

School Certificate in Philosophy**Project****Should we legalize Cannabis in the
UK?**

⑧ Well-written with
good use of sources.
Arguments for and
(some) against.
Clear commitment &
dedication.
A little more editing +
use of citations would
have been good.

Assessment

Grade 7 – 9	An impressively managed project, showing commitment and dedication throughout, with a clearly focused aim and careful thought about the choice of question. Sources are analysed carefully (not simply summarized) in connection with the chosen question. Sources are carefully and fully referenced and the bibliography is complete. The student shows care in their choice of sources and uses a good range (10 – 12; not simply easy to access websites but sources with good academic content). They explain the background to the question and summarize arguments for and against in a clear, logical manner. They state a clear conclusion which can be defended using the evidence provided.
Grades 4 – 6	Project management is reasonable, with some degree of commitment shown. There is a reasonably clear aim and some thought goes into the choice of question. There is some analysis of source material and it is largely relevant to their chosen question. There is a reasonable range of sources (7 – 9) and some of these have some reasonable academic content. The project includes some background and presentation of arguments for and against. There is a reasonably clear conclusion
Grades 1 – 3	There is some evidence of project management and a limited degree of commitment is shown. An aim for the project is discernible and a question is chosen. Most of the source material is collated rather than analysed and some of it is not useful or relevant to the chosen question. The source range is modest (up to 6 sources) and the sources tend to be easy to access website with only limited academic content. There is some presentation of arguments and a conclusion is given.

TOTAL MARK AWARDED	8
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Supporting evidence (Drawn from written evidence submitted, creative work and judgements based on oral presentations.)

Well-written with good use of sources. Arguments for and (some) against. Clear commitment and dedication

A little more editing and use of citations would be good.

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Project Plan

Project Question:

Should we legalize cannabis in the UK ✓

Form of project:

My project will be in the form of an essay

Topic areas to research

What are the effects of marijuana on the Brain?

If the government legalized would it benefit the country?

Will it benefit the population in the long term and short term Maybe talk? about whether how it may affect individuals and communities?

Careful thought about question (7-9)

Initial ideas for resources

I will use different sources. These are some that i have found that i will use to start of my project with.

<https://www.bmj.com/content/361/bmj.k2057>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drug_policy_of_Portugal

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/109464-in-strict-medical-terms-marijuana-is-far-safer-than-many>

Introduction

The war on drugs costs each individual UK taxpayer an estimated £400 every year. As a country cannabis alone could earn the treasury £3.5 billion every year in tax revenue. Many countries around the world have legalised the drug and in return have had positive outcomes, Portugal, for example where non-violent possession has been decriminalised, the consumption of drugs has not increased but the number of drug related deaths has substantially fallen. According to DEA judge Francis Young during a court case in 1988 for someone to take a lethal overdose of Cannabis they would have to smoke around 1500 pounds in 15 minutes to induce a lethal dose yet eating 10 raw potatoes can result in toxic response and yet we still sell raw potatoes in every supermarket in the country. He also stated that Marijuana in its natural form is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man. In this essay I will argue my point for the legalization of Cannabis for both recreational usage and for medicinal purposes. ✓

Research

The chemical form of Cannabis is known as Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol or shortened to THC is the chemical responsible for the majority of marijuana's Psychological effects as quoted by live science. It is a naturally occurring chemical and when induced by the body has a number of stimulants for example the release of dopamine and creating euphoria. It also interferes with how the brain processes information in the hippocampus, which is where the brain produces new memories. This can then lead on to hallucinations, cause delusions and change thinking patterns. On average it takes between 10 to 30 minutes after indigestion for the effects to kick in and usually lasts for around 2 hours. According to A.J.Fabrizio, a marijuana chemistry expert, during a study they found many side effects including anxiety, elation, tachycardia which is when the heart rate exceeds the normal resting heart rate, relaxation and pain relief.

The other main active substance in marijuana is Cannabidiol more commonly known as CBD, that seems to counteract the psychosis effects produced by the THC and is even being tested as a treatment against psychosis and anxiety. But because CBD does not get you high growers have been gradually decreasing the CBD levels in the plant and increasing the levels of THC. Sample testing has shown that the amount of THC in marijuana has risen from around 4% in 1995 to nearly 12% in 2014, shifting the ratio of THC to CBD from 14:1 in 1995 to nearly 80:1 in 2014, although it is uncertain how precise these test were

Back in the 1990's Portugal faced a huge heroine crisis. 1 in every 100 people where using the drug. they were in such a dire position that they were willing to try something drastic. A team of healthcare professionals to find a solution to their problems, with nothing to lose their solution was radical. On July 1st 2001 Portugal

Sources
not
referenced
in text
(4-6)

good
background
(7-9)

decriminalised all drugs. This does mean that possessing small amounts of drugs from everything to marijuana to cocaine will not lead to an arrest. The users were not treated as criminals rather patients. The number of Portuguese in rehab programs across the country rose from 6,040 in 1999 to 25,808 in 2008, the number of heroin users has halved, and the number of drug-related deaths per million in 2015 was only 6 the lowest in Europe and 40 times smaller than the US. This was seen as a radical idea then but since 2001 it has shown that a humane and health-led approach can be much less damaging to society

In the last few decades marijuana has become much more potent, it has become so strong that it can lead to psychosis, which is when someone has an impaired relationship with reality and can cause serious mental disorders. And the more THC you consume the higher the risks of psychosis developing increase at the same time. A study in Britain has shown that while marijuana use has risen significantly between 1996 and 2005 the number of Schizophrenia cases, a type of psychosis has remained at a stable level. The reasoning goes that the lower the number of people that have access to marijuana the lower the risk of marijuana induced psychosis. As it seems that this is because the risk of marijuana caused psychosis is the highest for people who already have a high risk of developing psychosis to begin with. For them as far as we know at the moment it seems that marijuana does not cause psychosis it only speeds up the evolution of their condition.

sub-headings would help here

During the prohibition of alcohol in the USA, hard liquor became the normal drink as prohibition made it stronger and more potent, because it meant that people could ship more product in a smaller space and sell it for a greater profit. Imagine a world where liquor is the only alcohol available, you have the choice of not drinking at all or getting much drunker than you would like to. This is what is happening to marijuana today as obviously people did not stop drinking on the whole during the

✓
 Samey
 analysed
 in relation
 to
 question
 (7-9)

(?)

prohibition and the stats show that laws are not stopping people from using marijuana.

We can not make marijuana go away but we can make it much much safer. If marijuana became legal, there would be more options for consumers and the government could for example insist on a high level of CBD. For the safety of the youth of our country this would become a great benefit as it is often much harder to buy legal drugs than it is to buy illegal ones as distributors of alcohol and cigarettes can get large fines and lose their license to sell those things if they are caught selling to underage kids. This would become the same with marijuana as dealers would have to sell at a much lower price than they do at the moment to have any competition with the legalized shops and therefore it would be harder for illegal dealers to make a profit so they would realise that)

Discussion / Development

As above

In my opinion I believe that marijuana should be legalized in the UK for both medical and recreational purposes. I think this because from the research I have done I have found that there are many benefits of taking the drug but also negative effects but in my opinion that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages

One of the benefits of legalizing the drug would be that the government could insist that all legal growers of Cannabis have a high level of CBD to THC levels for example enforcing a ratio of THC to CBD to be 10:1 this would be a much safer way of having the drug legalized as as of 2014 it was almost 80:1 which can really put someone at risk. The difference between the two strands would be like the difference between vodka and beer as many people would gladly have a nice cold beer when they get home from work and I doubt that many would start drinking vodka when they get home. Like Alcohol I think many people would happily smoke the beer version of marijuana to relax after a hard days work rather than smoke the vodka version which is the one on the streets at the moment.

There are many positive psychological benefits of THC as it is a naturally occurring chemical that when introduced into the body has a number of stimulants these include the release of dopamine creating euphoria. This is why so many people that suffer from depression as it relieves the symptoms and creates a stable level of endorphins in the brain. Other side effects include elation, tachycardia, relaxation and pain relief. On the other hand it seems that the use of marijuana can lead to psychotic disorders. The reasoning for the law goes that the lower the number of people that have access to marijuana the lower the risk of marijuana induced psychosis. As it seems that this is because the risk of marijuana caused psychosis is

the highest for people who already have a high risk of developing psychosis to begin with. For them as far as we know at the moment it seems that marijuana does not cause psychosis it only speeds up the evolution of their condition. We know this as the number of people using marijuana in the uk has risen hugely and yet the number of cases of schizophrenia, a psychotic disorder has stayed at the same level.

(repeated
from
above)

In the 1990's when the portuguese was in the midst of a huge drug crisis, we have heard that it was estimated that 1 in every 100 people were using heroin, during this time cheap heroin was arriving from places like Afghanistan to Europe whilst most countries had experience fighting drugs the newly reformed Portugal didn't have any. With nothing to lose the Portuguese came up with a radical solution to solve their problems. On July 1st 2001 portugal decriminalised the possession of small quantities of all drugs from cannabis to cocaine. Users where no longer treated as criminals but more like patients. They felt like people would be a lot more likely to come looking for help if they knew that they would not be locked up. This lead to some drastic changes for many people leading to many health benefits for the whole country. The number of Portuguese in rehab almost quintupled in size from just over 6,000 in 1999 to 25,808 in 2008. The numbers of heroin users has halved in the space of 20 years and the number of drug related deaths per million people was the lowest in Europe with only 6 that's over 40 times smaller than the US who came in at 245 deaths. The number show just how remarkable their turn around has been incredible and as a country it has shown the world that a humane and health lead approach has been much less damaging to society than the illegalization. I am not saying that we should legalize all drugs in the UK because we are not having a drug crisis and our social services do know how to deal with these problems. But that this is just an example of what might happen if we legalize marijuana as the addicted men and women of the country would feel safer to reach out for help and so can deal with their problems in a safe way with doctors and family helping them through it and not by themselves.

(Repeating
material
from
above)

Research has shown that a regular use of marijuana can have negative effects on attention span, memory and learning. This can last long after the immediate effects of the drug have worn off. For example someone who uses marijuana on a daily basis may be functioning at a reduced intellectual level most or all of the time. It has also shown that during adolescence, students who smoke marijuana on a regular basis have poorer educational outcomes to their nonsmoking peers. A review of 48 relevant studies found that marijuana usage was associated with reduced educational attainment and so were less likely to graduate. Several studies also linked heavy marijuana use to a lower income, greater welfare dependence, unemployment, criminal behaviour, and lower life satisfaction

Illegal drugs will always be a lot stronger than legal ones this is purely because the stronger the drug the smaller the quantity someone has to take to feel its effects this means that people can ship more product in a smaller space and sell it for a greater profit. This is what happens during the prohibition of alcohol in the USA, hard liquor became the normal drink as prohibition made it stronger and more potent. This is what is happening with marijuana at the moment because it's just easier for people to transport it. Like i said earlier i think many people would like to smoke the

beer version of marijuana after a hard days work rather than smoke the vodka version. During the prohibition people clearly didn't stop drinking and stats show that people clearly aren't stopping smoking marijuana and they don't seem to be stopping any time soon. Stats from 2010 show that 6.6% of the population between the ages of 16 and 59 of England and wales were using the drug.

The most common use of medical marijuana in the US is for pain control. While it isn't strong enough to combat severe pain, like post-surgical pain or broken bones, it is quite effective for smaller pains that affect millions of Americans, especially as

they age. Marijuana is said to be a very good muscle relaxant, and many people swear by its ability to lessen tremors in Parkinson's disease. There is also a lot of evidence in its use for PTSD in veterans who are returning from combat zones. Many therapists and veterans report huge improvements in their conditions and clamour for more studies to take place. A number of small studies have shown that smoking marijuana can be helpful in treating nausea and vomiting from chemotherapy as THC can increase appetite, otherwise known as the munchies. Unlike THC, CBD is a cannabinoid that does not induce the "high" so therefore these drugs are less popular for recreational use age as they aren't intoxicating. Yet they have many medicinal purposes as they are proven to be useful in reducing pain and inflammation, controlling epileptic seizures, and even treating mental illnesses and addictions. There have been many studies have also taken place concerning marijuana and its effects on symptoms of cancer, coming back with many results in different areas. A few other studies have found that inhaled, either smoked or vaporized, marijuana can be helpful treatment of neuropathic pain from damaged nerves. In studies smoked marijuana has also helped improve food intake in HIV patients. Studies have long shown that people who were in clinical trials tended to need less pain medication if they took marijuana extracts. More recently scientists have reported that THC and other cannabinoids such as CBD have lead to a slower rate of growth or cause death in certain types of cancer cells growing in lab dishes. Animal studies have also shown that they can slow the growth and reduce the spread of some form of cancer. At the moment s There are many other uses of marijuana these are just a few that i found that affect major medicinal concerns that affect the world at the moment. Right now Scientists are also conducting preclinical and clinical trials with marijuana and its extracts to treat symptoms of illness and other conditions such as HIV, AIDS, multiple sclerosis which causes a gradual loss of muscle control . . .

Although there may be many positives of consumption of marijuana for medicinal purposes and there have been many studies that have come back with a positive outcome there are still possible harms of marijuana. As well as the euphoric feeling, the high, it can also lower the users control of movement, cause disorientation, and sometimes cause unpleasant thoughts or feelings of anxiety and paranoia. Whilst it delivers the cannabinoids to the body it also delivers harmful substances to the user, including many of the same substances found in tobacco smoke and if someone is not careful with amount they intake then they can develop an unhealthy dependence on marijuana, that can affect them in all parts of life from socially to economically as they spend more time and money smoking the drug rather in than using it to benefit themselves and people around them.

Arguments for, and
some arguments against,
summarized logically
(7-9)

Conclusion

In conclusion in my opinion i think that the legalization of marijuana for both medicinal and recreational purposes would be a good thing for the economy, society and the health industry. However if the UK was to legalize the drug it would have to heavily control the THC to CBD levels, how many people had access to the substance and the age of people who would start to use the drug legally or illegally.

clear
conclusion
based on
evidence
(7-9)

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Good
source
range (11)
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fairly
complete
(7-9)

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