

National 4/5 Revision 2014

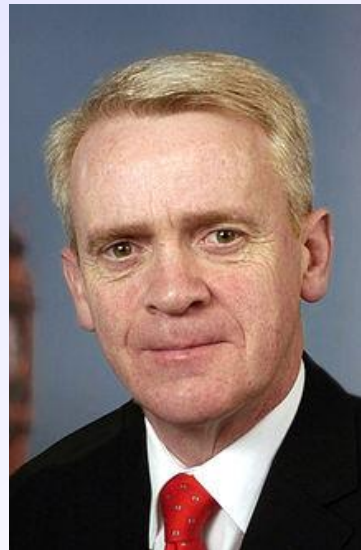
Syllabus Area 1: Politics and Pressure Groups

What you need to know:

1. Ways people can **participate** in politics.
2. Ways people can be **represented** in politics.
3. The **rights and responsibilities** of people in a democratic society.



To vote is to participate



MP Jim McGovern
represents
Dundee West in
the UK Parliament

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Ways people can **participate** in politics. Remember one point (explained with example) for National 3, two points for National 4 and three or more points for National 5.



- People can **vote** for a candidate of their choice e.g. Jim McGovern MP for Dundee West.



- People can **stand as a candidate** themselves e.g. as a local councillor.

- People can **join a political party** e.g. the Scottish National Party (SNP).



- People can **help a candidate** get elected e.g. go canvassing or donate money to a political party.



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People can be **represented** in politics by local councillors, MSPs and MPs. Representatives can:

- **Ask a question** at a meeting of the council, in the Chamber of the S. Parliament or in House of Commons at the UK Parliament. For example, an MP may ask the Defence Minister a question about army bases in Scotland.
- **Introduce a new law** or change an existing law in the Scottish or UK Parliaments. Example - bring in a law to change the welfare benefits system.
- Outside council or parliament meetings, councillors, MSPs and MPs will **write letter/emails, attend meetings or make visits** on behalf of the people they represent.

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The **UK Parliament**: The **House of Commons** consists of **650 MP's** (1 per constituency). The main job of the House of Commons is to **make new laws** and **scrutinise the work of the UK Government**.



The **UK Government** is made up of **MP's/Lords** from the largest party in Parliament (the party which won the most seats at the last General Election).

The Government is chosen by the **Prime Minister** (usually the leader of the largest party): It consists of **100 Junior Ministers of Departments** in total. The most senior Ministers form the **Cabinet** and sit with the PM to make decisions. They also head up the different government departments.

The government is assisted by around 500,000 unelected **civil servants** who work for the government of the day.

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The House of Lords is the **unelected upper chamber** of Parliament. The **House of Lords** participates in making laws. They do this by:

- **Debating government bills:** The House of Lords spend much more time discussing bills than the House of Commons.
- **Changing or Amending Bills:** The Lords have a great deal of expertise in politics, business, education and the legal profession etc. and often suggest and vote on changes to be made to bills before passing it back to the House of Commons.
- **Delaying bills** give the public and the House of Commons **time to reflect** on changes being made.



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The rights and responsibilities of people in a democratic society.

- People have the **right to vote** (voting gets best people elected; don't vote, can't really complain).
- People have the right to **march and demonstrate**.
- People have the right to **criticise the government in the media**.
- People have the **right to free assembly**.
- **Voting is a responsibility**. People should use their vote in elections.
- **Protests must be peaceful**. No violence.
- People have a **responsibility to say and write what is accurate**.
- **Groups must operate within the law of the land**.

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Pressure Groups

Pressure groups are people who have come together to protect or change something. Pressure groups do not want power for themselves but seek to influence those in power. Well known pressure groups include Greenpeace, Amnesty International and Fathers for Justice. Pressure groups campaign by:

- **Marching and demonstrating**
- **Lobby representatives**
- **Making use of the media**
- **Organising petitions**



Pressure group campaigns must stay within the law or risk losing public and political support.

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National 3/4:

- Describe **two** ways people can participate in UK politics. (4)
- Explain **two** ways people can be represented by their MP. (4)
- Describe **two** democratic rights and **two** democratic responsibilities people have in the UK. (4)
- Describe **two** ways pressure groups try to influence MPs. (4)

National 5 (Examples needed for full marks)

- *"There are many ways people can participate in politics."* Describe the ways people can **participate** in politics in the UK. (8)
- *"People can be represented in politics in many ways."* Explain the ways people can be **represented** in politics in the UK. (6)
- *"People in the UK have many democratic rights and responsibilities."* Describe the **democratic rights and responsibilities** of the people of the UK. (8)

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Voting Systems

Simple Majority Systems

1. First Past The Post (FPTP):

- Used in UK General Elections
- 650 constituencies: most votes wins each seat
- Party with the most M.P.'s (seats in the House of Commons) forms the Government.
- Voters given one ballot paper. Must mark one 'X' beside chosen candidate.



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Advantages/Disadvantages Of FPTP

Advantages

- Winning by clear majority means stable government able to implement policies.
- One party government means no major compromises. In 12 years former Labour government was only been defeated a handful of times.
- Tried and tested, simple, cheap to run, *may* lead to higher turnout (e.g. General Elections).
- M.P.'s directly linked to constituency and accountable to constituents.
- Small parties and extreme parties *usually* don't get elected and cannot hold balance of power (2010 is the exception with Conservative/Lib Dem coalition).

Disadvantages

- Majority government based on minority of support. Labour 2005: 35% of vote, 55% of seats giving 66 seat majority.
- Individual M.P.'s elected on minority of support. Inverness 1992: winner got 26% of vote!
- Leads to two-party system, smaller parties lose out. Lib Dems 2010: 23% of vote but only 9% of seats.
- Poor proportionality leads to wasted votes and tactical voting.
- Regional imbalances created. Conservatives strong in South and Midlands of England, Labour strong in Scotland.

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Single Transferrable Vote (STV)



- Used in **Scottish Local Council elections** and Northern Ireland Assembly elections.
- Multi-member wards or constituencies (e.g. 3-4 Councillors in each ward)
- Voters rank candidates in order of preference (e.g.1-6)
- Quota worked out which must be reached for candidate to be elected
- Second, third and fourth preferences then transferred (added) to candidates totals until quota is reached and all seats are filled

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Advantages/Disadvantages of STV

STV: Advantages

- Power is in hands of voters because of preferences.
- Simple for voters to use and no need for tactical voting. SP election 2007 fewer mistakes on STV vote than AMS vote.
- Keeps Councillors linked to an area that voters identify with.
- Produces governments or coalitions with more than 50% of the votes.
- Choice of candidates from within parties.

STV: Disadvantages

- Least proportional PR system.
- Link broken between Councillors and wards in large multi-member ward.
- More time spent on local matters instead of wider priorities.
- Disliked by politicians: less secure (safe) seats.
- Counting of votes is complex and time consuming and may put off voters.
- Most Councils in Scotland are N.O.C. (No-one voted for this).

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National 3/4:

- Describe **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of the FPTP voting system. (4)
- Explain **how** MP's are elected using the FPTP voting system. (4)
- Describe **one** advantage and one disadvantage of the STV system. (4)
- Explain how Councillors in Scotland are elected using the STV system. (4)

National 5 (Examples needed for full marks)

- *"There are many criticisms made of the First-Past-The-Post voting system."* Describe, in **detail**, **two** criticisms of FPTP. (6)
- *"Proportional Representation systems are seen as fairer ways of electing representatives."* Explain why a proportional representation system **you have studied** is seen as a fairer way of electing representatives. (6)

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Syllabus Area 1: Trade Unions

What you need to know:

1. Ways workers can **participate** in trade unions.
2. Ways workers can be **represented** in trade unions.
3. The **rights and responsibilities** of trade union members.



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Ways workers can **participate** in trade unions. Remember:
P (Point), E (Explain), E (Example).

1. At the most basic level people can **join** a trade union. This means no more than paying a subscription and attending the odd union meeting. The GMB union has over 700,000 mostly ordinary members.
2. People can **vote** in union elections e.g for a shop steward or the leaders of a union such as UNISON.
3. Workers can **stand as a candidate** for election themselves e.g. for the position of shop steward in UNITE.

Dave Prentis General
Secretary of UNISON



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Ways workers can be represented in trade unions.

1. Trade union representatives can **negotiate with management** on behalf of the members of a union e.g. about pay or holidays.
2. Trade union shop stewards can represent their members in **matters relating to discipline or discrimination**.
3. In a wider sense trade union representatives may **lobby Government** to improve laws in relation to health and safety in the workplace.



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Rights and responsibilities of trade union members are:

1. Right to **vote** in trade union elections.
2. Right to **attend meetings** of the trade union.
3. Right to **protest** outside the workplace (picket).
4. Right to **strike**.



1. Responsibility to **use vote** in trade union elections.
2. Responsibility to **attend trade union meetings** e.g. at lunchtimes or after work.
3. Responsibility to **picket peacefully** and only at own place of work.
4. Responsibility to **hold a democratic vote** before going on strike.

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National 3/4

1. Describe **two** ways workers can **participate** in a trade union. (4)
2. Describe **two** ways workers can be **represented** in a trade union. (4)
3. Explain **one right** and **one responsibility** of a trade union member. (4)

National 5

1. "*There are many ways that trade union members can participate in the work of their union.*" Describe the ways that trade union members can participate in the work of their union. (6)
2. "*In the workplace shop stewards represent trade union members.*" Describe the ways shop stewards can **represent** trade union members in the workplace. (4)
3. "*Being a member of a trade union involves both rights and responsibilities.*" Explain why being a member of a trade union involves both **rights and responsibilities**. (6)