

[Swinney's hypocrisy on tax exposed](#)

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Deputy First Minister John Swinney's hypocrisy on taxation has been laid bare.

At First Minister's Questions today, Ruth Davidson challenged the former finance secretary on a series of remarks he made suggesting he was opposed to tax increases prior to the 2016 Holyrood elections.

That includes a statement to parliament last year where he said increasing taxes for teachers and local government workers was the "last thing" an SNP government would do.

He also described tax rises as "a punishment".

Since then, the SNP has outlined its plans to increase income tax, compounding Scotland's position as the highest-taxed part of the UK.

And the Scottish Conservative leader demanded to know why Mr Swinney had so radically changed his mind in the space of a year.

In response, the education secretary – standing in for Nicola Sturgeon – defended the Scottish Government's move to raise taxes.

Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said:

"The SNP told people one thing on tax when it wanted their votes, then the complete opposite once it had got them.

"John Swinney used to see tax hikes as a 'punishment' – now he says they're a virtue.

"This is astonishing hypocrisy from the SNP government on a vital issue.

"Quite simply, the nationalists completely misled the people of Scotland on tax before last year's election, and there's no good explanation as to why.

"Under their plans everyone in Scotland earning more than £24,000 will be hit in the pocket by a higher tax.

"Making Scotland the highest-taxed part of the UK will damage our economy, and punish workers right across the board.

"An urgent rethink is required."