Assess Boris Johnson’s political career.

Boris Johnson’s political career has undoubtedly been one of scandal and, at times, humiliation. However, on further analysing the nature and quality of any career it is imperative to first consider the definition of this term. The Oxford Dictionary defines a ‘career’ as “an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person’s life and with opportunities for progress.” Johnson worked for a lengthy time as a journalist; perhaps his most high profile post was becoming editor of *The Spectator* in 1999. Therefore, throughout his time in the public eye, there has been conflict between the perceived opinions and behaviours of “Johnson the politician” and “Johnson the journalist” (Gimson: 2012), and as a result a question of which professions Johnson’s loyalties lie with. However, using the aforementioned definition of the term ‘career’, and taking into consideration the fact that Johnson first stood in a political election in 1997, it can be determined that as his work as a politician has so far spanned 16 years it can as a result be deemed a ‘career’. The analysis of this career is that it has been successful albeit tumultuous, and that there are definite “opportunities for progress” in the political field for Boris Johnson.

Within the blatant success of Boris Johnson’s career as a politician, there have been many scandals featuring him at the centre. Although some of the most significant scandals concerning Johnson actually took place while he was also a journalist, the fact that his political career was well underway simultaneously meant that he had to take responsibility for his actions in all aspects of life, as a figure of public interest. In 1990, while working as a journalist for *The Telegraph*, a telephone conversation between Johnson and old school friend Darius Guppy was recorded. Within this conversation, Johnson is heard giving information to Guppy regarding the whereabouts of a *News of the World* journalist – Stuart Collier – who Guppy believed had insulted his wife (Daily Mail: 2013). The scandal lay in the detail that Johnson was aware of the circumstances under which Guppy requested this information and once the level of planned violence from Guppy to Collier had been determined – Guppy confirmed that Collier “will not have a broken limb or broken arm” and that “he will probably get a couple of black eyes and a...cracked rib” (Gimson: 2012) – continued to pass on the information about Collier, thus questioning Johnson’s morals. This particular humiliation continued to follow Johnson, an idea explored by Andrew Gimson in his biography *Boris: The Rise of Boris Johnson*: “no scandal, or alleged scandal...pursued Boris for longer”.

Further trouble for Johnson came from his journalistic ventures. In 2004 – during his time as editor of *The Spectator* – he allowed an article to be published which spoke less than compassionately about the people of Liverpool, specifically with regard to the Hillsboro disaster in which 96 football fans were killed (Herbert: 2004). Not only did the article almost downplay the figure of fatalities – quoting the number as “more than 50” – but it claimed that Liverpudlians “wallow” in their “victim status” and do not apprehend or acknowledge the part played “by drunken fans” (Herbert: 2004) in the horrific disaster. Outrage was directed at Johnson, not because it had been confirmed that he had personally written the article, but because as editor of the publication he would have had the power to stop it from being published. As an attempt to clear his name in Liverpool, Johnson embarked on a high profile visit to the city, appearing on various radio discussion programmes. On one such discussion programme, Paul Bigley – brother of murdered Iraq hostage Ken Bigley, who was from Liverpool and whose death sparked the article in question, phoned in to tell Boris: “‘You’re a self-centred, pompous twit; even your body language on TV is wrong. You don’t look right, never mind act right. Get out of public life!’” (Gimson: 2012). Even despite such negativity towards Johnson, the scandal seemed to cause...