



**2017 specification**  
first exams in 2019 (2018 for AS)

# **Learning Grids for AS and A Level Edexcel**

Component 2: UK Government  
and Non-core Political Ideas

*Parliament*

2022 Edition

[zigzageducation.co.uk](http://zigzageducation.co.uk)

**POD  
11857a**

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...  
Register at [publishmenow.co.uk](http://publishmenow.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter [@ZigZagPolitics](https://twitter.com/ZigZagPolitics)

# Contents

<b>Product Support from ZigZag Education</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Terms and Conditions of Use</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Teacher’s Introduction</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
Textbook Cross-referencing.....	v
<b>Question Grids</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Unit 2.1: The Structure and Role of the House of Commons and the House of Lords .....	1
<i>Parliament</i> .....	1
<i>The House of Lords</i> .....	4
<i>Functions of Parliament</i> .....	5
<i>The Effectiveness of the Functions of Parliament</i> .....	9
<i>The House of Commons</i> .....	10
Unit 2.2: The Comparative Powers of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.....	11
<i>The Powers of the Commons and the Lords</i> .....	11
<i>Fill in the Blanks: The Powers of the Commons and the Lords</i> .....	14
Unit 2.3: The Legislative Process.....	15
<i>The Eight Stages of Legislation</i> .....	15
<i>Types of Bill</i> .....	16
Unit 2.4: The Ways in Which Parliament Interacts with the Executive .....	18
<i>Parliament and the Executive</i> .....	18
<i>Keeping the Government in Check</i> .....	20
<i>Fill in the Blanks: The Effectiveness of Select Committees</i> .....	21
<i>The Opposition and PMQs</i> .....	22

## Teacher's Introduction

The following learning grids cover the UK Parliament module of the Edexcel A Level specification. The UK Parliament is an interesting topic, but can be daunting for students new to Parliamentary procedure. These learning grids are designed to help a student test their knowledge of the basics of UK Parliament.

This set of learning grids is designed to help students develop their AO1 knowledge for the UK Parliament module of the Edexcel A Level Politics specification. The questions and answers provided here should give the students a comprehensive grasp of the facts before moving on to the analysis and evaluation needed for AO2 and AO3 marks in the exams.

The learning grids are split into four sections in line with the specification: the structure and role of the two Houses of Parliament; the comparative powers of the two Houses; the legislative process; and finally, the ways in which Parliament interacts with the executive. The grids are all questions with space for the answers next to them. Interspersed within the learning grids are activities for the students to test their knowledge.

### Second edition, April 2020

The second edition of these learning grids has been updated to reflect recent developments, contemporary debates and new political contexts that have emerged since their initial publication. In relation to Parliament, this includes (but is not limited to) political developments since the 2017 general election, the advancement of debates surrounding the strength of parliamentary institutions, and changes in the positions of prominent political figures. These changes have been made through the addition of new questions, activities and model answers.

### Third edition, November 2022

Cross-referencing updated for Course Companions (ZigZag Education 2022) and added for additional Hodder textbook (2021). Minor updates also made to questions (pages 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8) and answers (pages 3, 7, 8 and 12).

This resource is cross-referenced to:

- *Edexcel GCSE Politics AS and A Level Student Book*, Goodlad, Mitchell, Colclough, Levinson, Laycock, Schindler and Tomes, Pearson Education, 2017, ISBN 978-1292187020
- *UK Government and Politics for AS/A Level (Fifth Edition)*, Lynch, Fairclough and Cooper, Hodder, 2017, ISBN 978-1-4718-89233
- *UK Government and Politics for AS/A Level (Sixth Edition)*, McNaughton and Cooper, Hodder, 2021, ISBN 978-1-3983-1133-6
- *A Level Edexcel Course Companion: Comp 1: UK Politics: Political Parties*, Murphy and Glover, 2022, ZigZag Education (MORE/11855)

### Free Updates!

Register your email address to receive any future free updates\* made to this resource or other Politics resources your school has purchased, and details of any promotions for your subject.


\* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

Go to [zzed.uk/freeupdates](https://www.zzed.uk/freeupdates)

## **Selected Question and Answer Pages**

---

For demonstration only, the sample answer pages immediately follow their corresponding question pages

		<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<b>Parliament (cont.)</b>		Why was this law been criticised in 2019?	
		How many MPs were not members of a political party after the 2019 general election?	
		What is the name for the minister and shadow ministers based on where they sit in the Commons?	
		What is the name for the majority of MPs in the Commons who are not ministers or shadow ministers?	
		Parliament is split into two main groups, government and what? 	
		Who became leader of the opposition in 2020?	
		What criteria do you have to meet to be the official leader of the opposition?	
		Name two responsibilities of the leader of the opposition.	
		What is the job of the speaker of the House of Commons?	

	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<b>Parliament (cont.)</b>	<b>Why was this law been criticised in 2019?</b>	It was ignored by the passing of a bill with a simple parliamentary majority in 2019, allowing a general election to be called – this shows the principle that no previous parliament can bind the current parliament. It has also been criticised for contributing to parliamentary deadlock in 2019.
	<b>How many MPs were not members of a political party after the 2019 general election?</b>	One – the speaker
	<b>What is the name for the minister and shadow ministers based on where they sit in the Commons?</b>	The frontbenchers
	<b>What is the name for the majority of MPs in the Commons who are not ministers or shadow ministers?</b>	Backbenchers
	<b>Parliament is split into two main groups, government and what?</b>	Opposition
	<b>Who became leader of the opposition in 2020?</b>	Keir Starmer
	<b>What criteria do you have to meet to be the official leader of the opposition?</b>	You must lead the largest party in the House of Commons that is not in government.
	<b>Name two responsibilities of the leader of the opposition.</b>	Leads scrutiny into key legislation Can call a vote of no confidence in the government
	<b>What is the job of the speaker of the House of Commons?</b>	Presides over House debates. They also rule on important Parl



## Fill in the Blanks: The Effectiveness of Select Committees

Select Committees are Effective		Select Committees are not Effective	
<p>Select committees can call _____ to answer their questions. These can be almost anyone, but they will usually be members of the government, meaning either civil servants or government _____.</p> <p>Select committees can draw attention to the failures of government, and can hold the government to _____ by publicising their errors. Select committee hearings are _____ on television and online, and on rare occasions they can become widely viewed by the public.</p> <p>The chairs of select committees are chosen by backbenchers in a _____. This means that they are not as constricted by party politics, especially not by the _____, as their Parliamentary colleagues. Backbenchers can choose to vote for who they wish without _____ from the party.</p> <p>The government respond to select committee findings. They attempt to respond within 60 days to a select committee’s report, and if they cannot then they discuss extending the time. This ensures that committees are not completely _____ by the government.</p>		<p>There are limits on the select committee’s powers to compel witnesses to appear before them. They can request the _____ to answer questions, but they cannot _____ them to. Witnesses called for investigation may also avoid answering the questions properly.</p> <p>Because the select committees have a party membership in the same proportion as that in the _____, if a government has a large majority in the Commons, they will also have a large majority on every committee, meaning the party balance in committees will be _____ in their favour. As with other checks on government power, it is stronger when the government is _____ in the Commons.</p> <p>The government may simply _____ the suggestions made in the select committees. The select committee has no powers to enforce changes on the government. Select committees cannot _____ departmental appointments; they can only _____ appointments and give advice on them.</p>	
<i>ignored</i>	<i>witnesses</i>	<i>force</i>	<i>weaker</i>
<i>account</i>	<i>repercussions</i>	<i>veto</i>	<i>prime minister</i>
<i>broadcast</i>	<i>ministers</i>	<i>ignore</i>	<i>skewed</i>
<i>whip system</i>	<i>secret ballot</i>	<i>Commons</i>	<i>scrutinise</i>

## Fill in the Blanks: The Effectiveness of Select Committees

Select Committees are Effective	Select Committees are not Effective		
<p>Select committees can call <b>witnesses</b> to answer their questions. These can be almost anyone, but they will usually be members of the government, meaning either civil servants or government <b>ministers</b>.</p> <p>Select committees can draw attention to the failures of government, and can hold the government to <b>account</b> by publicising their errors. Select committee hearings are <b>broadcast</b> on television and online, and on rare occasions they can become widely viewed by the public.</p> <p>The chairs of select committees are chosen by backbenchers in a <b>secret ballot</b>. This means that they are not as constricted by party politics, especially not by the <b>whip system</b>, as their Parliamentary colleagues.</p> <p>Backbenchers can choose to vote for who they wish without <b>repercussions</b> from the party.</p> <p>The government respond to select committee findings. They attempt to respond within 60 days to a select committee’s report, and if they cannot then they discuss extending the time. This ensures that committees are not completely <b>ignored</b> by the government.</p>	<p>There are limits on the select committee’s powers to compel witnesses to appear before them. They can request the <b>prime minister</b> to answer questions, but they cannot <b>force</b> them to. Witnesses called for investigation may also avoid answering the questions properly.</p> <p>Because the select committees have a party membership in the same proportion as that in the <b>Commons</b>, if a government has a large majority in the Commons, they will also have a large majority on every committee, meaning the party balance in committees will be <b>skewed</b> in their favour. As with other checks on government power, it is stronger when the government is <b>weaker</b> in the Commons.</p> <p>The government may simply <b>ignore</b> the suggestions made in the select committees. The select committee has no powers to enforce changes on the government. Select committees cannot <b>veto</b> departmental appointments; they can only <b>scrutinise</b> appr them.</p>		
<i>ignored</i>	<i>witnesses</i>	<i>force</i>	
<i>account</i>	<i>repercussions</i>	<i>veto</i>	
<i>broadcast</i>	<i>ministers</i>	<i>ignore</i>	
<i>whip system</i>	<i>secret ballot</i>	<i>Commons</i>	

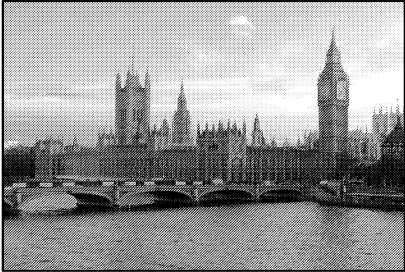



© ZigZag Education



## **Additional Selected Question Pages**

---

		<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<b>Functions of Parliament</b>	<p><b>What are the four main functions of Parliament?</b></p> 		
	<p><b>What is legislation and what is a legislature?</b></p>		
	<p><b>What area of legislation does the House of Commons have exclusive control over?</b></p>		
	<p><b>Who introduces most legislation?</b></p>		
	<p><b>Who makes sure that parties vote the way their leaders want them to?</b></p>		
	<p><b>What is the most urgent instruction a Member of Parliament can get before voting on a bill? This requires them to turn up and vote a certain way.</b></p>		
	<p><b>What type of MP will the whips usually target the most? Explain why.</b></p>		
	<p><b>What needs to be won in order to ensure the passage of legislation?</b></p>		

		<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<b>The Functions of Parliament (cont.)</b>	Which of the two Houses fulfils the function of political representation? Explain why.		
	How do MPs represent the views of a wide area of the country?		
	What is an executive?		
	What is scrutiny of the executive? Please explain your answer and why it is important.		
	What is a select committee?		
	Name two other ways the government can be scrutinised. Explain how they perform this function.		
	Which group of MPs can choose the topic of debate one day a week?		
	Where are ministers selected from in the UK?		
	Who selects ministers?		

		<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>			
<b>The Functions of Parliament (cont.)</b>		Are MPs expected to use their own judgement? Why?				
		What two loyalties do most MPs have to balance?				
	Fill in the demographic information comparing the general population with the House of Commons.		<b>Social group</b>	<b>Approximate % of the population</b>	<b>% of the House of Commons after 2019 general election</b>	
			Female	51		
			Ethnic Minority	14		
		LGBT+	1.7			
		Oxbridge	Less than 1			