

Timeline to the Scottish Parliament

Background

This resource faced considerable criticism in the press for being biased in favour of a nationalist view of history. Two particular aspects were referenced. First the 'Battle of George Square' section and secondly the Medieval section.

Review of 2015 Resource

1. Battle of George Square

The Senior Education Officer for Social Studies reviewed the first of these complaints and found that on the whole the section was factually correct, but the language left room for interpretation.

For example, 'tanks were dispatched from London to George Square' was one of the disputed sections. While it is true that tanks were sent from London along with 10 other armoured vehicles, they were not deployed in George Square as having taken three days to arrive, the protest was over.

This section has been rewritten to remove as far as possible all interpretation.

2. Medieval Section

The resource was sent to the Professor of Medieval History at the University of Glasgow, he explained that the writing of a timeline was a very difficult process as it inevitably leads to some degree of bias. Indeed the medieval history course at Glasgow now includes a pre-course on how to write a timeline. This section would require consideration by an expert in this area of history and due to capacity and resources this is not currently possible.

The document is a basic word document, with a table. There are very limited illustrations with few links.

Advantages of the Scottish Parliament Timeline

- Available in both English and Gaelic.
- Fully illustrated.
- Fully interactive with links to documents at e.g. University of St Andrews.
- Options to investigate each section in more detail.
- Sits within a suite of educational resources about the Parliament which complement the timeline and provide further opportunities for study of politics in Scotland.

Conclusion

The original Education Scotland document was a simple word document, with a few pictures. The Parliament resource provides a much more detailed user friendly timeline, on a level we could never replicate because of resource and web platform constraints. The Parliament resource would provide an excellent alternative to the existing Education Scotland one.

The proposal would be to construct a short document about creating historical timelines and then link to the one from the Scottish Parliament. This process should

require no more than a day of work, between research and writing and then Quality Assurance before it could be put up.

Future Review

Education Scotland should review this resource in 6 months, to consider if there is the capacity and expertise and web platform to make further changes to the document.

23/02/21