

FREE SAMPLE SET | IGNOU GUESS PAPER | DECEMBER 2026 TEE

MPS-001 Political Theory

Four IGNOU papers, two clear tracks, three December-track themes solved in full

Course: MPS-001 Political Theory (also searched as MPS-01 or MPS-1)**Programme:** MA Political Science (MPS)**December 2026 paper:** Monday 4 January 2027, 10 AM to 1 PM (IGNOU tentative date sheet dated 21 September 2026)**Built from:** IGNOU MPS-001 papers of December 2023, June 2024, June 2025 and December 2025, read on IGNOU's servers on 29 September 2026

STUDY REFERENCE

WRITE IN YOUR OWN WORDS

NOT AN IGNOU PUBLICATION

How IGNOU sets the MPS-001 paper

- **Time and marks.** 3 hours for 100 marks.
- **Choice.** Answer five questions in all, at least two from each section, in about 500 words each. Every question carries 20 marks.
- **Short notes.** Question 5 asks for short notes.
- **Language.** The paper file carries the Hindi version after the English one.

The pattern that matters: two tracks

The four papers read for this set fall into two groups.

- **The December papers (2023 and 2025)** asked about *concepts*: political theory, democracy, rights, liberty, equality, justice, autonomy, citizenship, sovereignty and civil society.
- **The June papers (2024 and 2025)** asked about *ideologies*: liberalism, libertarianism, Marxism, fundamentalism, nationalism, multiculturalism and fascism.

Within each track, the two papers repeat each other almost question for question.

If this pattern holds, the December 2026 paper would be a concepts paper, and this set solves concept questions first. **But IGNOU follows no written rule here.** Prepare the ideologies briefly as well; a revision list for them is given at the end.

Repeat map: December track (concepts)

Concept	Dec 2023	Dec 2025
What political theory is; modern political theory	Q1	Q1
Democracy: its genesis and historical background	Q2	Q2
Rights: meaning and nature	Q3	Q3
Liberty (positive or negative); contemporary debates	Q4	Q4 (partly visible)
Equality and justice (notes; Rawls)	Q5, Q6	Q5
Autonomy	Q7	Q6

Concept	Dec 2023	Dec 2025
Citizenship	Q8 (Marxist concept)	Q7
Sovereignty (Austin; its development)	Q9	Q8
Civil society; state and civil society	Q10	Q9
Legitimacy and power	none	Q10

Repeat map: June track (ideologies)

Ideology	Jun 2024	Jun 2025
Liberalism; liberal democratic or welfare state	Q1, Q2	Q1, Q2
Libertarianism	Q3	Q3
Marxism: class war, historical materialism, Lukács, Gramsci	Q4, note	Q4, Q5
Conservatism; socialism	Q6, note	none
Fundamentalism	Q7	Q6
Nationalism	Q8	Q7
Multiculturalism	Q9	Q8
Fascism	Q10	Q9
Feminism: sex and gender	none	Q10

A caution about copies on other websites: one site sells a "December 2025" MPS-001 solved paper whose questions are those of IGNOU's June 2025 paper. Always check the session printed on IGNOU's own file.

Three December-track themes, solved

1. Trace the development of the concept of sovereignty. Include Austin's theory and its critics.

Covers December 2023 Q9 and December 2025 Q8.

Introduction. Sovereignty means supreme authority within a territory. It is the power to make final decisions and laws that no higher authority can override. The idea grew with the modern state and has been reshaped by democracy, pluralism and globalisation.

Bodin and Hobbes. Jean Bodin (*Six Books of the Commonwealth*, 1576) described sovereignty as absolute and perpetual power over citizens and subjects. It was limited only by divine and natural law. Thomas Hobbes (*Leviathan*, 1651) made the sovereign the product of a social contract. Individuals surrender their natural right to an absolute sovereign to escape a state of nature in which life is insecure.

Popular sovereignty. Locke placed ultimate power in the people, with government held as a trust. Rousseau located sovereignty in the general will of the whole community, inalienable and indivisible. This line of thought prepared the idea that sovereignty belongs to the people in a democracy.

Austin's legal (monistic) theory. John Austin (1832) defined law as the command of the sovereign. The sovereign is a determinate human superior, not in the habit of obeying any like superior, who receives habitual obedience from the bulk of a given society. On this view sovereignty is:

- absolute and unlimited;

- indivisible;
- located in a definite person or body, such as the King-in-Parliament.

Criticisms of Austin.

- *Pluralists* such as Harold Laski argued that society contains many associations (churches, trade unions, professional bodies), each with a claim on loyalty. The state is one association among many, so its sovereignty is neither absolute nor indivisible.
- *Historical and customary law* obeyed out of habit, not command, does not fit his model.
- *Federal states* divide power, and it is hard to find one determinate sovereign in them.
- *Popular sovereignty* places final authority in the people, not in a legal superior.

Sovereignty today. International law, human rights norms, and bodies such as the WTO and regional unions limit what states can do. Global capital flows and technology weaken control over the economy. Many scholars speak of shared or pooled sovereignty, though the state remains the central holder of legal authority.

Conclusion. Sovereignty moved from the absolute power of a ruler, through the legal sovereign of Austin, to the sovereignty of the people and of a state bound by international rules. Its history is the history of the modern state itself.

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2. Examine the significance of citizenship. Explain the liberal and Marxist views.

Covers December 2023 Q8 (the Marxist concept) and December 2025 Q7 (significance).

Introduction. Citizenship is full membership of a political community, which carries rights and duties and a claim to equal standing. It answers the question of who belongs and on what terms.

Significance. Citizenship gives:

- *legal status*: nationality, protection and the right to reside;
- *political participation*: the rights to vote, stand for office and take part in public life;
- *equal standing*: every citizen counts equally before the law.

It also creates duties, such as obeying the law, paying taxes and taking part in the common good.

The liberal view. Citizenship is mainly a set of individual rights protected by the state. T. H. Marshall (*Citizenship and Social Class*, 1950) traced its growth in England in three stages:

- civil rights (liberty of the person, property, equality before law) in the eighteenth century;
- political rights (the franchise) in the nineteenth century;
- social rights (education, health, welfare) in the twentieth century.

Social rights, he argued, reduce the inequalities of the market.

The Marxist view. Marx, in *On the Jewish Question* (1843), distinguished political emancipation from human emancipation. The liberal state grants equal citizenship in the political sphere, while inequality

remains in civil society, in property and class. Citizenship is therefore formal: the worker and the capitalist are equal as voters but unequal in real power. For Marxists, full citizenship requires the end of class exploitation, not only equal legal status.

Contemporary debates.

- *Communitarians* stress belonging and civic virtue.
- *Feminists* show how the public/private divide excluded women.
- *Theorists of multiculturalism* argue for differentiated citizenship, with group-specific rights for minorities.
- *Global citizenship* and migration raise the question of rights beyond the nation-state.

Conclusion. Citizenship is significant because it defines membership, rights and participation. The liberal view celebrates its expansion; the Marxist view asks whether equal status can coexist with deep economic inequality.

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3. Write on the relationship between the state and civil society.

Covers December 2023 Q10 and December 2025 Q9.

Introduction. Civil society is the sphere of voluntary association between the family and the state: associations, trade unions, religious bodies, NGOs, the media and social movements. Its relationship with the state has been understood in very different ways.

Classical ideas.

- *Locke*. Civil society was political society formed by contract to protect natural rights.
- *Hegel*. Civil society is the sphere of particular interests and market exchange between the family and the state. The state is the higher ethical unity that reconciles those interests.
- *Marx*. Civil society is bourgeois society, the realm of economic relations. It shapes the state, which serves the dominant class.
- *Gramsci*. Civil society is the terrain where the ruling class wins consent through culture, education and the church. This is hegemony, as distinct from coercion by the state.
- *Tocqueville*. Voluntary associations are schools of democracy and a check on state power.

The relationship today.

- *Complementary*. A vibrant civil society supports democracy by raising demands, supplying information and holding governments accountable. The state in turn provides the legal framework, rights and security within which associations function.
- *Conflictual*. Civil society can challenge the state through protest and movements, and the state can regulate, restrict or co-opt civil society. Examples are laws on foreign funding and on the registration of associations.
- *Not always democratic*. Civil society also contains exclusionary groups, so it is not automatically a force for freedom.

Conclusion. State and civil society are distinct but interdependent. Democracy depends on a state strong enough to protect rights and a civil society free enough to question it.

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Answer plans for the other December-track concepts

Rights

- Natural, legal and moral rights.
- Theories: natural rights, legal (positivist), social welfare and Marxist.
- Human rights and the Universal Declaration (1948).
- Rights and duties as correlatives.

Democracy: genesis and forms

- Athenian direct democracy.
- Liberal representative democracy.
- Procedural and substantive democracy (IGNOU's 2024-25 assignment asks this).
- Contemporary challenges.

Liberty

- Isaiah Berlin's *Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958): negative liberty as freedom from interference, positive liberty as self-mastery.
- The risks each view carries.

Equality and justice

- Forms of equality: legal, political, social, economic.
- Equality of opportunity against equality of outcome.
- Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1971): the original position and veil of ignorance, and the two principles (equal basic liberties; the difference principle with fair equality of opportunity).

Autonomy

- Self-government of the person.
- Kant's moral autonomy.
- Autonomy as the basis of rights and consent.
- Feminist relational autonomy.

Legitimacy and power

- Power as the ability to make others act.
- Authority as legitimate power.
- Weber's traditional, charismatic and legal-rational authority.
- How legitimacy is gained and lost.

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If the June pattern appears: a short revision list

- **Liberalism and libertarianism:** from Locke to the welfare state; Nozick's minimal state.
- **Marxism:** historical materialism, class struggle, and Gramsci's hegemony.
- **The rest:** fundamentalism, nationalism, multiculturalism, fascism, and feminism's sex and gender distinction.

Prepare a one-page outline for each.

Use this set in the last three weeks

- **Week 3:** write the three solved concepts from memory in 500 words each.
- **Week 2:** turn the six concept plans into full answers.
- **Final week:** make one-page outlines for the June-track ideologies.
- **Last two days:** read the June 2026 paper on ignou.ac.in (filed as MPS-001) to see which track it followed.

What this free set is, and is not

This set covers the December-track concepts that repeated across the papers above. The complete MPS-001 set, with both tracks solved in English or Hindi medium, costs ₹49 as a PDF or ₹100 as a printed copy, plus a one-time ₹100 courier charge per printed order. Order on WhatsApp +91 93546 37830.

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