

## Politics Induction Task sheet

### Task 1:

Ensure that you have a good understand of the key terms that you will need to know for the Politics course. Please complete the grid below, and bring it with you to the first lesson!

Term	Definition	Where used? Where heard?
Constitution		
Convention		
Parliament		
Ratified		
Democracy		
Reform		
Suffrage		
Referendum		
Partisan		
Manifesto		

### Task 2:

What do you think is the difference between 'politics' and 'government'? Write some ideas down in the box below. We will discuss your ideas when we start the course!

### Task 3:

Part of the course requires you to understand key concepts and terminology. Below are some terms that you will need to know, and also be able to use accurately within your answers.

- codified
- uncodified
- statute
- common law
- conventions
- authoritative opinions
- The royal prerogative
- rule of law
- parliamentary sovereignty
- individual and collective rights.

Rather than writing or finding a definition, create an image (or find an image) that you think best represents this concept.

**Task 4:** Read the article below. what does it tell you about British politics?

**Is the King in charge of the UK?**

Sort of. The United Kingdom is a parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy. This means that while a monarch – in this case, King Charles III – is the head of state, he is not the head of government. He does not get to make most of the decisions about how the government is run; that job belongs to the Prime Minister, or PM.

The English monarchy used to have absolute power, but that was a long time ago – over 800 years in fact. 2015 was the 800th anniversary of the [Magna Carta](#), or the Great Charter. This document spelled out the rights and responsibilities of King John of England and the ruling class in 1215. The Magna Carta is regarded as the first statement of citizen rights in the world.

[The Bill of Rights of 1689](#) – which is still in effect – lays down limits on the powers of the crown and sets out the rights of Parliament and rules for freedom of speech in Parliament, the requirement for regular elections to Parliament, and the right to petition the monarch without fear of retribution.

Nowadays the King's role is mostly ceremonial.

**Do England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland each have their own governments?**

Yes and no. England is the most powerful country of the four and the British Government works for the King, who is an English monarch. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland are all ultimately beholden to English law. However, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland all have governing bodies that work exclusively on issues in their own countries.

Scotland is the most politically independent country. The Scottish National Party (SNP) have 56 seats in the House of Commons and the [Scottish Government](#) is responsible for running day-to-day matters in Scotland such as education, transport, and health.

Wales has the [Welsh Government](#) and the [National Assembly for Wales](#), which are in charge of things like making laws for Wales and agreeing Welsh taxes.

At the moment, Northern Ireland does not have a sitting government but Northern Ireland does have the Northern Ireland [Executive](#) and [Assembly](#) which has powers closer to those already devolved to Scotland. However, the situation in Northern Ireland is rapidly changing.

**Who makes the laws in the UK?**

The UK's government has three basic types of power: legislative, executive, and judiciary.

Legislative power is the power to make new laws or remove old ones. This power is held by Parliament, which is made up of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly, and the Northern Irish Assembly also have legislative powers; however, they do not have as much authority as Parliament.

Executive power – the power to implement and enforce laws – is controlled by the British government, which works on behalf of the Queen, as well as the devolved governments of Scotland and Wales and the Northern Ireland Executive.

Judiciary power, which is the power to prosecute those who break the law, is kept independent of the legislature and the executive. The highest court in the UK is the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom.