# Level 2 Public Services – Positive and Negative Aspects of Government Policy

# 1 of 18 - Welcome

Welcome to this session on the positive and negative aspects of government policy on the lives

of individuals.

In this session we will be covering:

* The Government
* Education
* Minimum wage
* Social welfare

You will need a pair of headphones.

# 2 of 18 - The Government

**The Government – who are they?**

The Government is a group of people with authority to govern a country or state.

The Prime Minister is head of the UK Government, and he is supported by Members of Parliament – or MPs.

# 3 of 18 – The Government

**The Government – what do they do?**

The Government is responsible for deciding how the country is run and for managing things on a day to day basis.

They set taxes, choose what to spend public money on, and decide how best to deliver public services, such as:

* The National Health Service (NHS)
* The police and armed forces etc.
* Welfare benefits, like the state pension
* The UK’s energy supply

# 4 of 18 – Education

In 2015 the Government made a dramatic change to education, that saw the participation age rise from 16 to 18. Before this you were able to leave school at the age of 16.

However, this new policy means that you can leave school at 16, but you must do one of the following until you are 18:

* Stay in full-time education, for example, at a college or sixth form
* Start an apprenticeship or traineeship
* Spend 20 hours, or more, a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

# 5 of 18 – Education

Since this change has been made there have been arguments made both for and against it.

Can you describe three advantages and three disadvantages of having to be in some type of education until you are 18?

Download the interactive PDF and complete **Task 1.**

**Task 1**: Describe three advantages and three disadvantages of having to be in some form of education until the age of 18 years.

Remember to save your work.

# 6 of 18 – Education

Here are some points you may have considered:

Advantages:

* Staying in education provides the opportunity for people to gain more skills and, therefore, have better employment options.
* If everyone is educated for the same amount of time at school, it should promote equality in society.
* If more people continue in education, it may mean more people go to university, which could bring more economic benefits.

Disadvantages:

* Staying in school does not necessarily mean you are learning; if you lack interest in education it may mean you would not benefit from this.
* Working from the age of 16 can be a benefit to some families who do not have much money or if they own a family business.
* Keeping students in schools, apprenticeships and traineeships could end up costing the government money.

# 7 of 18 - Minimum wage

The hourly rate for the minimum wage depends on your age and whether you are an apprentice.

This wage has been continually increasing.

The wage amounts can be broken down into two areas in the UK. To qualify for the different tiers of wage you must be:

* School leaving age, to get the National Minimum Wage
* Aged 25 to get the National Living Wage; the minimum wage will still apply for workers aged 24 and under

You can find out more about the wage brackets in the UK at the following website: [National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates](https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates)

You may wish to take notes, as you will be asked questions later in the session.

# 8 of 18 – Question 1

Is the following statement true or false?

The hourly rate for the minimum wage depends on your age and whether you are an apprentice.

1. True
2. False

Answer: a) True

# 9 of 18 – Question 2

Drag and drop to match the age to the correct amount of money (2016).

£7.20, £6.95, £5.55, £4.00, £3.40

* Age: 25 and over
* Age: 21 – 24
* Age: 18 – 20
* Under 18
* Apprentice

The correct answers are:

• Age: 25 and over (£7.20)

• Age: 21 – 24 (£6.95)

• Age: 18 – 20 (£5.55)

• Under 18 (£4.00)

• Apprentice (£3.40)

# 10 of 18 – Question 3

In 2015 the Government made a dramatic change to education, that saw the participation age change. To what age do you need to stay in education?

1. 16
2. 17
3. 18
4. 19
5. 20

Answer: c) 18

# 11 of 18 – Question 4

What are the advantages of staying in education until you are 18?

Choose all that apply:

1. Staying in education provides the opportunity for people to gain more skills and, therefore, have better employment options.
2. Staying in school does not necessarily mean you are learning; if you lack interest in education it may mean you would not benefit from this.
3. If everyone is educated for the same amount of time at school, it should promote equality in society.
4. If more people continue in education, it may mean more people go to university, which could bring more economic benefits.
5. Keeping students in schools, apprenticeships and traineeships could end up costing the government money.

Answers: a) Staying in education provides the opportunity for people to gain more skills and, therefore, have better employment options. c) If everyone is educated for the same amount of time at school, it should promote equality in society. d) If more people continue in education, it may mean more people go to university, which could bring more economic benefits.

# 12 of 18 - The effects of the national wage on individuals

Watch the following video to learn more about the effects of the minimum wage:

[How will the UK react to higher minimum wage](https://www.youtube.com/embed/etZvDNANf2g?autoplay=1&rel=0&start=0&modestbranding=1&showinfo=0&theme=light&fs=0&probably_logged_in=0)

As you are watching the video, make notes on the benefits and disadvantages of the national wage.

Revisit the interactive PDF and complete **Task 2.**

**Task 2**: Make notes on the benefits and disadvantages of the national wage for employers and employees.

Remember to save your work.

# 13 of 18 - Social welfare – what is it?

“The well-being of the entire society. Social welfare is not the same as standard of living but is more concerned with the quality of life that includes factors such as the quality of the environment (air, soil, water), level of crime, extent of drug abuse, availability of essential social services, as well as religious and spiritual aspects of life”

Social Welfare can have both a positive and negative influence on people’s lives.

This definition comes from the [Business Dictionary](http://www.businessdictionary.com/).

# 14 of 18 - Social welfare – what is it?

Visit the website to learn about the different types of benefits available in the UK: [Browse: Benefits](https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits)

Revisit the interactive PDF and complete **Task 3.**

**Task 3**: Make notes on how the different types of social welfare benefit citizens.

Remember to save your work.

# 15 of 18 - Social welfare changes – bedroom tax

The bedroom tax is a cut in your housing benefit if you live in a council or housing association property and have what is classified as a “spare” bedroom.

You can only claim for a certain number of bedrooms, depending on how many people live in your home.

You may get less housing benefit if the following applies to you:

* You have a spare bedroom
* You live in a council or housing association property
* You're of working age (when you or your partner reach state pension age you're no longer affected)

# 16 of 18 - How bedroom tax can affect citizens?

Bedroom tax is applied to your “net rent”, which is the rent when things like water charges are removed, as these aren't covered by housing benefit. The housing benefit office call this your “eligible rent”.

How does bedroom tax affect citizens?

* You pay 14% if you have one spare bedroom
* You pay 25% if you have two or more spare bedrooms

For example, if your net rent is £120 a week you need to pay the following extra rent yourself:

* £16.80 more if you have one spare room
* £30 more if you have two spare rooms

# 17 of 18 - Bedroom tax

Using the internet, conduct some research into the bedroom tax. Take some notes on how the bedroom tax can affect people.

Revisit the interactive PDF and complete **Task 4.**

**Task 4**: What affect could the bedroom tax have on today’s citizens?

Remember to save your work.

# 18 of 18 – End

Well done. You have completed this session on the positive and negative aspects of government policy on the lives of individuals

In this session we have covered:

* The Government
* Education
* Minimum wage
* Social welfare

If you are unsure or have any questions about any of these topics, make a note and speak to your tutor for more help.