



## STUDY DOG POLITICS

### 2026 Predicted Paper

# Paper 1

## UK Politics & Core Political Ideas

**Time:** 2 hours

In the style of Edexcel

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>  |  |
| <b>Mark</b>  |  |
| <b>Grade</b> |  |

### Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in your name** at the top of this page.
- There are **two** sections you must answer **three** questions:
  - in Section A answer **either** 1(a) **or** 1(b) and then **either** 2(a) **or** 2(b)
  - in Section B answer **either** 3(a) **or** 3(b).
- Writing space is **not provided**. Answer on lined paper

### Information

- The total mark for this paper is 84.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets
  - *use this as a guide as to how long to spend on each question.*

### Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.

## SECTION A: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

**Answer ONE question from EITHER Question 1(a) OR Question 1(b) and then answer ONE question from EITHER Question 2(a) OR Question 2(b).**

### **EITHER**

- 1 (a)** *Source A is adapted from a commentary on democratic participation and the franchise in the UK, published in 2025.*

The United Kingdom's franchise has never been fixed. From the 1832 Great Reform Act to the Representation of the People Acts of 1918 and 1928, which finally enfranchised women, the history of British democracy is one of gradual, often contested expansion. In 1969, the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. The question now is whether 18 remains the right threshold.

Over 1.5 million 16- and 17-year-olds are currently excluded from voting in Westminster general elections. Yet since 2021, young people of the same age have been able to vote in Scottish Parliament and Welsh Senedd elections. Campaigners for votes at 16 argue that this inconsistency is both arbitrary and corrosive: young people who can pay income tax, consent to medical treatment and join the armed forces are deemed insufficiently mature to choose their government.

Opponents counter that the franchise extension to Scotland and Wales reflects devolved competence, not a constitutional obligation on Westminster. They point to polling data suggesting that 16- and 17-year-olds are less politically informed than older cohorts, and that voting habits formed before civic education is complete may entrench rather than reverse patterns of youth disengagement. Turnout among 18–24 year olds, they note, remains the lowest of any age group; a pattern that votes at 16 would be unlikely to fix.

The suffragette movement demonstrated that the denial of the vote is never simply a neutral administrative decision, it carries a political message about whose voice counts. Whether the exclusion of young people today carries a similar message is a question that democratic reformers are increasingly unwilling to leave unanswered.

(Source: Study Dog's own material)

Using Source A, evaluate the view that extending the franchise to 16- and 17-year-olds would strengthen democracy in the UK.

*In your response you must:*

- *compare and contrast the different opinions in the source*
- *examine and debate these views in a balanced way*
- *analyse and evaluate **only** the information presented in the source.*

(30)



OR

1 (b) Source B is adapted from an academic analysis of electoral systems and representation in the UK, published in 2024.

At the 2019 general election, the Conservative Party won 365 seats, a majority of 80, on 43.6% of the popular vote. The Liberal Democrats received 11.6% of votes and won just 11 seats. The Brexit Party stood in 275 constituencies, won 2.1% of the national vote, and returned zero MPs. For supporters of proportional representation, such figures require no commentary.

First-past-the-post has survived every serious challenge to its dominance. In the 2011 referendum on adopting the Alternative Vote system (the only nationwide poll on Westminster electoral reform) 68% of voters rejected change. Defenders of FPTP argue that its virtues are practical rather than mathematical: it produces clear governing majorities, maintains a direct link between MP and constituency, and allows voters to remove governments without ambiguity. A proportional system, they suggest, would hand disproportionate power to smaller parties in coalition negotiations, producing governments that nobody voted for.

The experience of devolution complicates this picture. Scotland has used the Additional Member System since 1999, and the evidence suggests that coalition and minority governments have not produced the instability that critics of PR predicted. Turnout in Scottish Parliament elections has generally been lower than in Westminster contests, however, which weakens the claim that PR alone drives participation.

What is clear is that the legitimacy of FPTP rests increasingly on convention rather than consent. Each election that produces wide disparities between votes and seats adds weight to the reformers' argument. Whether that argument will ever translate into action at Westminster is another matter entirely.

(Source: Study Dog's own material)

Using source B, evaluate the view that the case for replacing first-past-the-post with a proportional system for Westminster elections has now been established..

*In your response you must:*

- *compare and contrast the different opinions in the source*
- *examine and debate these views in a balanced way*
- *analyse and evaluate **only** the information presented in the source.*

(30)

**(Total for Question 1 = 30 marks)**



**AND EITHER**

- 2 (a) Evaluate the view that the 1997 general election outcome was shaped by the media.

*You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.*

(30)

**OR**

- 2 (b) Evaluate the view that party funding in the UK is in need of radical reform.

*You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.*

(30)

**(Total for Question 2 = 30 marks)**

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**TOTAL FOR SECTION A = 60 MARKS**



**SECTION B: CORE POLITICAL IDEAS**

**Answer ONE question from EITHER Question 3(a) OR Question 3(b).**

**EITHER**

**3 (a)** To what extent is conservatism divided over its attitude towards the state?

*You must use appropriate thinkers you have studied to support your answer and consider both sides in a balanced way.*

**(24)**

**OR**

**3 (b)** To what extent does socialism reject the economy of capitalism?

*You must use appropriate thinkers you have studied to support your answer and consider both sides in a balanced way.*

**(24)**

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**(Total for Question 3 = 24 marks)**

**TOTAL FOR SECTION B = 24 MARKS**

**TOTAL FOR PAPER = 84 MARKS**

