How does May’s government differ from Cameron’s?

Theresa May’s cabinet comprises the fewest privately educated ministers since Clement Attlee’s 1945 cabinet and the highest number of women of any previous Conservative administration, matching Blair’s record of eight female MPs in top government posts.

### Table 1: Cabinet facts: May and Cameron compared

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cabin facts</th>
<th>Theresa May</th>
<th>David Cameron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and ethnic minorities</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxbridge graduates</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated at a state school (including grammar schools)</td>
<td>70% (inc. 26% grammar schools)</td>
<td>57% (inc. 7% grammar schools)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated at an independent (private) school</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50% 2015 62% 2010 coalition cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated at a non-selective state school</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43% 2015 21% 2010 coalition cabinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 40–49</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged 50–59</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aged over 60</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fiqures on education taken from the Sutton Trust report. Other figures taken from the BBC website.

### Creation of new departments

- International trade, with Liam Fox as secretary of state
- Brexit, with David Davis as secretary of state

### Reorganisations:

- Business and energy merged into the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
- Universities and skills added to the responsibilities of the Department for Education

### Theresa May’s advisors

- Fiona Hill and Nick Timothy were jointly appointed as May’s chiefs of staff. They had both previously worked as advisors to May when home secretary but both had had to resign.
  - Hill was forced to resign after an argument with Education Secretary Michael Gove over Islamic extremism in schools.
  - Timothy left in 2015 after being blocked by Cameron’s office from the Conservative candidate list for the 2015 general election.
- Timothy, known as ‘Theresa’s brain’, supports Renewal, a conservative think-tank and pressure group which promotes blue collar Toryism. It will be used as an ‘ideas factory’ for May’s government.

### Environment

- Theresa May infuriated green campaigners by scrapping the Department for Energy and Climate Change, created only 8 years ago.
- David Cameron had championed the department and supported green issues.
- Environmentalists accused the May government of downgrading climate change as a priority.

### Directly elected mayors

- Theresa May will abandon George Osborne’s plans for directly elected mayors for city regions after the 2017 Manchester and Liverpool mayoral elections.
- She will also phase out Osborne’s plans for a Northern Powerhouse.
- There are concerns that elected mayors would provide a platform for Labour moderates to get elected and revive Labour’s electoral fortunes.
- May will focus on boosting the economy throughout England by focusing on regions outside the southeast.

### Grammar schools

- Theresa May’s first significant domestic policy decision was that all comprehensive schools would be able to apply to become grammar schools.
- Existing grammar schools would also be allowed to expand and new faith schools would no longer have to select half their intake on the basis of faith.
- May, who briefly attended a Catholic school and was educated at a grammar school, hopes to increase the number of Catholic schools, arguing that they are more popular, successful and ethnically diverse than any other type of state school.
- May will insist, however, that new grammar schools take a proportion of pupils from lower-income households.
- David Cameron opposed the expansion of new grammar schools. May’s plans are likely to face significant opposition from both the House of Commons and House of Lords.

### Bill of Rights

Theresa May is likely to drop Cameron’s plans for a British Bill of Rights. The plans have been sent back to the Ministry of Justice to be reviewed.

### Government by Twitter

In a further distancing of the May regime from Cameron’s government, a Downing Street official said May would end her predecessor’s ‘government by Twitter’, with policy announcements no longer made on social media.

### Emma Kilheeney

Emma Kilheeney is a teacher of politics at Manchester Grammar School.

May’s government is facing challenges from the opposition and from more traditional Conservative policies, such as grammar schools and the National Health Service (NHS). While some may see her as a departure from Cameron’s style, others argue that she is simply following the same policies with a new face. The jury is still out on how successful she will be in her new role as Prime Minister.