This chapter examines the role of select committees in the UK Parliament, and more specifically how they enable lawmakers in the House of Commons to pool their scrutiny efforts by working together as a formally constituted team. Select committees are cross-party, with membership restricted to backbench Members of Parliament (MPs) and reflecting the party balance in the House. These committees determine their own work agendas and decide for themselves which topics to investigate.

Committee work is structured around running focused inquiries into specific issues, ranging from antisemitism to foster care. The chapter first considers the effectiveness of select committees before discussing some major developments that the departmental select committee system has undergone over the last four decades with regard to elected committee chairs and membership, committee activity, addressing highly controversial topics, and developing policy expertise.
16. Select Committees

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