Debate: should political parties be funded by the state? Politics Review, Volume 24, Issue 3, February 2014 to 2015.

Tomes A, Have the minor parties reshaped UK politics? Politics Review, Volume 30, Issue 1 (2020).

[The rise of small parties in UK politics.](#)

Quinn T, The UK party system: a two-party or a multi-party system? Politics Review, Volume 24, Issue 3, February 2014, 2015.

[The UK 2024 General election – do we now have a multi-party system?](#)

Listen:

“Political Parties and Us” [BBC World Service - The Forum, Political parties and us](#)

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Knowledge Test/ 9 mark analyse and evaluate question/ 25 mark essay/extract question



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.4 UK Pressure Groups

Learning about this topic is important because:

It establishes an understanding of how different groups influence the political and legislative process in the UK.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.2.1 UK Democracy: representation of majority and minority interests and the participation crisis

3.1.2.3 UK Political parties: party funding, policy formation and party factions

3.1.2.2 UK Elections and Referendums: Campaigns and funding, two-party and multi-party systems

3.1.1.2 UK Parliament: lobbying MPs and select committees

This leads to:

3.2 US Government and Politics

We will learn:

Pressure groups and democracy – pluralism
other influences on government and parliament:

- think tanks
- lobbyists
- corporations
- media

Typologies of pressure groups, including a detailed study of one insider and one outsider group

Methods used by pressure groups
factors likely to affect the political influence of different groups, such as membership and resources

Links with political parties, government and the media.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

Pressure groups: Organisations that seek to influence government policy without seeking election.

Pluralism: A system where multiple groups influence government decisions.

Insider pressure groups: Groups that have strong connections with decision-makers and are regularly consulted by the government.

Outsider pressure groups: Groups that operate outside formal government processes and rely on public campaigns to influence decision-makers.

Promotional groups: Groups focused on promoting a particular cause or issue, such as environmental protection or human rights.

Interest groups: Groups that represent specific sections of society, such as trade unions or professional associations, advocating for their members' interests.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Watch:

[UK Politics: Pressure Groups](#)

Read:

[Pressure groups in the United Kingdom](#)

[How do pressure groups exert influence in the UK? - BBC Bitesize](#)

Websites of various pressure groups.

Egan M, Publicity and pressure, Politics Review, Volume 33, Issue 1 (2023)

Fairclough P, Pressure groups: what makes them successful? Politics Review, Volume 23, Issue 1, September 2013 to 2014.

[Pressure group success – the CBI](#)

[The role and reach of think tanks](#)

[What exactly is lobbying and how does it work?](#)

BBC Politics

[Articles on lobbying on The Guardian](#)

Ashman-Banks N & Ryall L, Does the influence of pressure groups enhance democracy in the UK? Politics Review, Volume 31, Issue 4 (2022)

Listen:

BBC Newscast

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Knowledge Test/ 9 mark analyse and evaluate question/ 25 mark essay/extract question



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.5 The European Union

Learning about this topic is important because:

Understanding of the institutions of the EU its impact on UK government and Constitution.

Synoptic Links to other units include (i.e. this builds on):

3.1.1.1 Constitution: how the European Union and Brexit impact the UK Constitution

3.1.1.2 UK Parliament: Parliamentary sovereignty and Brexit

3.1.1.4 The judiciary: Impact of EU law

3.1.2.1 Democracy and participation

3.1.2.2 Elections and referendums

This leads to:

3.1.1.2 UK Parliament

We will learn:

- Aims of the EU and the extent to which they have been achieved
- The impact of the EU on UK politics and policy making.

Some of the vocabulary that we will use includes:

EU institutions: The core bodies that govern the European Union, promoting its values and objectives, including the **European Parliament, European Council, Council of the EU, European Commission, Court of Justice of the EU, European Central Bank,** and the **Court of Auditors**, each with specific roles in legislation, policy-making, finance, and justice, ensuring a framework for member states to work together.

We will develop/practise skills including:

Explanation: demonstrating knowledge and understanding of political events, concepts and ideas including the use of relevant examples.

Analysis: demonstrating understanding of the significance, causes, and effects of political ideas, events and concepts, as well as the relationship between them.

Comparison: Identifying similarities and differences between extracts, considering their significance and impact in a political context.

Evaluation: Making reasoned judgments about the strengths and weaknesses of an argument, concept, or theory in a statement or extract.

Extended Reading/Listening/Viewing (You could learn more about this topic by):

Here are **clear, exam-relevant Read / Listen / Watch recommendations** tailored specifically to **AQA A-level Politics (3.1.2.5 – The European Union)**. These focus on **institutions, sovereignty, democracy, and the impact of the EU on the UK**, which are core to essays and source questions.

Read:

Essential / Student-Friendly

- **AQA A-level Politics Textbook (Pearson or Hodder)**
- → Core coverage of EU institutions, treaties, and UK–EU relations
- → Use for definitions, structure, and exam phrasing
- **BBC Bitesize – European Union (A-level Politics)**

→ Clear explanations of: European Commission, Council of the EU vs European Council, European Parliament & Democratic deficit. ☑ Especially good for quick revision and recap

Stretch & Evaluation (for AO2/AO3)

- **McCormick, Understanding the European Union:** → Excellent for arguments about: Sovereignty, Democratic legitimacy & Federalism vs intergovernmentalism
- **Institute for Government – EU explainers:** → Strong for post-Brexit evaluation and real-world context (e.g. EU law, trade, and UK influence)

Listen:

Podcasts

- **BBC World Service – The Documentary / World at One:** → Episodes on EU decision-making, enlargement, or crises & good for contemporary examples in essays
- **Talking Politics (David Runciman – older episodes):** → Deep discussion on: EU democracy & Brexit's constitutional impact & great for high-level evaluation



AQA Politics: Paper 1

3.1.2.5 The European Union

- **Intelligence Squared Debates – EU topics:** → Balanced arguments you can directly use in essays

Watch:

Core Understanding

- **BBC Bitesize Videos – The European Union:** → Short, specification-focused & ideal for reinforcing institutional roles
- **YouTube: “TLDR EU” channel:** → Clear explanations of: EU institutions, Law-making process & Power struggles within the EU/ → Use critically, but very accessible

Evaluation & Contemporary Examples

- **BBC Newsnight – EU-related segments:** → Excellent for: Democratic deficit debates, EU responses to crises & UK–EU relations post-Brexit
- **Arte / DW Europe documentaries** (with English subtitles): → Shows EU from a *non-UK perspective* — great for evaluation

Your teacher will assess your knowledge & understanding throughout the topic by looking at your work, questioning, discussion and giving you feedback in lots of different ways. The key pieces of work in this topic are:

Section A (9 marks)

Explain and analyse three ways in which membership of the EU has had an impact upon UK politics.

Explain and analyse three ways in which withdrawal from the EU has affected UK government and politics.

Section B (25 marks) - Extract

Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the extract over the impact of EU membership on Parliament / the judiciary / UK policy-making.

Section C (25 marks) - Essay

Evaluate the impact of Brexit on UK democracy and participation.

End of Unit Test: Knowledge Test and essay or extract question