

## Politics exam command words

The **command words** in a question indicate to candidates the nature of the answer they should give, and also give an indication of the skills being tested. Here are some examples of command words and the way they tend to be used:

### Analyse

Here you need to provide a detailed comparison of the causes and effects of how something has happened / developed. Wherever possible use examples, especially if the stimulus material has some within it. Sometimes the word "critically" is inserted before analyse. This means that you must make suggestions as to why / why not something would / would not, in your opinion, be appropriate to the issue being analysed. As ever, it's best to offer support to your findings/opinions.

### Apply

Apply your knowledge of, say the marketing mix, to a particular situation. You need to relate your specific knowledge of the syllabus area to the situation you have been given.

### Comment

This calls for you to draw conclusions about what the result of your workings / calculations tell you about the problem you have been set.

### Compare

This calls on you to look for and state the differences / similarities between two or more sets of numbers, trends or a situation in which two distinct patterns emerge.

### Consider

What are the different options that exist to solve / resolve / defeat / correct the situation you have been given.

### Define

You must give the PRECISE meaning of what you are being asked.

### Discuss

This asked for a DETAILED explanation considering the possible outcomes and where possible offering support to your descriptions.

### Evaluate

You are now being asked to judge / assess / , using whatever information is available, the probable outcome / worth / advantages / disadvantages / success of whatever is central to the question.

### Explain (why)

This needs a detailed response with reasons about WHY something will, for example, benefit or improve a particular situation.

### Explain (how)

This needs a detailed response that gives reasons HOW something might help / hinder the central issue of the question.

**How**

You need to show details of in what way something is achieved or stopped or whatever exercise you are asked to perform.

**Justify**

This calls for you to explain why / give reasons for something happening or not happening.

**Outline**

You need only give the main features of, say, why something might or might not happen.

**Using your own knowledge as well as the extract**

This is a type of statement you will see in the exam. You must make reference to the EXTRACT given in the question, as well as using your own additional knowledge to answer the question.

**What is**

This also calls for an explanation about something. Normally it is obvious what is central to the question and that is the topic to address.

**Which**

You are now being called upon to make a decision as to, say, the most appropriate of a range of choices / decisions / methods etc. available. You need to say WHY you would support a particular decision.

**Why**

This asks for you to explain something, often the advantages / disadvantages of a particular aspect of the syllabus.