Democracy in Scotland Outline

Representation

- Main political representatives in Scotland: Explain the role of MSPs and local councillors. Explain how a constituent makes contact with their representatives.
- Role/function and areas of responsibility of Scottish Parliament Explain how MSPs represent their constituents in the Scottish Parliament. Learners should have a good knowledge and understanding of debates, First Minister’s Question Time, voting, work in committees and Members’ Bills.
- The work of a local councillor. Cover areas such as how they can help resolve local conflict e.g. budgets, new road/by-pass etc. Explain how councillors can represent their area. Examples of matters that Councillors can make decisions on.

Participation

- Introduction to political parties. Learners should have a working knowledge of the main political parties in Scotland: SNP, Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat. Describe the main policies of each of these political parties and purpose of political parties, to get votes in an election and represent views of their members. Standing as a candidate for election: personal qualities needed.

Election campaigns

- Purpose, process and outcomes.
- Explain why it is important to use your right to vote.
- Look at how people vote in elections for the Scottish parliament and/or local councils: AMS and STV. Examine the advantages and disadvantages of each electoral system.

Influence

- Pressure groups purpose aims methods used examples of pressure group action; focusing on Scotland.
Introduction

Rights and Responsibilities:
People living in a democracy have rights that are protected by law. But with each right, comes a responsibility. Some of these rights and responsibilities are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those aged 18 and over are allowed to vote</td>
<td>We should use our right to vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the right to protest if we disagree with decisions</td>
<td>We have the responsibility to obey the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the right to freedom of speech</td>
<td>We must not slander people or tell lies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have the right to be protected (e.g. the NHS, armed forces)</td>
<td>We must pay our taxes to help fund these services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participation:
You could be asked to explain the ways in which people can participate in politics, these include:

1. Voting
2. Standing as a candidate
3. Joining a political party
4. Canvassing
5. Putting up posters
6. Posting leaflets

Representation:
There are numerous representatives that people in Scotland have:
- Members of Parliament
- Members of the Scottish Parliament
- Members of the European Parliament
- Local councillors
Representation

MSP’s are elected by the public to the Scottish Parliament to represent their constituents in Holyrood. The public may raise concerns with their MSP over local issues or issues specific to Scotland, such as the health service, housing or education. The MSP will then represent and try to help their constituents by:

- Writing to or arranging a meeting with a Cabinet Secretary or Minister
- Debating within the Parliament
- Asking questions during Question Time
- Introducing Member’s Bills
- Voting within the Parliament
- Raising issues through the media

People can contact their MSP by:

- Writing letter to their constituency office or their parliamentary address
- E-mailing their MSP
- Calling their MSP at their constituency office or parliamentary office
- By sending an e-mail message through the Scottish Parliament website
- Many MSP’s also have Twitter and Facebook accounts

Local councillors are elected by the public to Local Authorities such as South Lanarkshire Council, Glasgow City Council and East Renfrewshire Council. The public will raise concerns over local issues with their Local Councillor such as planning, schools, housing and transport. The Local Councillor will then represent and try to help their constituents by:

- Speaking at council meetings
- Contacting council officials to solve local problems
- Hold weekly surgeries to listen to any problems
- Pass on problems to MSP’s or MP’s when necessary

People can contact their Local Councillors by:

- E-mailing their councillor
- Calling or faxing their councillor
- Writing to them at the council headquarters
- Meeting with their councillor at their surgeries
(For example, Councillor John Anderson (SNP) in South Lanarkshire Council holds two surgeries each month. One on the first Thursday of each month in The Murray Owen Centre, East Kilbride and the other on the third Thursday of each month in the Westwood Hall, East Kilbride.)

Candidates

What is a candidate?

- A candidate is a person who stands for election
- In the UK candidates can stand for the European Parliament, UK Parliament, Scottish Parliament or local government
- Candidates are chosen by the local party’s selection panel

How can supporters help a political party during an election campaign?

- Handing out leaflets
- Displaying posters e.g. on windows, lamp posts, or bumper stickers on cars
- Canvassing - asking people door-to-door who they intend to vote for
- Give lifts to known supporters of they can get to the polling station
- Help scrutinise the count
- Attend public meetings supporting the candidate, or criticising an opponent
- Writing letters to a local newspaper
The Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament was created in 1999, and allows the people of Scotland a greater say over how their country is run and the laws that are passed to govern it.

Prior to the Scottish Parliament, laws for Scotland were made in London at the UK Parliament in Westminster. Scotland remains part of the UK, however 'devolution' means that the Scottish Parliament can now make certain laws for Scotland as it has devolved powers.

Devolved Powers
- Health
- Education
- Local Government
- Law
- Social Work and Housing
- Economic Development and Transport
- The Environment
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Sport and the Arts

Reserved Powers
- The constitution
- Defence and National Security
- Foreign Policy
- Immigration
- UK fiscal and monetary policy
- Employment Legislation
- Social Security
- Transport and safety regulation
- Nuclear energy
- Broadcasting

The Parliament, sometimes referred to as "Holyrood", is a democratically elected body comprising 129 members known as Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). Members are elected for four-year terms under the Additional Member proportional representation system (AMS). The most recent general election to the Parliament was held on 5 May 2011.

In 1999 Labour won more seats than any other single party but not enough to form the Scottish Executive (now called the Scottish Government) on their own. Labour and the Liberal Democrats therefore formed a coalition.
In 2007 the Scottish National Party won 47 seats and the Scottish Labour Party won 46 seats. The Scottish Conservatives won 17 seats, the Scottish Liberal Democrats 16 seats, the Scottish Green Party 2 seats and one Independent (Margo MacDonald) was also elected. The Scottish National Party formed a minority government.

In 2011 the Scottish Parliamentary election produced a majority SNP government. This was an important result because it means that for the first time in the Scottish Parliament one party has had a parliamentary majority. The Nationalists took 16 seats from Labour, with many of their key figures not returned to parliament. The SNP took a further eight seats from the Liberal Democrats and one seat from the Conservatives. The SNP overall majority means that there is now sufficient support in the Scottish Parliament to hold a referendum on Scottish independence.

Examples of recent Scottish Parliament decisions:

Health

As we live longer, illnesses such as Dementia and Alzheimer’s have become more common. In 2002, the then Scottish Executive introduced free personal care for all elderly people in Scotland. In 2006, the Scottish Parliament passed a ban on smoking in enclosed public spaces. The rest of the UK has followed.

In 2007, the new SNP government introduced legislation to abolish prescription charges. These were gradually phased out and were finally abolished in April 2011.

Legislation is expected to tackle Scotland’s health problems related to alcohol consumption. Supermarket alcohol ‘super deals’ are no longer legal in Scotland. The Scottish Government has plans to introduce minimum pricing for certain alcoholic drinks.

Education

Unlike England, Scottish students at Scottish universities do not pay tuition fees. In 2008, the SNP Scottish Government also abolished the ‘graduate endowment tax’, saving students a further £2000.

At present, Scottish students do not have to pay for Higher education, in contrast to students from other parts of the UK who have to pay tuition fees.
Ways MSP’s Represent their Constituents

First Minister's Question Time

The First Minister is accountable for the actions of himself and the Scottish Government at First Minister’s Question Time. During First Minister's Question Time MSPs from all parties aim to hold the government to account on a variety of issues. Supported by his Depute First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, Alex Salmond provides leadership to the Scottish Cabinet as well as the Parliament.

Committees

The Scottish Parliament has a powerful committee system, which can propose as well as scrutinise bills. In the committees, MSPs discuss legislation in detail and work closely together.

There are 17 Committees, most of which have between five and fifteen members, scrutinise the work of the Government. They work much more on cross-party lines than do Committees of the Westminster Parliament and there tends to be much more agreement among MSPs from different parties when they are scrutinising or challenging the Government’s legislation as it passes through Parliament.

The Convenors of the Committees are responsible for organising the meetings. These Convenors are drawn from across the main parties. For example, the convenor of the Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee might be a Labour MSP while the convenor of the Health and Sport Committee might be an MSP for the SNP.

Types of committee
There are two types of committee - mandatory and subject.

The current mandatory committees are:
- Equal Opportunities
- European and External Relations
- Finance
- Public Audit
- Public Petitions
- Standards
Procedures and Public
Appointments
Subordinate Legislation

The current subject committees are:
- Economy
- Energy and Tourism
- Education and Culture
- Health and Sport
- Infrastructure and Capital Investment
- Justice
- Local Government and Regeneration
- Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment

Private Bill committees can also be set up whenever an MSP or an outside individual/organisation is successful in having a Private Bill considered by the Scottish Parliament. A good example is the Private Bill Committee which examined the proposals to bring back trams to Edinburgh.

Members’ Bills

A Member’s Bill is a public Bill introduced by an individual MSP. Members’ Bills are distinct from Executive Bills (introduced by Scottish Government ministers) and Committee Bills (introduced by committee conveners).

Before introducing a Member’s Bill, the MSP must first lodge a draft proposal and then a final proposal. The draft proposal must be accompanied either by a consultation document or by a statement of reasons why the MSP does not consider consultation necessary (which is subject to scrutiny by a committee).

The final proposal, which must be broadly similar to the draft proposal, is published in the Business Bulletin for a month. If, by the end of that period, it has been supported by at least 18 other MSPs from at least half of the parties or groups represented in the Parliamentary Bureau and the Scottish Government has not exercised its right to block the proposal (on the grounds that either it or the UK Government will legislate in similar terms), the MSP secures a right to introduce a Bill to give effect to the proposal. This right may be exercised until the beginning of June in the penultimate year of the session.

Once introduced, a Member’s Bill is subject to the same three-stage scrutiny process as other public Bills.
Local Councils

It is the job of councillors, elected local representatives, to decide how the Council's budget should be spent.

Councillors also have the other vital role of engaging with the public; having regular surgeries or responding in other ways to issues of concern. These are often about housing, education, entertainment, or local law and order matters. Traditionally, Councillors tend to represent areas where they have grown up and know the needs of the local community.

There are now 32 directly elected local authorities in Scotland which provide local services and receive a large part of their funding from the Government.

Local government functions include the organisation of:
- education and leisure services - staffing, buildings, museums, pools and sports centres, childcare, psychological services, halls and community facilities, libraries
- social work - community care, children and family services
- planning and transport - roads, public transport, economic development, flood prevention, building control
- environmental services - refuse collection and disposal, street lighting, weights and measures, food safety, health promotion, animal welfare, maintenance of parks and cemeteries
- housing - allocation and maintenance of public housing, homeless provision, rent collection, capital investment
- finance - annual budgets for managing income and spending, financial reports, collection of Council Tax and non-domestic rates
- information technology

It is clear, therefore, that the work of local government has a huge impact on the lives of residents of the area. It is a matter of great concern that, in some areas, as few as 20% of the electorate turns out to vote in local government elections.

Powers
Local government powers may vary in their impact but they may be:
- mandatory - they must be provided by law - for example, primary and secondary education, and social work
- permissive - they do not have to provide these by law but usually choose to - for example, leisure centres and theatres
- discretionary - they may choose to allocate funds to specific projects or groups in that area - for example, providing an outing for children with special needs.

Local government provides an opportunity for people to participate in democracy at a level closer to their everyday lives than National or European elections. Local people elect councillors for their own area, called a ward. Local communities can hold their councillors accountable for the organisation and efficiency of services. Local councils also provide a source of power other than central government so that there is less centralisation of power. However, local governments generally have to act within central government policy even if it is something of which they are not particularly in favour. Compulsory competitive tendering, under which councils have to award contracts to the lowest bidder, may mean that a council department loses out on a contract. For example, a council may lose the contract for cleaning schools or hospitals. Sometimes councils rebel, but this can bring financial penalties. There is constant monitoring of local government activities in an effort to ensure that 'best value' is always being attained.

**Finance**

Local governments are financed in a variety of ways:
- government grants: the main source of local government income. This money comes from the UK government via the Scottish Parliament and accounts for about 40% of the total revenue.
- council tax: an amount of money paid by each household based on the value of the property. Each local authority sets its own council tax
- non-domestic rates: paid by businesses. This is set by the central government and is the same across the country
- charges for services: such as entrance to leisure facilities, housing rents
- the revenue gained or saved through various public-private partnerships: such as improvements to schools and hospitals
- the sale of assets: such as council houses

**Local Council Elections in Scotland**

2007 marked the first time the Single Transferable Vote (STV) voting system was used to elect Local Councillors in Scotland. This followed criticisms that some councils in Scotland were dominated by a single party. Using a form of PR, not FPTP, it would be fairer and all parties would be better represented. It
is hoped that more people will turn out to vote however, it will lead to coalitions running many Scottish councils.

STV uses multi member constituencies of 3 or 4 councillors per ward. Each party selects a number of candidates to be elected. Voters rank their preferred candidate(s) in order of preference. To be elected a candidate needs to reach a set number of votes also known as a quota. The candidate with the least votes drops out and their votes are re-allocated to the voters’ second choices until the required number of candidates (3 or 4) have reached the quota and are elected. Using STV ensures there are far fewer wasted votes.

Only five councils in Scotland are now controlled by one party and 27 councils have no one party in control. This will make it more difficult to get things passed without agreement among the parties. Many councils have formed coalitions or partnership agreements.

**Budget cuts**

In recent years, the Scottish Government's budget has been reduced as part of wider UK Treasury spending cuts. Recent Scottish government budgets have included a public sector pay freeze, as well as 'efficiency savings' targets.

As a result, Scotland's local authorities are facing cuts in their budgets which could mean cutting staff and services.

Across the country there have been cuts in school transport, museums and sports centres and police overtime. Many voluntary redundancies have been made and posts left unfilled. There have been increases in charges for breakfast clubs, special refuse uplifts and blue badges for disabled drivers.

Election Campaigns

Purpose:

An election campaign is used to try and influence voters to cast their vote for a specific political party at election time.

The four main parties in Scotland are:

- SNP (Scottish National Party)
- Labour Party
- Conservative Party
- Liberal Democrat Party

These parties all want to get as many votes as possible as more votes means more seats in government and that means more power for the party.

Process:

In Scotland we use different electoral systems depending on the election:

- First Past the Post (FPTP) for MP’s
- Additional Member System (AMS) for MSP’s
- Single Transferable Vote (STV) for local councillors

Whichever system is used, the process for the voter remains fairly similar. The parties all campaign to win votes by using poster and leaflet campaigns, TV broadcasts as well as holding public meetings, interviews, etc. This is to try and get as many voters as possible to hear what the party promises to do if they come to power – it allows the parties to let voters know about the policies in their manifesto. On voting day, the voter will go to a designated polling station (usually a local primary school or community hall) and cast their vote on a ballot paper. Voting is private and anonymous, so once making their choice, the voter puts the ballot paper into a sealed box which is only opened once the polling station closes.

Outcome:

All the electoral systems operate in different ways (see notes further on), but the outcome is announced and one party usually has more seats than the others. There are three possible outcomes though:
1. A party wins over 50% of the seats and therefore can rule as a majority government.

   *Advantages* – they don’t have to share power or negotiate with other parties because when it comes to voting on new laws they have more members than any other party.

   *Disadvantages* – it can allow a party to pass some unfavourable policies.

2. A party wins less than 50% of the seats and decides to rule as a minority government.

   *Advantages* – they don’t form a coalition and therefore don’t “water-down” their policies.

   *Disadvantages* – they don’t have enough seats on the house to control voting on new bills, so new laws can take a long time to pass and they may have to make deals with other parties to push laws through.

3. A party wins less than 50% of the seats and decides to form a coalition with another party (they join together).

   *Advantages* – this gives the party enough votes to push through new laws and allows more people in the country to have a government that is more representative.

   *Disadvantages* – the parties will have to negotiate and adapt their policies to work together, and no one in the country voted for a coalition.

**Why vote?**

Some people feel that it is pointless voting, that all politicians are the same and that their vote doesn’t really make a difference anyway.

However, many argue that it is extremely important that people use their right to vote... in Australia, the government even introduced a law that all eligible citizens must vote, if they don’t, they can receive a $1000 fine.

The Electoral Commission outlines many reasons why people should vote, including:
• **It gives you a say on important issues that affect you**

  – Everything from roads and recycling in your area, to education and climate change.

  You may think you don’t want to vote now, but if an issue comes up that you want to have your say on, you’ll have the chance to vote on it.

• **It gives you a say on who represents you in your local council, in the UK Parliament and in Europe**

  It gives you a say on who represents you in your local council, in the UK Parliament and in Europe – One of the candidates will be selected to represent you whether you vote or not, so if you do, you’ll have the chance to have a say on who represents you by voting. Some people are quick to complain when they disagree with politicians, but if you don’t vote, you’ll never change anything.

• **Across the world people have died fighting for the right to vote and be part of a democracy**

  Across the world people have died fighting for the right to vote and be part of a democracy – By using your right to vote you’ll be showing that you think that right is important. Think about it this way – in the UK, less than 100 years ago, people were killed during their struggles to get the vote for women. In South Africa, not until the end of apartheid in 1994 were black people able to vote for the first time. Today, many people across the world are still denied the right to vote.
Political Parties

As mentioned before, there are four main political parties that you may choose to cast your vote for (there are other smaller parties and independent candidates who are not tied with a political party but for the purpose of the exam, we will focus on just the four main ones).

SNP

The SNP form the current government in the Scottish Parliament... we all know that Alex Salmond is their leader and is the current First Minister of Scotland. We also know that they want Scotland to become an independent nation, separate from the rest of the UK. But what else do they stand for?

For a brief history of the SNP, you can visit their party website. However, the website does state:

The Scottish Parliamentary election of 2011 marked a turning point in the history of Scottish politics and the Scottish Parliament. Following a hugely positive campaign, the SNP won an overall majority in the Scottish Parliament with 69 seats - a feat made more significant by the fact the electoral system was specially designed to prevent any party gaining overall control of the parliament.

Following the historic win, Leader Alex Salmond announced that the SNP Government would hold a referendum on Independence within 5 years.

During an address in Edinburgh, he said the SNP had "a majority of the seats, but not a monopoly on wisdom". He added that the SNP would carry the hopes of the nation and make it proud.

Some of their promises during the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary election included freezing council tax rates, protecting the NHS budget, putting 1000 extra police officers on the beat, promising to hold a referendum on independence, keeping university education free, and many more. (See http://votesnp.com/campaigns/SNP_Manifesto_2011_lowRes.pdf for the full 2011 manifesto)
**Labour**

The Labour Party website states:

*Within three months of the 1997 election, Donald Dewar produced a White Paper on devolution. When Dewar introduced the Scotland Bill, he read the first clause, “There shall be a Scottish Parliament”, paused, looked up at his audience and said, “I like that.” He expertly piloted the legislation through the House of Commons, and, in September 1997, a mandate for a Scottish Parliament in a referendum was won: 74.3 per cent of those voting supported a Scottish Parliament, and 63.5 per cent were in favour of giving it tax-raising powers. In the first election to the Scottish Parliament, in May 1999, Scottish Labour won 56 of the 129 seats, and Dewar became Scotland’s first First Minister.*

*After Donald’s tragic death, Henry McLeish was elected First Minister. He was succeeded in 2001 by Jack McConnell and Labour was once more returned as the largest party in the Parliament after the 2003 election. McConnell pioneered innovative changes, including ban on smoking in public places and controls on anti-social behaviour.*

*In May 2011, Ed Miliband commissioned Jim Murphy and Sarah Boyack to undertake a root-and-branch review of Scottish Labour in order “to achieve an effective, modern Scottish Labour Party, better able to earn the trust of, and deliver for, the people of Scotland.” Four months later, Murphy and Boyack unveiled the largest package of reforms to the Scottish Labour Party. The proposals, which included the creation, for the first time, of an elected Leader of the Scottish Labour Party, were approved by a special conference in Scotland on 29 October.*

*In December 2011, Johann Lamont won the contest to become the first overall Leader of Scottish Labour.*

Some of their promises during the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary election included creating 10,000 work placements for unemployed young people, creating a new Scottish Living Wage of £7.15 per hour, doubling the value of exports over a 10 year period, guaranteeing modern apprenticeships and many more.

Conservative Party

The Conservative Party website states:

We are a patriotic party of the Scottish centre-right which stands for freedom, enterprise, community and equality of opportunity.

We are a party of choice, responsibility, localism, low taxation and strong but limited government.

- **We are a party which champions individual choice.** Scottish Conservatives believe that people and not government make the decisions that are best for themselves, their families and communities.

- **We are a party of responsibility.** Scottish Conservatives believe that people must take responsibility for the decisions they make and bear the consequences if they break the law. Freedom cannot exist without responsibility and respect for the rule of law.

- **We are a party of localism.** Scottish Conservatives believe that decisions should be made as close to the people as possible. Big government stifles local action. We believe in re-empowering local communities.

- **We are a party of low taxation.** Scottish Conservatives want to see people keep more of the money they earn and not have it eaten up by excessive government spending. We believe in prioritising the family budget over the government budget.

- **We are a party of strong but limited government.** Scottish Conservatives believe in government that is strong in its guarantee of security, freedom and civil liberties, but limited in its size, cost and ability to interfere in the day to day lives of individuals, families and businesses.

Some of their promises during the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary election included creating a £140m Scottish business start-up fund, introduce a road maintenance fund, freeze public sector pay on those earning more than £21,000, freeze council tax, introduce variable student fees for university and reduce school leaving age to 14, plus many more.

(See [http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-12961008](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-12961008) for a summary of the manifesto)

Current leader: Ruth Davidson
Liberal Democrats:

The Liberal Democrats website states:

Our values can be summarised by the Preamble to our Constitution which starts:

"The Scottish Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity."

Some of their promises during the 2011 Scottish Parliamentary election included creating 100,000 new jobs, creating enterprise zones in Scotland, invest £250m to deliver superfast broadband across Scotland, drive forward renewable energy, allocate £250m to insulate homes and buildings, keep university education free, and many more.


Current leader: Willie Rennie
**Electoral Systems:**

**First Past The Post**

This system is the simplest electoral system. The candidate with the most votes wins in a constituency and the party with the most seats (MPs) in the House of Commons forms the government.

This system is used to elect MP’s, MEP’s and Local Councillors in England.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Easy to understand:</strong> voters put an X next to the candidate they want to vote for.</td>
<td><strong>Wishes of voters not fully represented:</strong> the winner often does not have over 50% of the votes so many votes are therefore wasted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quick result:</strong> result is known the next day.</td>
<td><strong>Parties not fairly represented:</strong> smaller parties get a lot of votes but few seats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clear winner:</strong> there is usually a clear winner with a majority in the House of Commons; creating a strong government.</td>
<td><strong>Undemocratic:</strong> Most governments have more people voting against them than for them – this is not democratic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong links with representatives:</strong> Each constituency has one MP whose responsibility it is to keep in close contact with constituents and represent them.</td>
<td><strong>Instability:</strong> Extremes of government can come to power, leading to constant changes in policy i.e. switching between a Conservative to a Labour government. This instability is not good for the country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strong governments created:</strong> usually one party will gain a majority and will form the government. Which means laws will be passed with more ease and the public can assess how effective the party has been over their 4 years.</td>
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<td><strong>Continuity:</strong> it is a tried and tested system that has been in place for many years.</td>
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The Additional Member System
This system combines First Past the Post with the Party List system. This is to maintain a link between the constituency votes and representation and also gives the smaller parties a fairer distribution of seats in government. This system is used to elect MSP’s.

The system works by giving each voter 2 votes. The first vote is cast to elect a candidate for that constituency. This uses FPTP, so the person with the most votes wins. There are 73 constituencies within Scotland so 73 constituency MSP’s are elected to Holyrood.

The second vote is cast for a political party. This vote is counted within regions in Scotland; there are 8 Scottish regions and each region will elect 7 MSP’s (so there are 56 regional MSP’s in total). Once each region has counted the votes and calculated how many regional seats a party will win, the political party is informed. They then look at a pre-arranged list and select the candidates from the top. So if a party won 4 constituency seats in “Central Scotland”, they would take the top 4 names off their list. Then if they won a further 4 seats in “West of Scotland” they would take the next four names closest to the top.

In total there are 129 MSP’s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fairer results:</strong> the seats gained tend to be more in line with the % of votes cast.</td>
<td><strong>Difficult to understand:</strong> there’s confusion over completing the ballot paper and who you can vote for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairer representation:</strong> women and ethnic minorities are more likely to be elected because parties put forward a list in order of preference for candidates.</td>
<td><strong>More power to the Parties:</strong> using the list system gives the parties the choice to the parties as to who is elected; not the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coalition government:</strong> parties have to cooperate with each other so there is agreement about policies introduced.</td>
<td><strong>Coalitions are weaker:</strong> decisions take a lot longer to make and require compromise between the views of different parties – not much changes!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greater choice:</strong> voters are given more choice because of 2 votes.</td>
<td><strong>Coalitions break down:</strong> lots of disagreement occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeps the link between MSP and constituents while giving a more representative distribution of seats.</td>
<td>There can also be confusion between the role of the Constituency and the Regional MSP.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Single Transferable Vote**
This system is a form of Proportional Representation. When casting a vote using STV, voters rank the candidates in order of preference; 1 being their favourite and then voters can choose to rank numbers 2,3,4, etc. Voters can put down as many numbers as they wish. More than one candidate is elected for each constituency depending upon the size of the electorate in that constituency. Candidates do not need a majority to win. Instead, candidates must reach a quota of votes to be elected. Each voter’s first preference is totalled. If a candidate has reached the quota then they are elected. Any additional votes they have received are removed and the voters’ 2\textsuperscript{nd} choice is allocated to candidates. This will continue to happen until all the seats for that constituency have been filled. If no candidate or not enough candidates reach the quota, then the candidate with the least votes is removed and the voters’ 2\textsuperscript{nd} choices are taken into account and allocated to the other candidates.

<table>
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<td><strong>More choice:</strong> STV gives voters more choice than any other system. This gives voters more power.</td>
<td><strong>Large constituencies:</strong> In areas with small populations, like the Highlands, the constituencies would have to be very large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most votes count:</strong> Fewer votes are wasted under this system as people’s preferences are taken into account.</td>
<td><strong>Longer process:</strong> It takes a lot longer to calculate the vote and announce the results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairer:</strong> As parties can put forward more than one candidate, they try to present a balanced team and therefore put forward more women and ethnic minorities.</td>
<td><strong>Confusing:</strong> As there are numerous candidates standing to fill more than one seat, the ballot paper can be very long and confusing to complete. This may result in ruined ballot papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple representatives:</strong> STV results in multi-member constituencies and therefore the public have more than one representative they can turn to for help with any issues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Under-representation**

Women and ethnic minorities are under-represented in British politics. We know this as they do not have representation within the House of Commons or the Scottish Parliament that is equal to their overall percentage of the population.

**House of Commons:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number &amp; % in House of Commons</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>144 members = 22.2%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>506 members = 77.8%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some examples of current female MP’s include:
- Anne Begg (Labour) for Aberdeen South
- Margaret Curran (Labour) for Glasgow East
- Anne McGuire (Labour) for Stirling

There are also now 27 ethnic minority MP’s in the House of Commons; a large increase from the previous 14. This means that minorities now make up 0.04% of the House of Commons but as of 2001, ethnic minorities accounted for 8% of the population.

Some of the ethnic minority MP’s include:
- Khalid Mahmood (Labour) for Birmingham
- Adam Afriyie (Conservative) for Windsor
- Sajid Javid (Conservative) for Bromsgrove

**Scottish Parliament:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number &amp; % in Scottish Parliament</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45 members = 34.9%</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>84 members = 65.1%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some examples of current female MSP’s include:
- Linda Fabiani (SNP) for East Kilbride – Constituency MSP
- Annabel Goldie (Scottish Conservatives) for West Scotland – Regional MSP
- Anne McTaggart (Scottish Labour) for Glasgow – Regional MSP

There are also now 2 ethnic minority MSP’s in the Scottish Parliament. This means that minorities now make up 0.02% of the Scottish Parliament but as of 2001, ethnic minorities accounted for 8% of the population. One of the ethnic minority MSP’s is Humza Yousaf (SNP), he is a Regional MSP for Glasgow.

**PRESSURE GROUPS**

A pressure group is a group of individuals that have a common interest in a cause and want to change or influence society.

Some pressure groups include:

- Shelter - aim to help homeless people
- Amnesty international - defends human rights
- Greenpeace - campaigns on environmental issues
- CBI (Confederation of British Industry) - promotes business interests
- TUC (Trade Unions) - promotes workers interests
- ASH (Action on Smoking Health) - anti-smoking group
- FORREST - pro smoking group

Rights and responsibilities of pressure groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to criticise the government and other organisations.</td>
<td>not to tell any lies or give false information about a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to hold meetings and events where people can discuss issues and demonstrate their support</td>
<td>to ensure these meetings are peaceful and not attack any people or property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to protest and demonstrate to get their voices heard</td>
<td>to obey the law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to use the media to publicise their</td>
<td>to give accurate information or their</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example 1: Shell oil wanted to dump its disused Brent Spar oil platform in the North Sea; Greenpeace damaged its own campaign when it gave incorrect information about the amount of pollution this would cause.
Example 2: Before the G8 Summit at Gleneagles in 2005, the Make Poverty History campaign held a march in Edinburgh and Live 8 concerts which were broadcast live and gained worldwide publicity. However, despite the pleas of the organisers, some of the demonstrators were not peaceful and this gave a bad image in the media.
Example 3: The Fathers 4 Justice campaign lost support when one of its members dressed up as Batman and climbed onto a balcony of Buckingham Palace as a publicity stunt therefore breaking the law.

(Try to get some up-to-date examples to use in your KU answers!)

Reasons why people join pressure groups:
1. You can create lots of publicity for your cause so more people learn about your opinions
2. More people means more can be achieved = more power!
3. Share expert knowledge with the government e.g. Age Concern contributes information to the government that impacts pensions, etc.
4. Members can gain professional and personal benefits e.g. through trade unions.

Ways in which pressure groups campaign:
Pressure groups try to gain public support and influence the government by using a variety of different methods. These include:
- Internet - email and web sites
- Letters
- Lobbying
- Petitions
- Demonstrations
- Mass media campaigns (T.V., radio and newspapers)
(Try to identify the methods that specific pressure groups use for your KU answers)

Remember to PEEL your Knowledge and Understanding questions!!!

See the next page to help you!!!
PEEL

PEEL stands for Point, Explain, Example and Link.

This is how you should structure your paragraphs for your KU questions. The following example comes from the “How to Pass Standard Grade Modern Studies” textbook, the same theory on how to answer questions should be applied to the new National 5 answers too.

The turnout at UK elections is seldom over 70%.

*People should use their vote.*

Why is it important that people should use their right to vote?

(Knowledge and Understanding, 4 marks)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINT</th>
<th>It is important that people should use their right to vote because low voter turnout is a threat to democracy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXPLAIN</td>
<td>Democracy means that people have a say in how their country is run, but when people do not bother to vote, a government could be elected by a small number of people who will then make important decisions that affect everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXAMPLE</td>
<td>The number of people currently voting in the UK is falling. For example, the turnout at the 2005 General Election was only 61%. Therefore, the party that got into power may think the public are not interested in politics and may start to push through laws that are unpopular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LINK</td>
<td>Therefore, people should use their vote to prevent this from happening.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this question is worth 4 marks, you would be expected to give a second valid point and repeat the PEEL process.

If you cannot think of examples to build into your answer in the exam, try to expand your explanation.

Have a look at some more sample answers on the next few pages.
Q) Describe 2 powers of the First Minister. (6 marks)

The First Minister has many powers including answering questions at First Ministers Question Time and he is also the focus of media attention.

The First Minister commands huge media attention. As First Minister, you are seen as the figurehead of the Government and you have huge access to the media. An example of the First Minister using this power is when Alex Salmond called a press conference with Police Scotland chiefs and other emergency service officers to offer his condolences to those who lost loved ones in the Clutha helicopter crash in Glasgow as well as to praise the emergency services for their efforts (November 2013). (3 marks for this paragraph)

The First Minister also participates in First Minister’s Question Time every Thursday between 12pm-12:30pm. This is when the First Minister has an opportunity to tackle challenging questions over the work of the government and the futures plans for Scotland put forward by other MSP’s in the chamber, including opposition MSP’s. For example, on the 13th March 2014, Alex Salmond was questioned by opposition MSP Johann Lamont (Labour) on Scotland’s deficit and how we would cope if we became independent. Mr Salmond tackled this by pointing out that the UK’s deficit is much higher and that Scotland has enough natural and human resources to build a strong economy independently. (3 marks for this paragraph)

You could also have chosen to mention other powers such as:

- Leader of Scottish Government
- Chairs the Scottish Cabinet
- Leader of biggest party in Scotland
- Chooses members of the Cabinet
Q) Explain why some believe a majority government works well AND why some think it does not. (6 marks)

Some people believe majority government work well as the government will be able to carry out their policies. Like the current SNP majority government, long promised policies such as a referendum on independence or a minimum price on alcohol can be put forward by the government. This is good as parties are elected based on the promises in their manifesto so if a government has a majority then they have the ability to carry out these policies without much opposition in parliament. (4 marks for this paragraph)

However, others would argue that a majority government is a bad thing as the political party with the majority of seats may be unwilling to compromise. The Additional Member System used in Scotland to elect MSP’s is much more likely to produce a coalition government. Many think this is better as it forces parties to compromise and therefore provides broader representation for more of the voters. For example in the Labour and Liberal Democrat coalitions in Scotland, it was the smaller party, the Liberal Democrats, that pushed for the abolition of university tuition fees as it was in their manifesto. (4 marks for this paragraph)

You could have also mentioned:
It works well due to clear, decisive decision making (things get done quicker!), no need to compromise, able to keep election promises.
It doesn’t work well as the government may become too powerful and ignore others views, they can pursue unpopular or extreme policy changes.
Q) Describe, in detail, two devolved matters the Scottish Parliament can make decisions about for Scotland. (4 marks)

One devolved matter in which the Scottish government can make decisions is healthcare. All healthcare decisions are made in Scotland for Scotland with decisions about new hospitals and care for the elderly devolved. An example is the Scottish government’s decision to ban the display of cigarettes in large shops to stop people being attracted to smoking. (3 marks for this paragraph)

Another devolved issue the Scottish government make decisions about is education. They have responsibility over the funding and running of the education system from nurseries through to universities. For example, the Scottish government have recently overhauled the national curriculum, introducing Curriculum for Excellence and new National 3, 4, 5 and 6 examinations. (3 marks for this paragraph)

Q) Explain in detail, at least 2 ways local councils in Scotland can raise money. (6 marks)

Local authorities can raise funds in a number of ways. Their main income is from Council Tax which is charged to every household. This tax is used to pay for a huge variety of services. For example, Local Authorities provide state education and money raised from council taxes will help to pay for schools and nurseries. Council Tax varies depending on which area you stay in and the number of rooms within the house. For example, in South Lanarkshire, someone living in Council Tax band A will pay the council just over £1000 per year (£1007.90) but someone with Council Tax band H will pay over £3000 per year (£3023.70). (4 marks for this paragraph)

Another way councils can raise funds is through charges they can apply for additional services they provide. In an Audit Scotland report, it is said that councils can raise around £1.3billion from charges and fees. These charges and fees come from admission to gyms, galleries and museums, school meals, parking permits, meals on wheels, repairs to properties, pest control, special rubbish uplifts, and many more. For example, in South Lanarkshire Council, each household gets one, free uplift of bulky rubbish each year (e.g. sofas), but after that one free uplift, the council charges £30 for each subsequent uplift. (4 marks for this paragraph)
Q) Describe 2 ways in which decisions made about local services by councils can affect the lives of people in Scotland. (4 marks)

Local councils affect the lives of Scottish people in many ways. One way is through the collection of refuse or waste. In some local authorities there are many different collections. This may be to try and increase recycling or “greener” ways of reusing our waste. An example would be North Lanarkshire who has collections for garden waste, paper and other recyclables, “food only” and then general waste, so each household has four separate containers for each. (3 marks for this paragraph)

Another service that councils provide that can affect peoples’ lives is through their social work department. For example, many social work departments will assess the needs of vulnerable groups in society, like the elderly, and put in place the appropriate care to ensure their safety. For example, South Lanarkshire Council provides sheltered housing to meet the needs of the elderly. Sheltered housing provides individual, self-contained homes specifically designed to suit the needs of older people. However, sheltered housing also has 24 alarm systems in place, there are social activities arranged that the residents can take part in if they wish and there is usually a manager around most days to keep an eye on the residents. This gives the elderly person the ability to remain independent while also feeling secure which will make them, and their family members feel better. (3 marks for this paragraph)
Q) Explain, in detail, why some people are happy with AMS, while others are not. (8 marks)

One way people are happy with the Additional Member System is the greater representation for smaller parties. In AMS, voters have two votes, one for an individual constituency MSP like Linda Fabiani with the second vote being for a party. From the Regional List, MSP’s, such as Patrick Harvie MSP for the Green Party, have been able to get elected even though they are from a smaller party. Using AMS, in every election since 1999, the Green Party has always had a representative in the parliament.

(3 marks for this paragraph)

Another reason people are happy with AMS is because they have more representatives to choose from if they wish to speak with an MSP. Using AMS means that there are 8 MSP’s that represent each constituent in parliament; one is elected from the constituency using FPTP and the other 7 are elected from the Regional List System. Also, these 8 representatives will probably be from different parties so the voter can choose which person they think would help them the most. For example, if you lived in East Kilbride, you could choose to get help from the constituency MSP Linda Fabiani (SNP), or you could go to one of the seven Regional MSP’s, such as Mark Griffin (Labour) or Margaret Mitchell (Conservative).

(3 marks for this paragraph)

However, not everyone is happy with the AMS system. Some argue that using the Regional List System puts too much power into the hands of the political party and takes the power away from the voter. This happens, as on the ballot paper, using the List system, a voter only gets to vote for a party, not a candidate. This could mean that a representative is selected for you by the party that you are not happy with and wouldn’t have voted for. For example, in East Kilbride, there are seven Regional List MSP’s that speak on behalf of the constituents there even though no one actually voted for that person; so you may have selected the Conservative Party on the ballot paper but do not agree with the stance Margaret Mitchell MSP takes on certain issues.

(3 marks for this paragraph)