

This update package relates to the **elections on 6 May 2021**.

The package comprises the following:

- How this topic links to each of the three Awarding Bodies specification and the DfE Subject Content
- Resources material(s) in the form of teacher’s background notes and materials for students to use. There will also be web links enabling further research/investigation
- A lesson plan relating to the topic/materials
- A series of sample examination questions that relate to the topic.
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Topic 2 – 6 May 2021 Elections

Specification	Topic Area	Page reference	Reference Point
DfE Subject Content	Democracy and government	4 and 5	The concept of representative democracy. How citizens can hold those in power to account. The electoral system based upon parliamentary constituencies and the first past the post voting system. The frequency of general elections and who can and cannot vote and why.
	Citizen participation in democracy and society	6	Standing for election.
AQA	3.4.5 How can citizens try to bring about political change?	10	Standing for election.
	3.4.1 Where does political power reside in the UK and how is it controlled?	12	Concept of representative democracy.
	3.4.2 What are the powers of local and devolved government and how can citizens participate?	12	Nature of the First Past the Post system
	3.4.3 Where does power reside: with the citizen, parliament or government?	13	

OCR	Democracy, elections and voting in the UK	11	Know the key features of democratic government including regular and free elections, secret ballots Know that the UK is a representative democracy with fixed term sovereign parliaments and that MP's represent constituencies. Know who can and cannot vote in UK parliamentary elections.
	National, local and regional and devolved government	13	Know the role, structure and organisation of local, regional and devolved government in the UK.
	Citizenship participation in the UK	18	Standing for election.
Pearson	Democracy at work in the UK How does local democracy work?	10	How candidates are selected to stand for a constituency. The concept ...representative democracy. How the Westminster first past the post system operates, who can and cannot vote in general elections and why; the frequency of general elections.
	Citizen participation in politics and society	14	Standing for election.

Teacher Notes

The May 2021 Elections

On 6 May 2021 a number of local and national elections took place; the delayed local elections from 2020, elections to the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, directly elected Mayors including the Mayor of London, the London Assembly, Police and Crime Commissioners and County Councillors. There was also a Parliamentary by-election in Hartlepool on the same day.

Wherever your centre is located it is likely that there is local election data that can be incorporated within your teaching. All results past and present are available from local authority web sites.

It is therefore best seen as a means to bring together a range of points from the subject content and thereby enable students to use real life examples and case studies to help developing both their knowledge and understanding.

There are a range of elements of the specification can be linked to studying the elections held on 6 May 2021, in no specific order or ranking:

- What do we mean by representative democracy?
- What political parties stand for? – their basic philosophy – using General Election manifestos or media produced shorter versions
- An electoral system based upon single member constituencies – the benefits and draw backs of this system – start from your local area and study other seats as a comparative exercise
- How do the different voting systems work – how does First Past the Post work? What are its strengths and weaknesses? Why do some people want to replace FPTP?
- In Scotland and Wales and for the election of Mayors and PCC's different electoral systems are used.
- Who can vote? Who does vote? What do we mean by political apathy and how might it be overcome?
- Why is there a debate about lowering the voting age? In Scotland and Wales 16 years old could vote – did that impact upon turnout or the results?
- What do the results tell us about UK politics in 2021?

The material in this package provides some coverage of the points above, and clearly there is opportunity to use the 2021 Elections as a springboard for covering some or all of these points. This could form part of a class or group research, giving each group a key question to research and present back to the class, and for others to debate the evidence. If this work is done as an IT presentation, it also enables the whole class to have access to each groups research.

Student Notes – 2021 UK Elections

On 6 May 2021 a number of local and national elections took place; the delayed local elections from 2020, elections to the Scottish and Welsh Parliaments, directly elected Mayors including the Mayor of London, the London Assembly, Police and Crime Commissioners and County Councillors. There was also a Parliamentary by-election in Hartlepool on the same day.

Who was being elected?

- 143 English local councils, approximately 5,000 seats
- 39 police and crime commissioners
- 25 London Assembly seats
- 13 directly-elected mayors
- 1 MP in the Hartlepool by-election

These notes will provide you with the results of these elections and some comparative comments regarding how they differ from previous results.

Hartlepool parliamentary by-election

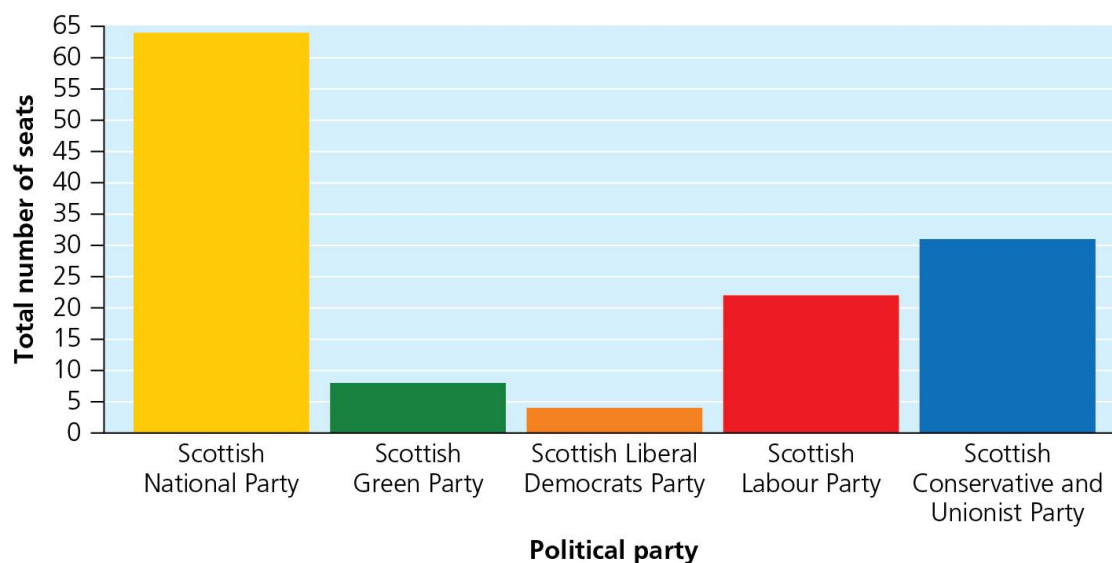
This is a constituency that had been won by the Labour party at every election since the seat was created in 1974. The Conservatives won the seat with a nearly 9,000 vote majority on a low turnout of 42.3%; this was an area that voted in favour of Brexit in 2016. It is unusual for a government to win by-elections from opposition parties. During the 2019 General Election the Conservatives won a number of northern seats that had traditionally returned Labour MP's. These seats are now known as 'red wall seats'; constituencies that have recently switched from Labour to the Conservatives. Is this a trend that will continue or will Labour start to win back these seats?

Party	Candidate	Votes (%)
Conservative	Jill Mortimer	15,529 (51.9%)
Labour	Paul Williams	8,589 (28.7%)
Independent	Sam Lee	2,904 (9.7%)
Heritage	Claire Martin	468 (1.6%)
Reform	John Prescott	368 (1.2%)
Green	Rachel Featherstone	358 (1.2%)
Liberal democrat	Andrew Hagon	349 (1.2%)

Elections to the Scottish Parliament

The whole of the Scottish Parliament is elected at one time therefore there were 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSP's) elected on 6 May 2021. Each elector in Scotland has two votes and the voting age is 16. 73 MSP's are elected to represent individual constituencies using the first past the post (FPTP) voting system. The second vote is for a political party. Scotland is divided into 8 regions and 56 MSP's are elected according to the % of votes each party achieved on the second vote in each region taking account of the number already elected for the constituencies in that Region. The aim of this system is to ensure proportionality between the votes a party receives and the number of MSP's elected to represent that party.

The graph below outlines the results of the election:



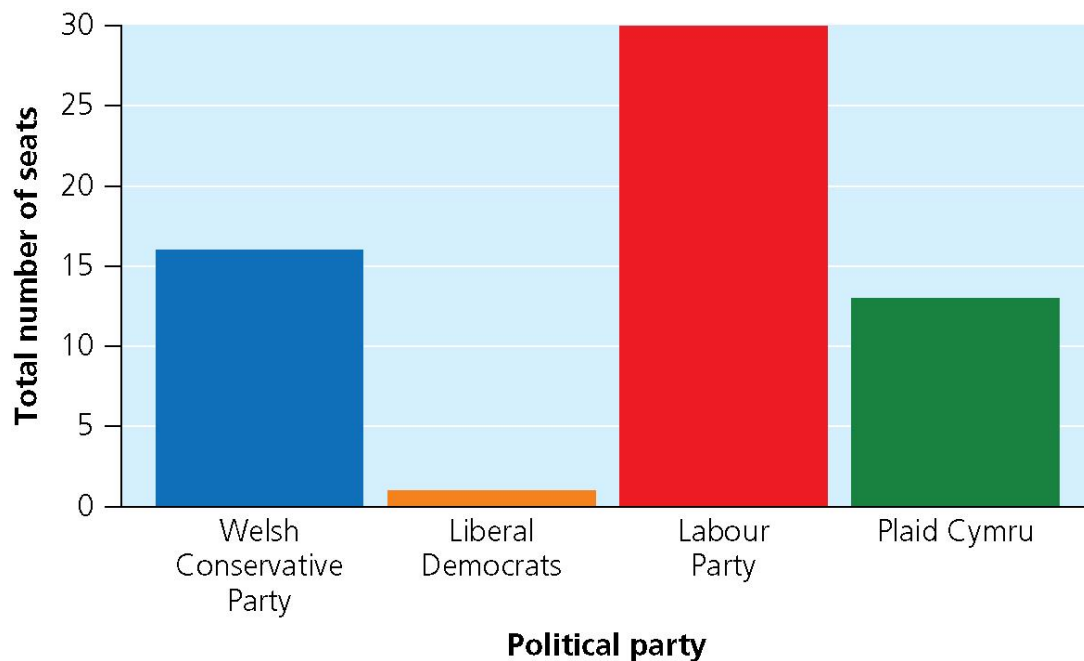
*Contains information licensed under the Scottish Parliament Copyright Licence.
Source: Electoral Management Board for Scotland*

The Regional top up system gave the SNP -2 extra seats, reaching 64, the Conservatives 31, Liberal Democrats 4, Labour 22, and the Green party 8. The overall result was that the SNP are still the largest party in the Parliament but lack a majority. If, like in a UK general election, the result was based only on constituency results, the SNP would have had an overwhelming majority. The major political issue in Scotland is whether a second independence referendum will be called. The final decision rests with the UK government.

Elections to the Welsh Parliament

The whole of the Welsh Parliament is elected at one time therefore there were 60 Members of the Welsh Parliament elected on 6 May 2021. Each elector in Wales has two votes and the voting age is 16. 40 members are elected to represent individual constituencies using the first past the post (FPTP) voting system. The second vote is for a political party. Wales is divided into 5 regions and 20 members are elected according to the % of votes each party achieved on the second vote in each region taking account of the number already elected for the constituencies in that Region. The aim of this system is to ensure proportionality between the votes a party receives and the number of members elected to represent that party.

The graph below outlines the results of the election:



The Regional top up system awarded the Welsh Conservatives 8 extra seats, the Liberal Democrats 1, Labour 3, and Plaid Cymru 8.

The overall result was that the Labour Party are still the largest party in the Parliament but lack a majority. If like in a UK general election the result was based only on constituency results the Labour Party would have had an overwhelming majority.

Election of mayors

A recent innovation within local government has been that of directly elected mayors. These are individuals who are elected and take on many of the powers of a council. The most important directly elected mayor is the Mayor of London who is held to account for their actions by the London Assembly. This year a number of new areas in the country had elections for directly elected mayors.

Mayor of London

For the past four years this post has been held by Sadiq Khan, a former Labour MP. The mayor before him held the position for eight years and is the current Prime Minister Boris Johnson (Conservative). Twenty candidates took part in the election on 6 May. Voters cast their vote by placing a '1' against their first-choice candidate then a '2' against their second choice. If no candidate gets 50% plus one of the first-choice votes, the top two candidates go through to a second count and all the second preference votes of the losing candidates are added to the two candidate totals. If the second vote was for neither of the top two candidates, the vote is eliminated.

2021 Result

Candidate	Party	1 st Preferences	2 nd Preference	End Result
Sadiq Khan	Labour	1,013,721(40.0%)	192,313(69.5%)	1,206,034(55.2%)
Shaun Bailey	Conservative	893,051 (35.3%)	84,550 (30.5%)	977,601(44.8%)

Sadiq Khan for Labour was elected for a further four years. The turnout was 41%.

Other Directly elected mayors

Seven combined authority mayors were up for election.

Combined Authority	Previous Mayor	Elected mayor -2021
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Conservative	Labour
Greater Manchester	Labour	Labour
Liverpool City Region	Labour	Labour
Tees Valley	Conservative	Conservative
West Midlands	Conservative	Conservative
West of England	Conservative	Labour
West Yorkshire	(NEW)	<i>Labour *</i> <i>(As a serving MP, she now has to resign her seat and a parliamentary by-election will be held)</i>

Five single authority mayors were up for election.

Local Authority	Previous mayor	Elected mayor - 2021
Bristol	Labour	Labour
Doncaster	Labour	Labour
Liverpool	Labour	Labour
North Tyneside	Labour	Labour
Salford	Labour	Labour

In these elections the Labour Party made some notable gains.

Election to London Assembly

London Assembly members are elected using the Additional Member system. You vote once for your constituency member and once for a London-wide representative.

There are 14 constituency members and 11 London-wide members.

2021 results

Party	Seats won	Change
Labour	11	-1
Conservative	9	+1
Green	3	+1
Liberal Democrat	2	+1
UKIP	0	-2

Police and Crime Commissioner elections

Police and Crime Commissioners are another recent innovation within local government (since 2012). These people are responsible for the policy direction and budget allocation for policing in their area. They also have the powers to dismiss Chief Constables. In four parts of the country (Northamptonshire, North Yorkshire, Staffordshire and Essex) they are now also responsible for the Fire and Rescue Service.

2021 results

Party	Seats won	Change
Labour	8	-6
Conservative	30	+10
Plaid Cymru	1	-1

Local Elections in England

Many different local elections took place on 6 May 2021. Some were for the whole council others for a part of the council. Pending by-elections were held and elections were taking place to different types of council. 143 Councils in England had elections on 6 May.

Overall Results

	Conservatives	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Green Party
Councils controlled	63	44	7	0
Councils Change	+13	-8	+1	0
Councillors Total elected	2,345	1,345	588	151
Councillors Change	+235	-327	+8	+88

These results were not so good for Labour. The Conservatives made many gains in both seats and councils. The Liberal Democrats had a standstill performance whilst the Green Party gained many seats but are yet to control a council.

Useful web links

Full background and results of the 2021 elections

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56286643>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-57028315>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-57026094>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c27kz1m3j9mt/london-elections-2021>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-57031010>

<https://research.senedd.wales/research-articles/election-results-2021-what-s-changed/>

<https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2021/5/11/591dc3c7-d994-4bbd-8120-767e9e781a67#Introduction>

Party web sites

Labour

<https://labour.org.uk/>

Conservative Party

<https://vote.conservatives.com>

Liberal Democrat

<https://www.libdems.org.uk>

The Greens

<https://vote.greenparty.org.uk>

Scottish Nationalist Party

<https://www.snp.org>

Plaid Cymru

<https://www.partyof.wales>

Lesson Plan – The 2021 Elections

The 2021 Elections	
Summary	In this lesson students will learn about the concepts and issues surrounding the various election held on the 6 May 2021.
Specification links	See table above
Learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain knowledge and understanding of the nature of key concepts relating to elections, devolution and local democracy, representation and accountability • Develop skills relating to assessing evidence, making arguments, and drawing conclusions.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information Sheet – the 2021 Elections ▪ Web based materials as determined by the teacher ▪ Citizenship Studies (2nd Edition 2021) p93,102 -113,121-124. ▪ Revision guide p37- 46,50-52.
Introducing the lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Assess prior knowledge – use Q&A to determine what the group know about the various elections that were held on 6 May 2021. Write the responses on the board, ask the students to note them down, as an individual and group exercise ask the students to sort the responses into a list of the most important to the least important elections held on the 6th May 2021. These lists can be used as a part of the plenary to establish what learning and understanding has taken place.
Main teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Task 1 -establish what each type of election was about and the different levels of government (tiers) and devolution within the UK. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q&A – to ascertain the function and responsibility of each of the different types of elected post; MP, MSP's, PC, Police and Crime Commissioners, London Mayor, London Assembly members, Directly Elected Mayors, County and District Councillors. This activity may need reviewing at the end of the lesson to confirm student understanding. Ensure a brief mention is made as to why the 2021 elections are a one – off due to the pandemic. You may wish to carry out this exercise after the students have had an opportunity to look at source material. ▪ Task 2 -split the class into groups asking each to research one set of elections that were held. For each, pose the following questions: what was the outcome and how did it differ from the last elections? What type of voting system was used? Who could vote and what was the turnout compared with the last elections? Were the results for these elections politically significant/ good or bad for a party? Or in the case of Scotland or Wales, did the results promote and diminish the case for independence? ▪ Task 3 – you may wish to use local data to discuss the nature of the elections held on 6 May 2021 or to look at the elections as a whole across the UK. To what extent were students aware of local elections taking place? Considering candidates are limited by law as to how much they can spend on their election, how would they organise an election campaign if they had £1500 to spend on an electorate of 6,000 living at 3,000 addresses?

Plenary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through questioning, ask the students about the initial list and check whether they would re-order their list. Secondly, ask students about the roles and importance of those elected on 6 May 2021. Lastly, what do these results say about the state of UK politics in 2021?
Extension Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extension exercise is to be completed out of class – have students design and draft their own election address for a local council election. There are also linked examination style questions to answer.
Linked Examination Questions	<p>Q1. What is meant by the term ‘an election’? 2 marks (AO1)</p> <p><i>Source</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Elections to the Scottish Parliament</p> <p>In Scotland every registered voter aged 16 and over on polling day is entitled to vote. Voters cast two votes- one for a constituency member and the other for a regional ballot. There are 73 constituency MSP’s who are elected using the First Past the Post system (FPTP). In the regional ballot the vote is for a party. Scotland is divided into eight regions. The parties are then allocated a number of MSPs depending on how many votes they received taking into account the number of constituencies they have already won in that region. This is done to make the overall result more proportional.</p> <p>Q2. The source above describes the Scottish Parliamentary electoral process . Describe two differences from the way in which members of the United Kingdom Parliament (MP’s) are elected. 4 marks (AO2)</p> <p>Q3. Examine the case for lowering the voting age to 16 in regard to UK general elections. 8 marks (AO3)</p>