

Politics Summer Homework Tasks

All tasks should be completed by hand on lined A4 paper. If you use a computer for exams, you may type your work and hand in a printed copy instead.

Please bring your completed work to your first Politics lesson in September.

Task 1:

The funding of political parties

- a. Read the source below in the box.

There are **no limits** on the amount an individual or company can donate to a political party in the UK, **as long as** the donor is from a **permissible source** (e.g. a UK-registered voter or company) and the donation is properly reported if it exceeds the relevant threshold (£11,180). These rules have been in place since a new law was made, the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act 2000 (updated in 2009).

Supporters of this system of unlimited donations argue that this respects the democratic right of individuals and organisations to freely support the political causes or parties they believe in. They contend that large donations can help parties effectively campaign, engage voters, and offer genuine policy alternatives—an essential part of a healthy democracy. The fact that some parties are able to raise more money than other parties to be used for election campaigns is just a sign that those parties are more popular, so it is completely fair. Introducing strict limits, they argue, might actually disadvantage smaller or newer political parties that rely on a few committed donors to compete with well-established parties such as Labour and the Conservatives, that are able to raise far more money as they have more members that pay fees to the party. If donations come from permissible sources and are properly reported, supporters believe the system balances political freedom with accountability, as the public can find out when big donations are made, who has made the donations, and to which party the money has been donated. UK law already guarantees that funding of parties is fair and transparent.

Those that believe that the current system for the funding of political parties requires change argue that large donations—regardless of transparency—can grant disproportionate influence to a small number of donors, undermining political equality and public trust in politicians and parties. For donations below £11,180, it is currently impossible for the public to know who has donated money to parties, and so it is difficult to know who may be influencing those parties. While unlimited political donations may appear to support democratic freedom, in practice they skew the system in favour of the wealthy. Also, new parties and smaller parties always struggle to compete with more established parties such as Labour and Conservative that have always been able to raise larger sums of money, meaning that elections are not truly competitive. Capping donations at a level affordable to even the poorest citizens would help ensure all voices carry equal weight. This would shift party funding to reflect genuine public support from voters rather than the financial power of big companies or wealthy individuals. A fairer democracy depends not on how much someone can give, but on equal participation and influence for all. Additionally, ensuring that all donations are publicly reported would improve transparency and accountability.

- b. Try and match at least three pairs of arguments that share a common focus (argument in favour of the current system + argument against the current system with a similar focus). Highlight the pairs of arguments in the source above.
- c. On your lined paper, create a table where you record the arguments in favour of the current system of party funding, and then those in favour of reforming (changing) the current system.

Example below:

Arguments in favour of the current funding system	Arguments against
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Based on these arguments, you can now decide which side has more justified view.

- d. Who made stronger arguments? Explain your view with reasons on your lined paper, underneath the table.

Task 2:

Your constituency Member of Parliament (MP)

It has now been two years since the most recent General Election in the UK. Research the following:

- a) What parliamentary constituency do you live in?
- b) Who was your MP before the 2024 election? Which Party did they represent?
- c) Who is your MP currently? Which Party do they represent? Are they an independent MP?

Examine the policies of the party which your MP represents, and briefly describe at least one policy promise in each of the following areas.

For each policy, answer the following question: *Is it a policy that you support or do you disagree? Why?*

Use the official website of the political party you are researching as a starting point.

- a) Law and Order (e.g. promises related to the rights of citizens, the court system, reducing crime, policing, and prisons)
- b) Economy (e.g. promises related to taxes, investment, spending, and growth)
- c) Public services (e.g. NHS, education)
- d) Welfare (e.g. promises to meet citizens' needs related to housing, unemployment, sickness, disability, families, pensions etc.)
- e) Foreign policy (e.g. promises in relation to our involvement in foreign conflicts, spending on the military, our relationship with other countries and international organisations etc.)

As an extension activity, you may repeat this task by looking at a different political party than the one that your MP represents.

Task 3:

Local Elections 2026

Talk to three friends or family members that were able to vote in the most recent local elections across Birmingham and Solihull in May 2026. Ask them, and make a note of their responses and the age of each person you interviewed:

- a) Did they vote in the election? If they did, had they considered not voting? What motivated them to participate and vote? Have they always voted when they had the opportunity?
- b) If they did not vote in the election, why not? Have they voted in previous elections?
- c) Whether they voted or not, which local issues mattered most to them at this time?
- d) If they voted, what was their main motivation for voting for the candidates that they chose?