

## Evaluate the view that Parliament performs its functions well (30)

- Remember – this is asking you to evaluate the weaknesses AND strengths of Parliament in terms of its THREE roles: [scrutiny](#), [representation](#), [legislation](#)

### Intro – what are Parliament's roles?

- Outline Parliament's roles
- The power of Parliament and will of MPs to fulfil these roles waxes and wanes
  - legislation (factors: strength of opposition, parliamentary majority, increased strength of HOL)
  - scrutiny (factors: strength of select committees, BUT suggest a criticism of this so-called 'scrutiny' -PMQs for example is in reality political theatre)
  - representation (factors MPs often not free to act, HOWEVER, private members bills, social media and e-petitions has forced MPs to be more responsive to voters)

### Legislation:

- The [fusion of powers](#) and [divisions with the main opposition](#) make it difficult to challenge government bills.
- However... the Government has only a slim majority, and Parliament has become increasingly rebellious.
- [Public Bill Committees](#) have been [strengthened](#), improving the scrutiny of legislation.
- However ... Public Bill Committees remain far less independent than select committees
- The House of Lords has become more [defiant](#), arguably improving the quality of laws passed
- However ... the House of Lords is restricted by the Parliament Acts and amendments can often be overturned.

### Scrutiny:

- [Select Committee reforms](#) have significantly improved the quality of scrutiny in Parliament.
- However... there are still several important factors limiting the effectiveness of Select Committees
- Parliament has [limited power](#) to challenge the use of the [prerogative powers](#) by the prime minister .
- However ... the Prime Minister has proven reluctant to declare military action without Parliament.
- Prime Minister's Questions is [political theatre](#) rather than proper scrutiny.
- However ... the opportunity to regularly question the Prime Minister is still significant, and quite [unique](#)

### Representation:

- The House of Commons has become more descriptively [representative](#)
- However ... there are still substantial differences between Parliament and the rest of the population.
- As UK elections are [party, rather than candidate, centred](#), MPs can get caught between whips & constituents
- However ... [social media pressures](#) MPs to be more responsive, & free votes lift the pressure from the whips .
- [Private-Member Bills and e-petitions](#) can raise issues that may otherwise go overlooked
- However... [few](#) Private- Member Bills are successful , and the government still dominates the timetable

### Conclusion

- Answer the q: does Parliament perform its functions well? Does it perform some functions better than others?
- What does its ability to perform its functions depend on? Does it have increased powers of scrutiny at the moment?