

Liberalism: Activities

Comparing the properties of Classical and Modern Liberalism (A01, A02)

The table below outlines a variety of liberal perspectives. Carefully read the information and then divide the different perspectives into i) those in which Classical Liberals would believe; and ii) those in which Modern Liberals would believe.

Then, attempt to organise the points in a way that allows you to construct an effective response to the following question: 'What are the main differences between Classical and Modern Liberalism?'

<p>If the legal and political arrangements of society do not give unfair advantage to any group (e.g. some high status jobs are restricted to men or white people) it can be concluded that everyone in society has equal opportunities.</p>	<p>To promote freedom, equality and success of all members of society, the state should actively intervene in a number of social (e.g. education and health) and economic (e.e. job creation schemes) areas.</p>
<p>Freedom requires doing more than merely eliminating obstacles and leaving the individual alone. To ensure true freedom, the individual needs an opportunity to develop abilities and understanding of the world.</p>	<p>On economic matters, the state should have a <i>laissez-faire</i> perspective, without any intervention in how the economy works. This will lead to a more flexible and effective economy.</p>
<p>Freedom requires doing more than merely eliminating obstacles and leaving the individual alone. To ensure true freedom, the individual needs an opportunity to develop abilities and understanding of the world.</p>	<p>People are wholly independent and self-sufficient creatures with the ability and acumen to look after themselves. Individuals do not have a responsibility towards others or society in general.</p>
<p>A civil society would be impossible without state. Responsibilities of state should however be heavily restricted. It should not be allowed to do more than what is essential to uphold law and order and safeguard individuals from attack.</p>	<p>As well as ensuring that no formal legal or political barriers face individuals, equal opportunity for all requires a guarantee of wider social conditions (e.g. poverty, lack of education, lack of health care) that do not impair their efforts.</p>
<p>The individual is free if left alone to live life without any intervention and he or she may behave in a way that is acceptable in his/her opinion.</p>	<p>The state should be willing to play an active role in the economy using public expenditure and taxes to control 'demand' levels. This will lead to a stable economic regime.</p>