



## Medium Term Plan: Government and Politics A Level Component Two

**Subject: G&P**  
**Year: 12**  
**Unit: UK Government**

Topic & Week	Learning Intentions/Key Questions	Learning Goals for Students	Learning Activities (including differentiation)	Resources
1 Introduction to The Constitution	What is the nature of the UK Constitution, what sources does it come from & how has it developed over time?	Students should understand the main features & sources of the constitution & be able to trace its historical development. Features: entrenched, unmodified & based around rule of law Sources: Statute/common law, conventions, authoritative works & treaties. Historical development: Magna Carta, Bill of Rights, Act of Settlement, Acts of Union, Parliament Acts & European Communities Act.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher explanation of main features of UK Constitution- definitions of key terms produced.</li> <li>Make notes on sources of UK constitution.</li> <li>Class discussion on which source most significant based on factors like EU law taking precedence over statute law, statute law taking preference over common law &amp; authoritative works not being binding.</li> <li>Produce timeline of key events in constitutional history.</li> <li>Identify trends in timeline like no dramatic change, slow transfer of power from monarchy to parliament, steady increase in citizen rights.</li> </ul>	Discussion outline Timeline
2/3/4 The nature and sources of the UK constitution	<p>What are the roles &amp; powers of devolved bodies in the UK?</p> <p>Should devolution be extended?</p> <p>Should further constitutional reform be carried out in the UK?</p> <p>Should the UK constitution be codified?</p>	<p>Students should have knowledge of the roles &amp; powers of the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly &amp; the Northern Ireland Assembly.</p> <p>Students should understand the debates on whether more powers should be given to the devolved assemblies and whether devolution should be extended to England through regional assemblies &amp; an English parliament.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make notes on the powers of the Scottish Parliament &amp; Government, the Welsh Parliament &amp; Government &amp; the Northern Irish Assembly &amp; Executive.</li> <li>Class discussion on why Scottish Parliament has the most power &amp; whether this is democratic.</li> <li>Look at 2017 manifestos to gauge the parties' views on further devolution.</li> <li>Look at articles by Mayor of London on why greater powers should</li> </ul>	Manifestos Scotland case study Debate outline



		<p>Students should understand the arguments put forward for further constitutional reform including electoral &amp; parliamentary reform.</p> <p>Students should understand the arguments for and against introducing a codified constitution in the UK.</p>	<p>be devolved to cities- see Evening Standard website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class debate on English regional devolution. One side can argue it would solve West Lothian question, facilitate a federal style of government &amp; allow regions to cater for their particular needs. Other side can argue it would inevitably be uneven between different parts of the UK, there is little demand for it &amp; it would complicate government &amp; parliament's relationship.</li> <li>Look at different suggestions that have been put forward by parties / pressure groups of House of Lords reform. Class vote on which is best.</li> <li>Look at different suggestions put forward for electoral reform by parties / pressure groups &amp; vote on which is best.</li> <li>Class discussion on whether the HRA should be entrenched &amp; judges given powers to strike down laws.</li> </ul>	
<p>5/6/7/8</p> <p>How the constitution has changed since 1997</p>	<p>What constitutional reforms have been undertaken since 1997 and why?</p>	<p>Students should have knowledge of the constitutional reforms undertaken since 1997 &amp; understand why they were introduced.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student presentations on: House of Lords reforms, Electoral reform, Devolution, HR Act, Supreme Court, Fixed Term Parliament Acts, Devolution, FOI Act.</li> <li>Timeline produced of reforms under Labour Government (1997-2010) the Coalition (2010-2015) and the current Conservative government.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation brief</p> <p>Timeline</p> <p>Debate outline</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Debates on further reform</p>	<p>Should further constitutional reform be carried out in the UK?</p> <p>Should the UK constitution be codified?</p>	<p>Students should understand the arguments for and against introducing a codified constitution in the UK alongside other amendments and changes.</p>	<p>Student led debate/Socratic dialogue</p>	<p>Brief</p>



10/11 Consolidation/Revision/Assessment	Consolidation/Revision/Assessment	Consolidation/Revision/Assessment	Consolidation/Revision/Assessment	
12 Introduction to UK Prime Minister and Cabinet	What is the structure of the Executive & what are its roles & powers?	Students should understand the main functions of the executive & its main powers including powers of secondary legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make notes on functions of the executive: proposing legislation based on manifesto, proposing a budget &amp; making policy decisions.</li> <li>• Make notes on powers of the executive including the royal prerogative &amp; controlling legislative agenda.</li> </ul>	PM profiles Manifesto outline Further reading
13/14 The structure, role and powers of the Executive	What powers does the PM have to control events & Policy?	Students should understand the influence of one Prime Minister from 1845-1997 and one post 1997 Prime Minister. They should gain knowledge of the key events & policies of their premierships & of examples where each PM both exerted control & lacked control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre 1997 PM: Margaret Thatcher. Students can do independent research to produce a fact file on her.</li> <li>• Class debate on Thatcher's ability to control events &amp; policy focusing on: Falklands war- won due to her hard line policy &amp; contributed to her 1983 election victory. Privatisation of utilities companies was successfully implemented &amp; was electorally popular. Monetarism reversed the Keynesianism consensus economics. BUT Poll Tax led to her downfall &amp; policy was reversed after public &amp; cabinet opposition.</li> <li>• Class debate on May's ability to control events &amp; policy focusing on:</li> </ul>	Debate outline Research brief



			<p>Supreme Court forcing her to consult Parliament before triggering Article 50. Calling a general election to increase Conservative majority. Her role in the EU negotiations. Policy changes brought in as a result of the 2017 election.</p>	
<p>15/16 The concept of ministerial responsibility</p>	<p>What is the nature &amp; significance of ministerial responsibility?</p>	<p>Students should understand the concepts of individual &amp; collective responsibility, how they apply in practice &amp; when they are suspended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write definitions of each convention.</li> <li>• Student presentations on recent/ prominent ministerial resignations.</li> <li>• Teacher explanation of how collective responsibility worked under the 2010-2015 coalition.</li> <li>• Case study of suspension of collective responsibility during EU referendum 2016.</li> </ul>	<p>Conventions list Resignation readings</p>
<p>17/18 The Prime Minister and the Cabinet</p>	<p>What are the relative powers of the Prime Minister &amp; Cabinet?</p>	<p>Students should understand the factors governing who the PM selects as cabinet ministers, the factors affecting the PM-Cabinet relationship &amp; whether a balance of power between PM &amp; Cabinet has been achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at current cabinet &amp; discuss why she may've appointed prominent members by considering factors like political balance, expertise &amp; need to constrain opponents.</li> <li>• Make notes on factors affecting PM-Cabinet relations like PM's leadership style, public opinion, political disputes &amp; special circumstances.</li> <li>• Class discussion on recent changes to PM-Cabinet relationship like increase in Cabinet Office budget &amp; media focus on PM.</li> <li>• Class debate on whether Cabinet's submissive to PM. One side can argue that the PM can hire / fire ministers, steer cabinet discussions &amp; act as government figurehead. Other side can argue that PM doesn't control a cabinet department, is blamed during times of crisis &amp; needs cabinet support to stay in power.</li> </ul>	<p>Current cabinet profile Debate outline</p>



<p>19/20 Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	
<p>21 Introduction to Parliament</p>	<p>What is parliament and who sits in it?</p>	<p>Students should be able to describe the composition and the comparative structure of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make notes on how MPs are elected &amp; Lords are appointed- including different types of peers.</li> <li>• Teacher PowerPoint on key office holders in both houses: speaker whips etc.</li> <li>• Meet The Lords documentary (BBC)</li> <li>• Discuss whether a bicameral or unicameral legislature is a good idea.</li> </ul>	<p>Current parliament breakdown Documentary</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>What functions does parliament perform?</p>	<p>Students should understand the functions of Parliament &amp; the roles of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. They should be able to define different types of bill and describe the stages a bill goes through to become law. They should understand the interaction between the Commons &amp; Lords during the legislative process including the Salisbury Convention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make notes on the functions of parliament: Legislation, scrutiny, debate, representation.</li> <li>• Produce diagram of legislative process</li> <li>• Debate the most important function of the House of Commons.</li> <li>• Discuss what they feel is an MP's most important responsibility.</li> <li>• Teacher explanation of role of opposition parties.</li> <li>• Make notes on roles of standing &amp; select committees &amp; research examples of their work.</li> </ul>	<p>Debate outline</p>



23	Which House of Parliament is more powerful- the Commons or the Lords?	Students should understand the exclusive powers of the House of Commons and the main powers of the House of Lords as well as the debates about their relative power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce a table comparing the roles of each chamber.</li> <li>• Teacher explanation of reasons House of Lords is becoming more significant.</li> <li>• Class debate on which chamber is more powerful One side could argue the Commons have the legitimacy of being elected and the government is drawn from it. Other side could argue Lord aren't dominated by government &amp; have greater expertise to scrutinise bills.</li> </ul>	Table Debate outline
24	How well does parliament act as a check the power of the executive?	<p>Students should understand the factors like executive dominance that prevent effective scrutiny of the executive. They should be able to evaluate whether parliament is performing its watchdog role effectively considering factors like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government majority</li> <li>• Imbalance of parliamentary time &amp; resources in favour of government.</li> <li>• Power of whips.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use teacher PPT to recap how parliament monitors executive.</li> <li>• Make notes on effectiveness of backbenchers &amp; opposition parties.</li> <li>• Make notes on the powers of select committees. Research recent examples of their work, especially PAC.</li> <li>• Make notes on purpose &amp; nature of PM's questions- is effective scrutiny carries out? Use video clips to support.</li> <li>• Class discussion on importance of parliamentary debates supported by video clips of recent debates.</li> <li>• Timeline produced showing whether balance of power between government and parliament has changed recently.</li> <li>• Discuss whether we have an elective dictatorship and whether parliament is an effective watchdog.</li> </ul>	Timeline

25	How effectively does Parliament perform its other functions?	Students should have knowledge of recent and proposed reforms for both houses of parliament and awareness of their implications and alleged benefits or drawbacks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss how effective parliament is at passing or blocking legislation- research how often backbench proposals become law.</li> <li>• Research number of women &amp; ethnic minority MPs.</li> </ul>	<p>Reform arguments Debate</p>
26	Should Parliament be reformed further?	Students should have knowledge of recent and proposed reforms for both houses of parliament and awareness of their implications and alleged benefits or drawbacks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make notes on recent reforms to Commons &amp; Lords.</li> <li>• Class discussion on whether they have been effective or if further reform needed.</li> <li>• Students evaluate suggestions for reform in groups taking on roles of different parties.</li> <li>• Class debate on whether an elected Lords is needed.</li> </ul>	
27	Where is sovereignty located in the UK political system?	Students should understand the distinction between legal & political sovereignty & extent to which it has moved to different branches of government. They should be able to explain where sovereignty can be said to lie in the UK.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students make notes on the changes to the location of sovereignty through constitutional reforms like devolution &amp; the Supreme Court being established, &amp; membership of the EU.</li> <li>• Class debate on whether Parliament is still sovereign: One side can argue that it retains legal sovereignty &amp; can reclaim political sovereignty- as seen through EU referendum. Parliament has chosen to devolve its power but could take it back at any time. It has resisted creating a federal system of government. The other side can argue that the increased use of referendums, devolution &amp; the role of the Supreme Court mean that sovereignty has been transferred.</li> </ul>	

<p>28/29 Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>	<p>19/20 Consolidation/Revision/Assessment</p>
<p>30 Introduction to Relations between institutions</p>	<p>What is the role and composition of the Supreme Court?</p>	<p>Students should understand the role of the Supreme Court as a final court of appeal, in judicial reviews cases and in jurisdiction disputes between governing bodies. They should be able to name some of its judges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of the types of cases heard by the court with recent examples for each.</li> <li>• Make notes on the appointment process for judges.</li> <li>• Students produce biographies of the justices.</li> <li>• Class discussion: should unelected but neutral judges or elected politicians decide how the law is to be implemented?</li> </ul>	<p>Case studies Judge profiles</p>
<p>31, 32, 33 The Supreme Court and its interactions with, and influence over, the legislative and policy-making process</p>	<p>Why is there conflict between the judiciary and executive over human rights &amp; civil liberties?  Why is it so important that judges are independent and neutral and can they be said to be so?</p>	<p>Students should understand how concern about individual rights amongst judges and the HRA have led to clashes between courts and ministers.  Students should understand why independence and neutrality are so important and be able to judge whether judges are independent and neutral.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap judicial review + brainstorm why it has led to conflict between judges and ministers.</li> <li>• Look at examples of judges and politicians clashing over human rights like the Belmarsh case and the Abu Quatada case.</li> <li>• Produce explanations of judicial independence and neutrality.</li> <li>• Produce a table of factors ensuring and threatening judicial independence.</li> <li>• Class debate on whether judges are independent &amp; neutral. One side can argue that as they're independently appointed &amp; separate from Parliament they're independent. Other side can argue they are unrepresentative of society and their growing activism shows they are not neutral.</li> </ul>	<p>Case studies News reports</p>





34, 35 The relationship between the Executive and Parliament	How do judges check the power of the executive and parliament and how effectively do they carry out this role?	Students should understand the relationship between the judiciary and other branches of government and the extent to which judges can check the power of the executive and the legislature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recap grounds for judicial review of government acts like illegality, unreasonableness &amp; maladministration.</li> <li>Discuss whether judicial review brings judges too far into the political arena or if it is a key element of British democracy.</li> <li>Make notes on issues that have caused conflict between the government and the judiciary.</li> <li>Class debate on whether Supreme Court is an influential branch of government.</li> </ul> <p>One side can argue it is influential because declarations of incompatibility with HRA lead to political pressure &amp; their independence makes them hard to control.</p> <p>Other side can argue they can't strike down parliament's laws and have to wait for a case to come before them before they can make a ruling.</p>	
36, 37 The aims, role and impact of the European Union (EU) on UK government	What impact has EU Membership had on the UK Government?	<p>Students should understand the aims, role &amp; impact of the EU on the UK government.</p> <p>Aims = 4 Freedoms of single market, social, political &amp; economic union. To what extent have these been achieved? What role does the EU play in policy making? What has been the impact of EU policies on the UK political system &amp; UK policy making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make notes on the aims of the EU including the 4 freedoms of people, capital, goods &amp; services, social policy including the Social Chapter &amp; the Charter of Fundamental Rights, political &amp; economic union including the reduction of the veto &amp; the introduction of the Euro.</li> <li>Student presentations on roles of EU including Treaties, the continued renegotiation of the EU's powers in accordance with "ever closer union."</li> </ul>	



			<p>Directives &amp; regulations which supersede national rules in some areas, and the enforcement of these rules through the ECJ.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion on the impact of the EU- Has the social chapter increased workers' rights or burdened businesses? Has the Common Fisheries policy preserved fish stocks or damaged the UK fishing industry? Has EU membership limited parliamentary sovereignty or pooled it to give us greater impact? Has it damaged or strengthened the UK economy? What will be the implications of the referendum result?</li> <li>• Class debate on whether the EU has achieved its aims. One side can argue that the single market has made it one of the world's most powerful economic bodies &amp; it has extended workers rights, promoted co-operation between nations &amp; the continued growth of the EU proves its success. The other side can argue that the Eurozone has experienced economic difficulties, it has not been able to cope with the refugee crisis, increasing political union has led to a democratic deficit &amp; its expansion eastwards has caused problems.</li> </ul>	
<p>38/39 Consolidation/Revision/ Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/ Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/ Assessment</p>	<p>Consolidation/Revision/ Assessment</p>	



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