Executive & Legislative Relations

1. **Legislature** – the legislature can be defined as the part of the state that makes the rules. It is usually elected by the people and has a focus on deliberation.

2. **Executive** – the executive can be defined as the part of the state that enforces the rules. It is usually also elected but there is less emphasis on the deliberation.

3. In the British constitution, there is an executive & legislative fusion in Westminster. Parliament, the legislative branch of the government, authorises the Acts of Parliaments. The executive branch of Parliament (Prime Minister, Cabinet and Civil Service) is responsible for enforcing Acts of Parliament.

Absolute Power

In the 12th and 13th century, the crown both made the decisions and enforced them. Through the 17th century, there was a gradual separation of power as the crown became accountable to Parliament and more rules enforced are designed in Parliament (the legislature). The glorious revolution in (date), established parliamentary sovereignty.

From Monarchical to Parliamentary Executive

- **Competing executives**: Crown vs. Cabinet: Robert Walpole (1721 - 1742) - The King was the executive but conferred by the crown on to the Cabinet and the Prime Minister.

- **Resignation**: The Parliament held a vote of confidence, which succeeded against Walpole, but only by three. Walpole resigned from his position against the desire of the crown to keep him in. This began the increasing decisive say Parliament had on who sat in the House of Commons.

- **19th & 20th century**: The Prime Minister and Cabinet must come from the House of Commons, reflecting popular will.

Democracy in the Modern Executive

- Some consider the modern executive to be an “elected dictatorship”. This is as there is no clear separation of powers; instead the executive and legislature have merged. (Idea by Montesquieu).

- Democratic roots of the executive: the government in Parliament has a majority of consent in the House of Commons and is therefore democratically accountable.

- But others have concerns that this has led to an elitist, representative democracy in which the people as a whole are not duly represented.

The Civil Service
Interpretation 2: Differentiated Polity Model

- This was a system designed by Rod Rhodes in 1997.
- It brings into focus pluralists and pressure groups in democracy. And encourages a broader political landscape that includes both private and public actors who have various levels of accountability.
- It also encourages networks rather than hierarchies.
- It criticises representative democracy in its handling of executive and legislative relations as patchy and uneven.

Interpretation 3: The Asymmetric Power Model

- Marsh, Richards and Smith designed this system in 2003. It falls somewhere between the Westminster model and the Differentiated Polity model with democracy that emerges to be in between elitist and pluralist democracy.
- It agrees that the British constitution today is characterised by a range of traditional and new institutions located in networks.
- But it argues that relations in these networks are asymmetric and skewed towards traditional actors.

The Party System

- A political party can be defined as an organisation, which represents the views of the people in an elected assembly. They are important for democracy as they lead to political choice, political participation, reconciliation and engagement of interests, communication and accountability.
- Constitutionally, political parties can be considered to be integral to the dynamics of Parliament. In the House of Commons, there are 650 MPs in total, representing 12 parties. The party or a coalition of parties that are able to control a majority of seats forms the government. It is also these parties that are responsible for guiding the legislative and executive agenda.

Whigs and Tories

1. Before the 17th Century, the Crown was in charge of the political programme. The development of a parliamentary legislature and executive brought about the first political parties.