

Chapter Questions

Chapter 1

1. What is the difference between social *policy* and social *administration*?
2. To what extent did the Majority and Minority reports of the 1905 Royal Commission offer visions for the development of social policy in the twentieth century?
3. What was *Butskellism*, and how did it shape post war policy development in Britain?
4. To what extent did the New Left and the New Right agree that the 'welfare state' had failed?
5. What is *welfare pluralism*, and how accurately does it describe current social policy planning?

Chapter 2

1. Why should social policy draw on research evidence as a 'way of knowing'?
2. What are some of the main characteristics and preoccupations of social policy research?
3. Why are mixed methods studies becoming increasingly attractive to social policy researchers?
4. Why is it important to consider ethical issues?
5. What criteria would you use to define 'quality' in social policy research?

Chapter 3

1. What are the main sources of a person's welfare in modern society?
2. How does industrial development shape welfare states?
3. How can we establish what someone's needs are?
4. What is the difference between needs, wants, and preferences?
5. Who defines social problems and how?

Chapter 4

1. What is the value of considering ethical issues such as equality, justice, and desert in relation to practical social policy issues?
2. Dean argues that 'human needs must be satisfied in the context of our interdependency with others' (2010: 85). What does he mean? Is he right?
3. Retirement pensioners, single parents, single unemployed people without dependents, and disabled people all receive different levels of state benefits. Is this fair? Why?
4. Equality, rights, and social justice are issues of political contest, not of rational debate: do you agree? How far can deliberation take us in this field?
5. In an increasingly diverse world it is impossible to devise principles of social justice that can be applied between all groups across the planet: do you agree? Suggest some possible principles and point out their strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 5

1. What possible advantages and disadvantages are there of bringing together concerns with equalities and human rights into one policy arena?
2. Concern about equality, rights, freedom, and social justice share critical features, notably being open to multiple definitions. What would be the key advantages of promoting a maximalist approach to achieving equality? And what risks might arise from doing so?
3. Nancy Fraser argues that a just society relies on both recognition and redistribution. What are the key features of each? Why are both important? Can both be achieved?
4. How might the capabilities approach be turned into a practical tool to promote equalities and protect human rights? What are the limitations of this tool?
5. Some people are critical of the move towards a single equalities focus. What reasons might people give for this critique and what possible reasons might be given for promoting a single equality focus?

Chapter 6

1. The concepts of social cost and social benefit involve the summation of individual benefits and costs. Explain why. What problems does this procedure pose?
2. The specification of an efficient allocation of resources, unlike the definition of an equitable distribution, does not involve value judgements. Do you agree?
3. Explain the concept of opportunity costs and how it relates to an efficient allocation of a good or service. Give examples where the private opportunity cost of an activity does not equal the social opportunity cost. In these cases, what tools may be used to make the private opportunity cost equal the social cost.
4. Explain why technical effectiveness is not the same thing as efficiency. Which is more difficult to achieve in your view?
5. Explain why economists value choice. Give examples of policies to improve choice in the provision of at least two public services. What are the advantages and disadvantages of increasing choice in the provision of public services?

Chapter 7

1. As welfare state provision is cut in response to the economic crises of 2008-9, will reciprocity between the generations be enhanced or subverted in future?
2. What are the limits of market mechanisms in the provision of health and social care?
3. What are the limits to state support in the form of cash payments and what else is needed?
4. What obligations will individuals have for their own welfare and that of their families in a welfare state more narrowly targeted on 'the poor'?
5. As individuals rely more heavily on the market, their families and fellow citizens rather than the state, will we be living in a more or less altruistic society?

Chapter 8

1. What are the key components of neo-liberal thought?
2. How do the ideas of Friedman and Hayek build upon Adam Smith's understanding of liberal political economy?
3. What are the key elements of the neo-liberal critique of state welfare systems?
4. What are the main criticisms that social democrats have levelled against neo-liberal ideas about welfare? How convincing are they?
5. How influential have neo-liberal ideas about the role and purposes of welfare states been over the past thirty years?

Chapter 9

1. Can you identify the significant shifts in Conservative approaches to the welfare state since 1945?
2. How visible are One Nation and neo-liberal views in the policies adopted by the Conservatives since 2010?
3. To what extent is it possible to see echoes of Thatcherism in Conservative Party policies since 2006?
4. Why do neo-liberal and One Nation Conservatives take different approaches to the role of state welfare?
5. In what ways might 'pure' neo-liberals criticize the social policies of the Thatcher and Cameron governments?

Chapter 10

1. What are the distinguishing features of social democracy?
2. Why do you think a social democratic welfare state took root in Sweden in the twentieth century?
3. Did a 'social democratic' consensus occur in Britain between 1945 and 1979?
4. Why did New Labour believe that social democracy needed to be modernized in the 1990s?
5. Does social democracy have a future?

Chapter 11

1. What are the defining characteristics of the socialist perspective?
2. In what ways does the socialist perspective interpret the role of the welfare state?
3. To what extent has socialism been a practical influence on the development of social policy?
4. Where does the difference between socialism and social democracy lie?

5. What relevance, if any, does the socialist perspective have today?

Chapter 12

1. How is it that social policies disadvantage as well as advantage women?
2. What are the key points of contention between different feminist approaches to social policy analysis?
3. In what ways does the idea of multiple social relations impact on feminist social policy analysis, what are the benefits and the challenges?
4. Why introduce an analysis of men and masculinities into a feminist analysis of social policy, and what does this add to an understanding of gender relations?
5. What are the complexities of feminist's involvement in formal politics and policy-making?

Chapter 13

1. Why is the idea of limits so important in green thinking?
2. To what extent can green ideas be successfully accommodated within existing political ideologies?
3. Can there be a green welfare state?
4. How would a citizen's income promote a green society?
5. Are environmental inequalities inevitable?

Chapter 14

1. Is postmodernism merely a critique of modernity or does it present alternative forms of social organization?
2. Are concepts such as 'needs', 'rights', 'class', and 'truth' nothing more than constructs of Western discourse?
3. To what extent are our social identities cultural rather than material?
4. What would a 'postmodern welfare state' look like?
5. What are the disadvantages of using post-structuralist ideas to understand the significance for social policy of risks and of social movements?

Chapter 15

1. What characteristics differentiate public from private history?
2. Do we need more than documentary sources to understand the past?
3. Why do you think Social Policy needs a historical perspective?
4. Give some examples that link the present and the past in terms of risk, resources, and responsibility.
5. Identify some emerging trends in the study of welfare in past times.

Chapter 16

1. How important were charity and mutual aid in helping working - class people to support themselves during the nineteenth century?
2. Why was the Poor Law 'reformed' in 1834 and what were the consequences?
3. How might we explain the growth of state welfare intervention in Britain before 1900?
4. To what extent did attitudes to the relief of poverty change in Britain after 1870?
5. How did the development of social policy during the nineteenth century contribute to the origins of the modern welfare state and what lessons, if any, should contemporary policymakers draw from nineteenth-century developments?

Chapter 17

1. How was 'the social question' in Britain understood in the early twentieth century?
2. How did new forms of scientific knowledge inform Liberal welfare policies?
3. Were the Liberal governments' social policies socialist in intent, or were they capitalism's answer to the problems of capitalism?
4. Did the reforms of 1906-14 form the foundations of a welfare state?
5. Why did the Liberal welfare reform programme split the Liberal party and what principles were at stake?

Chapter 18

1. How significant were the coalition government's (1939-45) welfare policies?
2. Did the post-war Labour governments create the welfare state?
3. What were the distinctive features of the modern Conservative approach to the welfare state?
4. Was there a welfare consensus between 1945 and 1979?
5. Why did the 'classic' post-war welfare state come under attack in the late 1970s?

Chapter 19

1. What were the key points made by the neo-liberal writers of the 1970s and 1980s?
2. What impact have their ideas had on social policy in the United Kingdom?
3. What in your view are the major strengths and weaknesses of their case?
4. What current social policies seem to be inspired by neo-liberal thinking?#

Chapter 20

1. What do you understand by the 'Third Way'?
2. In what ways is the 'Third Way' a new and distinctive approach, which differs from both the 'old Left' and the 'new Right'?
3. Examine how the main themes of the 'Third Way' apply to different services and benefits.
4. Examine how the 'orders of change' apply to individual services and benefits.
5. What are the continuities and discontinuities between the 'Third Way' and the 'Big Society'?

Chapter 21

1. What are the key drivers of population change?
2. What have been the most important demographic changes in the United Kingdom over the past century?
3. What causes population ageing?
4. How can we measure population ageing?
5. What are some of the implications for social policy of population change and population ageing in particular?

Chapter 22

1. Why is the relationship between economic policy and social policy considered problematic?
2. What are the main targets of government economic policy?
3. What were the main features of the so-called consensus in economic and social policy in Britain between the 1950s and the 1970s?
4. Why has the international economy in general, and competitiveness in particular, become so important for government economic and social policies in the 2000s?

Chapter 23

1. Do faith schools pose a threat to citizenship?
2. Should religious welfare groups be considered as part of the larger category of voluntary sector organizations?
3. How has the secularization thesis been challenged?
4. Should spirituality be considered an essential human need?
5. How might the study and practice of social policy benefit from greater appreciation of the role of religious welfare?

Chapter 24

1. What have been the key changes in family patterns in Britain over the past thirty years?
2. What are the challenges for social policy arising from increased employment among mothers?
3. Define family policy.
4. Did the Labour governments from 1997 onwards transform family policy?
5. What will determine the future of Britain's family policy?

Chapter 25

1. What are social divisions?
2. In which ways can gender impact on job experiences (e.g. type of job, levels of pay) and likelihood of building up wealth (through income or assets, like a house)?
3. To what extent is lifetime wealth related to job experiences?
4. Do the interests of different classes connect or conflict?
5. How do processes of inclusion or exclusion (e.g. in education) operate to reinforce positions of advantage or disadvantage?

Chapter 26

1. Why has research on poverty been so important to the development of academic social policy?
2. What is the difference between *absolute* and *relative* poverty?
3. How did the Poverty and Social Exclusion survey seek to define and measure social exclusion?
4. How, and why, have levels of income poverty in the United Kingdom changed over the past thirty years?
5. How effective were the policies of the New Labour government 1997-2010 in eradicating child poverty?

Chapter 27

1. Is its success in redistributing towards the poor the only, or even, the main criterion we should use in evaluating the impact of the welfare state?
2. Does it matter that some of those with middle or high incomes receive cash benefits and use services like the NHS and state education, so long as they pay in more for them through the tax system?
3. What does the distribution of who receives welfare benefits and services and who pays the taxes that pay for them tell us about how different ways of closing the public budget deficit would affect different groups?
4. Why does it matter what time period is used to measure who 'gains' and who 'loses' from welfare spending and taxation?
5. If much of what the welfare state does is to act as a 'piggy bank', with people paying in at one point and benefiting later in their lives, is this a safe arrangement, if, for instance, younger generations decided they no longer wanted to continue with as generous a system?

Chapter 28

1. Can you identify social policies in recent years which might be said to reflect 'rational' or 'incremental' approaches to policymaking?
2. Why might the views of some groups be excluded from the policy agenda?
3. How useful might policy transfer be as a tool for governments seeking to inform the making of social policies?
4. Why might 'top-down' approaches to policy implementation appeal to decision-makers but prove problematic in practice?
5. In what ways might a shift in power from Westminster to the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and to the European Union, affect policymaking and implementation in the United Kingdom?

Chapter 29

1. Why should policies be evaluated?
2. What are the different approaches and methods in policy evaluation?
3. What are the main problems involved in policy evaluation?
4. How would you go about evaluating a policy such as a NHS telephone 'helpline'?
5. Should social policy be 'evidence-based'?

Chapter 30

1. To what extent is the state the principal source of welfare provision in contemporary society?
2. How has the role of the state in the provision of welfare changed since 1979?
3. Why might the relationship between responsibilities of individuals and the state be so contestable for social policies?

4. What do you see as the key issues facing the development of state welfare over the next decade, and how do you think these might best be tackled?
5. What should the role of the state be in a mixed economy of welfare?

Chapter 31

1. What distinguishes commercial providers of welfare services from voluntary and state organizations?
2. What different kinds of commercial companies might play a role in the delivery of welfare services?
3. Why have governments since the 1980s chosen to introduce a greater role for private providers in the delivery of welfare services?
4. What are the potential problems that may arise from a greater role for private providers in the delivery of welfare services?
5. What is meant by the term 'row less and steer more' ?

Chapter 32

1. What do you understand by the notion 'occupational welfare' ?
2. Why is it a significant area of social policy?
3. Why have employers invested in occupational welfare?
4. Why, and in what ways, have successive governments promoted occupational welfare?
5. How will occupational welfare develop over the next decade?

Chapter 33

1. How do the concepts 'voluntary sector' and 'civil society' relate to one another?
2. What are the most important distinctions we should make between 'types' of voluntary welfare?
3. Why is the debate on social capital now so relevant to voluntary sector policy?
4. Does state action tend to help or hinder volunteering?
5. What are the main policy implications of the 'Big Society' agenda for the voluntary sector?

Chapter 34

1. To what extent are women and men of different ages affected by informal caring?
2. What factors should individuals contemplating whether or not to take on a caring role consider in their decision-making?
3. What is the relationship between models of care-giving and support for caregivers?
4. What is the appropriate balance between family and state responsibilities for supporting disabled and older people and how far have successive governments got that balance right?
5. Why is it necessary to give equal consideration to the choices and rights of carers and those of the people they are looking after?

Chapter 35

1. What do we mean by market failures and which are important for explaining why social policies exist?
2. What are the major sources of cash income or other resources that make welfare services possible?
3. How does a local school get the income to pay its teachers?
4. Who decides how much public spending shall be and on what it is spent?
5. What are likely to be the major debates on paying for welfare in the next five years?

Chapter 36

1. In what ways can the taxation system in the UK affect wellbeing?
2. Why do governments develop 'fiscal welfare', and what issues does it raise?
3. What is the 'poverty trap', and why is it perceived as problematic?
4. Should tax policy be used to encourage or discourage certain behaviours?
5. Why are reductions in public expenditure less likely to be progressive in their impact than increases in taxation?

Chapter 37

1. Outline the key ideas underpinning the notion of citizenship.
2. Consider the implications of *broad* and *narrow* interpretations of need for social citizenship.
3. How might an individual's immigration and residency status impact on their access to welfare provisions?
4. Define 'discretion' and consider its implications in relation to citizens' welfare rights.
5. What kind of substantive or procedural reforms could enhance welfare provision in the future?

Chapter 38

1. In what ways can the processes of managing and delivering welfare be seen as dealing with competing objectives?
2. Why has management been so central to how welfare organizations have been reformed?
3. What means of control have been developed to enable more effective central control over welfare systems?
4. Why might the relationship between welfare service providers and service recipients be difficult?
5. Should welfare be used to make people change their behaviour?

Chapter 39

1. Think about a particular welfare service (e.g. education, health, social care). In relation to this service *who* should be held accountable, and to *whom* should they be held accountable? What tensions arise between the needs of different groups?
2. In relation to a particular welfare service, what accountability mechanisms can you identify? How do these mechanisms overlap? Are any of them in conflict with each other?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of increasing accountability?
4. How do democratic and 'user' focused accountability mechanisms conflict with each other? How could mechanisms be improved to take account of both?
5. Identify any recent proposals for increasing accountability and/or cutting the costs of accountability. What implications do these proposals have for the issues raised in this chapter?

Chapter 40

1. What have been the major drivers for change in relationships between service users and providers?
2. Have these changes contributed to social justice?
3. Is greater influence by service users unambiguously a 'good thing'?
4. Are 'active citizens' and 'active consumers' the same?
5. Can users be influential without independent user groups?

Chapter 41

1. Do you know which council or councils are responsible for overseeing which services in your locality?
2. Do you know what the political complexion is of your local council(s) and what the electoral arrangements are?
3. What do you think could be done to increase participation in civic engagement and local decision-making?
4. What do you think are some of the advantages and disadvantages of directly elected mayors being in charge of local councils?
5. What do you think of the idea that the 'local state' should do less and citizens should engage more in voluntary action?

Chapter 42

1. What areas of social policy have been devolved to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland?
2. How do the devolution arrangements differ between the three nations?
3. What has been the effect of having nationalists in government since 2007?
4. What have been the main social policy divergences and innovations in the devolved nations?
5. How is devolution funded, and how may this change in future economic circumstances?

Chapter 43

1. How has the relationship between economic and social policy evolved since the establishment of the EEC in 1957?
2. To what extent has the autonomy of national social protection systems been undermined by the growing EU social policy competence?
3. What has been the impact of different waves of enlargement on the EU social policy remit?
4. To what extent are national social policy models compatible with a European social model?
5. How has the Lisbon Treaty affected the EU social dimension?

Chapter 44

1. Why are IOs central to the study of social policy?
2. To what extent are IOs involved in social policy formation?
3. How influential are IOs in matters of national social policy?
4. How might key concepts be adapted to the global context?
5. Summarize the different positions on IOs within global social reform debates.

Chapter 45

1. What is the scope of social security?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using means-tested support to alleviate poverty?
3. Is it better to provide people with either vouchers (such as Food Stamps in the United States) or support in the form of cash?
4. Is the wide variety of different benefits justified, or is a move to a 'Universal Credit' to be preferred?
5. Have changes in economic and social conditions rendered obsolete the Beveridge plan for the benefits system.

Chapter 46

1. What arguments are used to justify conditionality in welfare-to-work programmes?
2. What underpins the growing consensus on welfare-to-work?
3. In what ways has the scope of welfare-to-work widened in recent years?
4. What criticisms can be made of welfare-to-work programmes?
5. Is it possible to reconcile welfare-to-work policies with rising levels of unemployment and growing demands for informal care?

Chapter 47

1. Why is health and healthcare a prominent political issue?
2. Why is it important for government to have a role in (a) promoting health and (b) ensuring access to health care?
3. To what extent has health policy changed in recent decades? What are the continuities in policy?
4. Should we spend more on health care? If so, how should these resources be generated?
5. Why are partnerships important in providing health care and promoting health?

Chapter 48

1. How do the school systems across the United Kingdom vary?
2. What market-oriented policies have been implemented?
3. Why is there a concern about achievement levels?
4. What approaches have been adopted to try and reduce the achievement gap?
5. Why is preschool education considered to be important?

Chapter 49

1. Who should have access to lifelong learning?
2. Who should pay for post-compulsory education and training – the government and taxpayers or individual learners and employers?
3. Is post-compulsory education and training a private good or a public good?
4. Who should decide what post-compulsory education and training courses are available?

5. What effect are recent reforms likely to have on who goes to university and the choices they make about where, what, and how to study?

Chapter 50

1. How does housing fit in the UK welfare state?
2. How do supply- side and demand- side subsidies affect the roles of private landlords and social housing?
3. Is the transfer of social housing to third sector providers equivalent to privatization?
4. Do homelessness statistics follow homelessness policies or vice versa (considering recent Scottish and English experience)?
5. How will 'localism' and the 'Big Society' affect future housing policies?

Chapter 51

1. How can social care be encouraged to work effectively with other services (such as education or health) without losing its distinctive contribution and values?
2. How can services carry on meeting the needs of people in crisis while also trying to invest in longer-term preventative approaches?
3. What impact will personal budgets have on the nature and delivery of social care?
4. How can policy best promote inter-agency services without creating a split in services for children and for adults?
5. How fit for purpose does social care feel in the early twenty-first century, and what needs to change moving forwards?

Chapter 52

1. What are the two main sources of data about crime?
2. What has been the general trend in crime over the past thirty years?
3. How might the dominant characteristics of criminal justice policy over the same period be described?
4. What explains the rise in the prison population between 1990 and 2010?
5. In what ways have penal politics changed in recent times?

Chapter 53

1. How does the concept of ethnicity improve upon a focus of race in social policy?
2. What are the main features of British race relations policy?
3. At what points does social policy intersect with 'race' and ethnicity?
4. What has been the role of policy in contributing to housing inequalities?
5. Why do employment rates differ across ethnic groups?

Chapter 54

1. How has childhood changed in Britain over the past thirty years?
2. What role do children's rights play in policy?
3. What is the Child Poverty Act 2010, and what are the implications for children of this legislation?
4. How has devolution in the United Kingdom affected policies for children?
5. What are social investment policies and how do they affect children?

Chapter 55

1. What are the key stages in youth policy development described in the chapter and what are the key features of each stage?
2. What were the main reasons for the development of a more holistic approach to youth policy after 1997?
3. What is meant by 'social exclusion' and what were the main categories of young people thought to be at risk of social exclusion?
4. Why do you think 'NEET' became such a predominant policy concern after 1997?
5. How has youth policy changed since the 2010 election?

Chapter 56

1. What are the key factors that contribute to an ageing society and should we be concerned or celebrate these?
2. If people are living longer should we expect them to work longer?
3. How should we pay for pensions? Should it be a matter for individuals, employers and/or the state?
4. Should older people be able to decide how their care needs are met?
5. If older people have a good pension and assets should they use these to pay for their care needs?

Chapter 57

1. What is the difference between 'individual' and 'social' models of disability and what are the implications for social policies?
2. How convincing is the argument that 'disability' and 'disabled people' are flexible or fluid administrative categories that change in response to market conditions?
3. How are disabled people and their organizations represented in the policy process and how influential have their voices been?
4. What combination of regulatory and redistributive policies is most likely to deliver equality and full participation for disabled people?
5. To what extent are national disability policies now influenced by compliance with European and global governance?

Chapter 58

1. Why do people migrate?
2. What are the different categories of migrant?
3. What have been the main policy responses to migration and what factors drive policy?
4. Giving examples, in what ways have immigration, asylum, and welfare policies intersected?
5. What have been and are likely to be the main areas of EU policy?

Chapter 59

1. How would you account for the growing interest in comparative social policy?
2. What are the main methodological problems faced in comparative policy research?
3. Taking any two countries and a social policy issue of your choice what factors would you include in a comparative study?
4. What are the main drawbacks of using typologies in comparative analysis?
5. What factors might explain cross-national variations in social policy?

Chapter 60

1. Is there such a thing as 'European social policy'?
2. Does it make sense to contrast US with European social policy?
3. What is typical for European welfare states?
4. In what sense is the United Kingdom a typical European welfare state?
5. In what sense is the United Kingdom different from most other European welfare states?

Chapter 61

1. How is the word 'liberal' being used in the categorization of societies as liberal market ones?
2. What seem to have been the distinguishing characteristics of social policy in the United States?
3. How important would you expect social insurance to be in liberal market societies?
4. How important would you expect means tests to be in liberal market societies?
5. What are the forces that are tending to spread liberal market oriented social policies around the world?

Chapter 62

1. What impact has it been suggested Confucianism may have on social policy in East Asia?
2. What do you understand by the notion of 'the iron rice bowl'?
3. Why is China moving away from 'the iron rice bowl' approach to welfare?

4. What are the features of social policy development in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan that have led some writers to see them as rather like the conservative regimes of continental Europe?
5. Why is it particularly important to pay attention to the impact of demographic change upon social policy in East Asia?

Chapter 63

1. What is a Rentier state? Does the concept help or hinder the classification of social policy in the Middle East?
2. Why is it important to consider the role of international development institutions when analysing social policy in the Middle East?
3. How well does Esping-Andersen's typology of welfare regimes help us understand the nature and scope of social policy in the Middle East?
4. What are the shortcomings of a state-centred approach to social policy in the Middle East?
5. In what ways do Middle Eastern countries demonstrate corporatist and residual social policies?

Chapter 64

1. Is the conceptual distinction between different parts of the world useful for understanding social policy in developing countries?
2. What are the key factors that have shaped social policy in developing countries?
3. What are the potential threats to human security in developing countries and what role can social policy play in protecting households against these threats?
4. Has intervention by international institutions encouraged or inhibited the development of social policy in developing countries?
5. What is the potential for Cash Transfer Schemes to provide the foundation for more comprehensive systems of social protection in developing countries?