



National
Qualifications
2026

X858/76/12

**Politics
Paper 2**

MONDAY, 25 MAY
11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Total marks — 28

Attempt **BOTH** questions.

Write your answers clearly in the answer booklet provided. In the answer booklet you must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

Use **blue** or **black** ink.

You must leave your answer booklet on your desk; if you do not, you could lose all the marks for this paper.



Total marks — 28
Attempt BOTH questions

1. Study **Sources A** and **B** then attempt the question which follows.

SOURCE A

Voting behaviour in 2019

Post-election polling has shown that for every ten years older a voter was, they were around 9% more likely to vote for the Conservative Party. Adults over the age of 39 were significantly more likely to vote Conservative than Labour. Older voters also strongly supported Brexit, which influenced many to vote Conservative to ensure the UK left the EU. This clear division highlights the importance of age in predicting voting behaviour, and in the 2019 election, this was the most significant factor. A majority of voters aged 60–69 voted for the Conservatives, and 67% of those over 70 did the same. In contrast, a majority of voters under the age of 30 voted Labour. This was likely due to the Labour Party's policies which tended to favour younger, less affluent voters as well as their more ambiguous approach to the Brexit question.

Continuing a trend seen in recent elections, social class proved to be significantly less important to the British electorate than in years gone by. Traditionally, middle-class voters (social class groups A and B) overwhelmingly voted for the Conservatives. However, in 2019, the gap between Labour and the Conservatives among this group of voters was only 10 points. Traditional working-class voters (social class groups C2, D and E) voted Conservative by a margin of 15 points. This again ties into the Brexit debate, with middle-class voters being significantly more likely to support 'Remain' and working-class voters more likely to back 'Leave'. This represents a significant shift from previous elections and underlines the diminishing importance of social class as a factor in the way the British electorate votes.

In the 2019 election, voters also focused on party leadership and the most important issues. Key issues and how the party leaders explained them to the public proved to be an important factor in many voters' minds when they were deciding who to vote for. The Conservative Party had a very clear message of 'Get Brexit Done' under the leadership of Boris Johnson, who in his own style communicated this clearly to the British public. In contrast, the Labour Party, led by Jeremy Corbyn, seemed unable to articulate a clear message on Brexit, with different members of the party suggesting everything from 'Remain' to a second referendum on EU membership. Furthermore, the leadership of the parties played a significant role in their results. By 2019, a key reason for the movement of many former Labour voters to the Conservatives was a dislike of Jeremy Corbyn. In contrast, Boris Johnson, despite having his own baggage, was popular amongst former Labour voters in 'Red Wall' seats, mainly due to his support for Brexit and use of rhetoric.

1. (continued)

SOURCE B

Voting behaviour in 2024

The 2024 General Election was the nail in the coffin for class-based British politics. Both traditional working-class and middle-class voters opted for the Labour Party by significant margins over the Conservative Party. Among ABC1 voters, Labour enjoyed an 11-point lead, and for C2DE voters they held a 10-point lead. Labour won back many of the traditional working-class seats they had lost in 2019, particularly those in the 'Red Wall' areas. They also picked up a large number of seats in the South and Southeast of England, in what were once considered middle-class Conservative strongholds. The scale of the Conservative defeat meant that class was no longer an accurate predictor of voting behaviour.

For much of the electorate, party leadership played a lesser role in how people voted in 2024 compared to previous elections. Although some described Keir Starmer as 'boring', many voters viewed him as credible and trustworthy, due in part to his background as a lawyer. Rishi Sunak remained tainted by his association with scandals such as 'Partygate', in which he was fined for breaching COVID-19 rules. However, the Conservative Party as a whole was struggling in the polls. The 2024 campaign focused heavily on the key issue of the economy and the record of the Conservatives in government. Following the 2022 'mini-budget', which pushed up interest rates for mortgage payers, the Conservatives were no longer seen as being economically competent. In contrast, Labour promised economic growth, which helped clear away many of the lingering doubts from previous elections that the party could not be trusted with the economy.

Furthermore, in a change from previous elections, age played a more fluid role in 2024. Broadly, the usual patterns held true with younger voters more likely to vote Labour and older voters more likely to vote Conservative, but the margins varied considerably. No party gained a majority of votes within any age group, highlighting the relative decline in the importance of age since 2019. This was partly due to the increased strength of smaller parties, particularly the Green Party, who won almost a fifth of votes from the under-25s, and Reform UK, who did particularly well among voters over 50. Overall, in 2024, voters under 50 were more likely to vote Labour than Conservative, reflecting a significant shift in voting behaviour.

Use only the information in Sources A and B.

Compare the key influences on voting behaviour between the 2019 and 2024 UK General Elections.

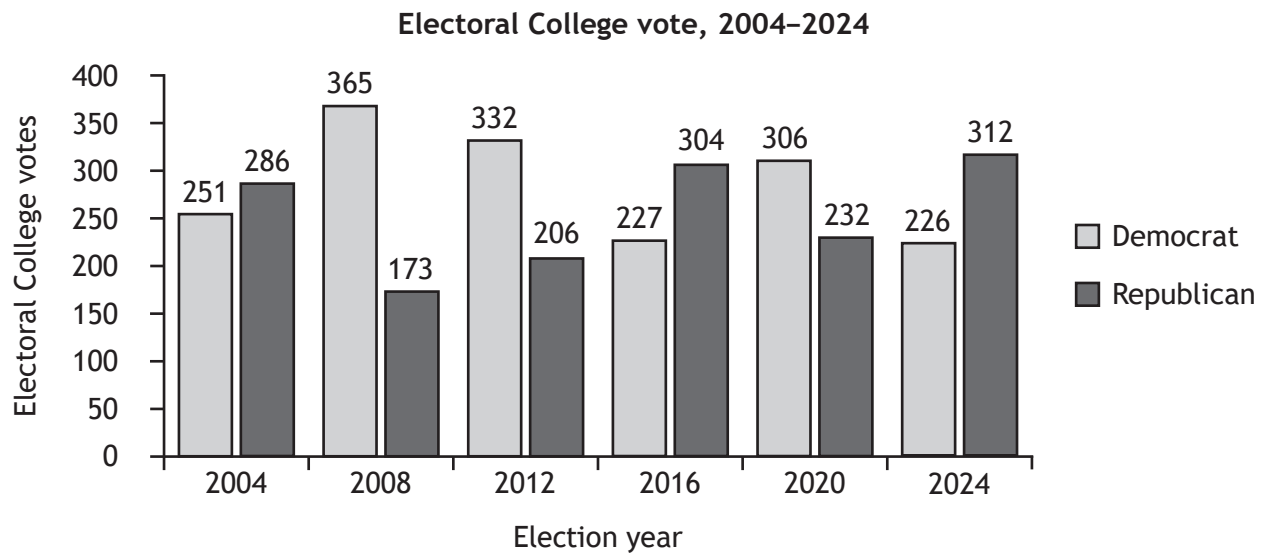
In your answer you **must** make **three** points of comparison and reach an overall conclusion.

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2. Study Sources A–E then attempt the question which follows.

SOURCE A Presidential election results



% of the popular vote, 2004–2024

Election year	Democrat	Republican	Other	Turnout
2004	48.3	50.7	1.0	60.1
2008	52.9	45.7	1.4	61.6
2012	51.1	47.2	1.7	58.0
2016	48.1	46.0	5.9	59.2
2020	51.3	46.9	1.8	65.3
2024	48.3	49.8	1.9	63.1

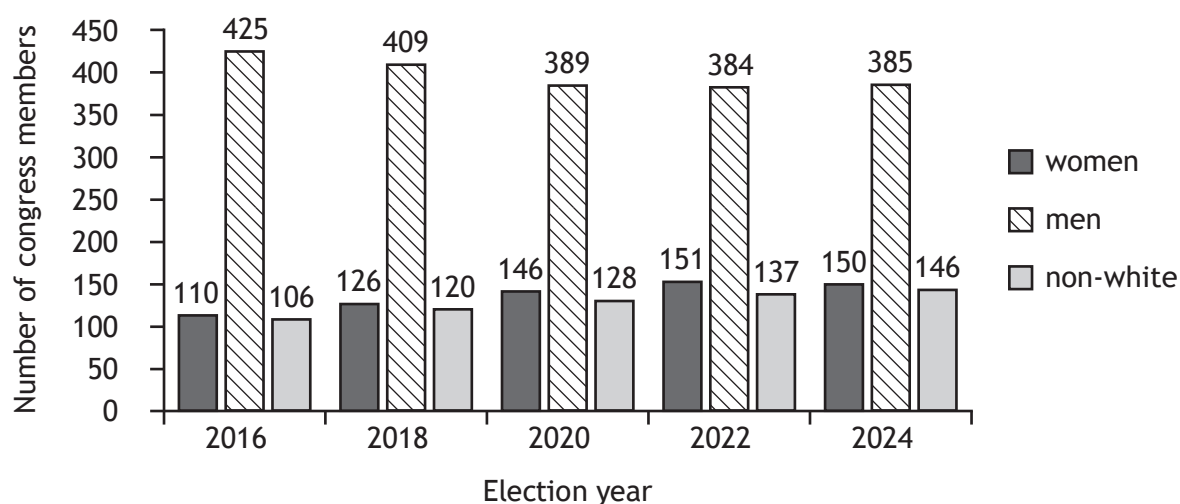
SOURCE B Congressional election results, 2012–2024

Election year	Senate (100 members)		House of Representatives (435 members)		Turnout (%)
	Democrat*	Republican	Democrat	Republican	
2012	55	45	201	234	54.7
2014	46	54	188	247	34.4
2016	48	52	194	241	55.9
2018	47	53	235	200	48.1
2020	50	50	222	213	63.8
2022	51	49	213	222	45.1
2024	47	53	215	220	63.9

(*includes independents who vote with the Democrats in the Senate)

2. (continued)

SOURCE C Number of elected members of Congress by group, 2016–2024



SOURCE D Number of women elected to Congress, 2014–2024

Election year	Senate			House of Representatives		
	Democrat	Republican	Total	Democrat	Republican	Total
2014	14	6	20	63	22	85
2016	17	6	23	64	23	87
2018	17	8	25	88	13	101
2020	16	8	24	90	32	122
2022	15	9	24	93	34	127
2024	16	9	25	94	31	125

SOURCE E Representation of women in executive and legislative branches in selected American nations

Country	Population (millions)	Cabinet (%)	National legislature (%)	Heads of state
USA	347.2	40	28	0
Canada	40.1	46	36	1
Argentina	45.8	25	43	2
Mexico	131.9	45	50	1
Nicaragua	7.0	64	55	2
Peru	34.5	11	42	1
Honduras	11.0	38	27	1

2. (continued)

By all four measures, the Democratic Party did not do as well in 2024 as it did in 2020. By these same measures, the Republican Party had their most successful year ever in 2024. The number of women and non-white people elected to Congress has seen continuous improvements and the most recent election saw the highest numbers ever elected. In each election year since 2014, both parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives have seen a constant increase in the number of women elected. The USA does significantly better than other American nations in terms of political representation of women.

Using only the information in Sources A–E.

To what extent does the evidence contained in these sources support the viewpoint above?

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