

How to Revise Global Politics: Top Tips

Dr Vicki Sutton

Revising Global Politics can feel initially daunting – how will you revise such a large body of knowledge in time for the exam? Please do not panic. You are not alone in feeling this way. Be reassured that, whilst it feels like there is a lot of content, everything is related to everything else, so holistically the pieces fit together well. It is impossible to remember everything and the key is to know enough to be able to answer the 12 and 30-mark questions.

The starting place for revision is to rank the course topics from most to least difficult. It always helps to start with the most difficult topic first as this will help you feel better and gain confidence throughout the revision process since you know there are going to be no nasty surprises later down the line.

Once you have done this, you are ready to start. We all learn differently so the key to successful revision is to revise according to your own learning style. I ask my students to complete the quick quiz here - <https://arden.ac.uk/what-type-learner-are-you>. The answer will give you a starting point as to the specific revision tasks that best suit your unique learning style.

Develop a revision plan that is SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). Know what you will include (and not include) and hold yourself to account. We all learn differently, so choose a schedule that works best for you.

In respect of learning the content, *Essentials of Global Politics* offers lots of useful information throughout the textbook to help you revise. You should test yourself on key concepts and theories using the Definition and Spec Key Term boxes. You can also use the Key Debates to help you. You can learn these and apply the same structure and ideas to differently worded questions. Make sure you familiarise yourself with the Exam Skills chapter which looks at the AOs in greater detail and importantly, how to access the higher marks across each of the AOs. This chapter also offers guidance for how to plan the 12 and 30-mark essays.

Closer to the exam it is also useful to check the news headlines on your favourite news source. BBC and Al Jazeera are especially good for Global Politics. Being able to refer to recent developments is a useful technique to signal to the examiner that you know your stuff!

I have included my top global politics revision activities in the table below.

Best of luck to you all!

Revision Idea	Instructions	Why is this useful?
Connection Maps	On a piece of paper, select concepts, institutions and ideas from across the Global Politics course and scatter them across the page. Draw lines between the concepts, institutions and ideas and write an explanation of the relationship between them.	Connection maps (see example on website) are useful to test your knowledge of both concepts and to think laterally across the course. Everything in Global Politics is related to everything else. The students who recognise this and show breadth of knowledge are rewarded in the exam.
Timed Essay Planning	Take a list of exam questions and time yourself writing an essay plan. For 12-mark essays, allow yourself 2 minutes. For 30-mark essays allow yourself 5 minutes (add 25% if you are entitled to extra time in the exam).	This activity uses retrieval practice whereby you think quickly and draw upon your existing knowledge. It strengthens your long-term memory. You can check your plan against your notes and in a different coloured pen add any additional aspects you might have missed out. It also helps you to normalise thinking quickly and planning under pressure which will help you in the exam.
Timed Essay Writing	Take a list of exam questions and time yourself writing an essay. For 12-mark essays, allow yourself 15 minutes. For 30-mark essays allow yourself 45 minutes (add 25% if you are	Writing in timed conditions helps normalise thinking quickly and writing. A common cause of underperformance is not finishing the paper. You are better off finishing the paper with four good answers than three excellent ones and a missing fourth!

	entitled to extra time in the exam).	
Case Study Bank	Make a brief case study bank of the events/issues in Global Politics you have learnt and what they suggest about Global Politics.	This helps you to remember the key case studies you have learnt. It also helps you to apply them analytically and evaluatively (AO2 and AO3) as opposed to as simply AO1 knowledge.