

Write your name here

Surname

Other names

Centre Number

Candidate Number

Edexcel GCE

Government and Politics

Advanced Subsidiary Unit 2: Governing the UK

Wednesday 23 January 2013 – Afternoon
Time: 1 hour 20 minutes

Paper Reference
6GP02/01

You do not need any other materials.

Total Marks

Instructions

- Use **black** ink or ball-point pen.
- **Fill in the boxes** at the top of this page with your name, centre number and candidate number.
- Answer **two** questions, **one** from Section A and **one** from Section B.
- Answer the questions in the spaces provided
– *there may be more space than you need.*

Information

- The total mark for this paper is 80.
- The marks for **each** question are shown in brackets
– *use this as a guide as to how much time to spend on each question.*
- You will be assessed on your ability to organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments clearly and logically, taking into account your use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Advice

- Read each question carefully before you start to answer it.
- Keep an eye on the time.
- Check your answers if you have time at the end.

Turn over ►

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Answer TWO questions, ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B.

Section B starts on page 14.

It is advised that you divide your time equally between both questions.

SECTION A

Answer EITHER Question 1 OR Question 2.

1 Prime Ministerial Power

Study the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

The decision to introduce fixed-term Parliaments was one of the key features of the coalition agreement between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties in 2010. The policy was, in due course, enacted through the Fixed-Term Parliament Act, 2011. The introduction of fixed-term Parliaments had long been advocated by the Liberal Democrats. It is often claimed that the reform will reduce prime ministerial power, because it means that prime ministers are no longer able to use their prerogative power to dissolve Parliament and call a general election when events turn in their favour. But a fixed five-year Parliament also means that they can plan ahead to complete their programme by a known date in the future.

The issue of fixed-term Parliaments is part of a long-running debate about how powerful UK prime ministers are. In addition to chairing cabinet meetings and controlling the cabinet system, prime ministers have attracted increasing media focus and become the 'brand image' of their party at election time. Some commentators have gone as far as to claim that UK prime ministers have, effectively, become 'presidents'. Concern about the growing powers of the prime minister has led, amongst other things, to calls for a fully codified written constitution, which would outline the role and responsibilities of the prime minister and government. This would establish clear guidelines for the exercise of prime ministerial powers, rather than allowing the prime minister to determine his or her own role as he or she sees fit.

Source: Edexcel, 12 October 2011.

- 1** (a) With reference to the source, describe how the introduction of fixed-term Parliaments affects prime ministerial power. (5)
- (b) With reference to the source and your own knowledge, explain **three** reforms, other than fixed-term Parliaments, which could limit the powers of the prime minister. (10)
- (c) To what extent have UK prime ministers become more 'presidential'? (25)

(Total for Question 1 = 40 marks)



2 Parliament

Study the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

House of Lords

Since the general election, David Cameron has created 117 new life peers, according to a report from the Constitution Unit at University College, London. This leaves the House packed to the rafters and prompts 'a major concern that if appointments continue, the House of Lords will simply cease to be able to function'. This will be because it is too large and cumbersome. The figures in April 2011 were that, compared to Labour's 243 peers, there were a total of 311 representing the coalition partners. But added together this only accounted for 554 of the total 792 peers. The rest were a mix of crossbenchers, Bishops and others.

But is the Prime Minister doing anything other than adjusting the political balance in the Lords to reflect the will of the people at the last election? Certainly, the House of Lords, with its 792 members, eclipses the size of the Commons. The coalition's Programme for Government of 2010 stated: 'Lords appointments will be made with the objective of creating a second chamber that is reflective of the share of the vote secured by the political parties at the last general election. The current system of appointing peers will therefore remain until the Government's reforms are in place.'

An angry Ed Miliband accused David Cameron back in November 2010 of filling the Lords with Conservative Party donors – and claimed the move was undemocratic. Downing Street was unapologetic, saying: 'The Government will be bringing forward a draft Bill proposing a wholly or mainly elected House of Lords.'

Source: Adapted from Cathy Newman article, Channel Four News online, 20 April 2011.

- 2 (a) With reference to the source, outline **two** criticisms of David Cameron's appointments to the House of Lords. (5)
- (b) With reference to the source and your own knowledge, explain **three** considerations that are taken into account when appointing Life Peers. (10)
- (c) Assess the arguments in favour of a largely or wholly elected second chamber. (25)

(Total for Question 2 = 40 marks)

(Total for Section A = 40 marks)



(b) continued)

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You should start the answer to part (c) on page 9



((b) continued)

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(10)

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 9



(c)

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You should start the answer to Section B on page 15



((c) continued)

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You should start the answer to Section B on page 15



((c) continued)

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You should start the answer to Section B on page 15



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SECTION B

Answer EITHER Question 3 OR Question 4.

EITHER

- 3 To what extent have constitutional reforms introduced since 1997 made the UK more democratic?

(Total for Question 3 = 40 marks)

OR

- 4 In what ways, and to what extent, is the Human Rights Act controversial?

(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)

(Total for Section B = 40 marks)



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