

Write your name here

Surname

Other names

Centre Number

Candidate Number

**Edexcel GCE**

# Government and Politics

## Advanced Subsidiary Unit 2: Governing the UK

Thursday 23 May 2013 – Morning  
**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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**PEARSON**

**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 The UK Constitution**

**Study the following passage and answer the questions that follow.**

Constitutions organise, distribute and regulate government power. They set out the structure of government, the major government institutions, and the principles governing their relations with each other and with citizens. The UK is unusual in that it has an uncodified constitution. Unlike the great majority of countries there is no single legal document which sets out in one place the fundamental laws outlining how the state works. Its constitutional rules are also not entrenched, as there is no higher category of constitutional law in the UK.

The UK constitution is derived from a number of sources. For example, the most important source of the constitution is statute law, law passed by Parliament. By contrast, conventions are unwritten practices which have developed over time and regulate the business of governing.

An uncodified constitution has two implications. First, it can make it difficult to know what the content of the constitution actually is. Second, it is easier to make changes to an uncodified constitution than it is to a codified constitution. The flexibility of the UK constitution is evident from the large number of constitutional reforms since 1997, including the removal of the majority of hereditary peers from the House of Lords, the introduction of codified rights of individuals for the first time in the Human Rights Act 1998, and the devolution of power to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Source: adapted from UK Constitution Unit ([www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/constitution-unit))

- 1** (a) With reference to the source, outline **two** features of the UK constitution. (5)
- (b) With reference to the source and your own knowledge, explain the sources of the UK constitution. (10)
- (c) Assess the strengths of the UK constitution. (25)

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**(Total for Question 1 = 40 marks)**



## 2 The role of the judiciary

Study the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Judges are becoming too politicised in their decision-making, encouraged by a European Court of Human Rights which is progressively shrinking national sovereignty, according to Jonathan Sumption, the newest appointment to the UK's Supreme Court. He implied that judicial reviews are in danger of trespassing on 'the proper function of government'. In a speech to fellow lawyers, Sumption said 'one of the most significant constitutional changes' since the Second World War 'has been the rise in the political significance of the judiciary, as a result of the increasingly vigorous exercise of its powers of judicial review'.

Judges are not politically biased, he stressed, but some cases involved them in 'dealing with matters (namely the merits of policy decisions) which in a democracy are the proper function of Parliament and of ministers answerable to Parliament and the electorate'.

The introduction of the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, through the 1998 Human Rights Act, has, Sumption argued, shifted the boundaries between political and legal decision-making in such controversial areas as immigration, sentencing policy, security and policing, privacy and freedom of expression.

Source: adapted from The Guardian, November, 2011

- 2 (a) With reference to the source, outline why the increasing exercise of judicial review is controversial. (5)
- (b) With reference to the source and your own knowledge, explain the main effects of the Human Rights Act. (10)
- (c) Should judges, rather than politicians, be responsible for protecting civil liberties? (25)

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**(Total for Question 2 = 40 marks)**

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**(Total for Section A = 40 marks)**

























**SECTION B**

**Answer EITHER Question 3 OR Question 4.**

**EITHER**

- 3** Has the experience of coalition government strengthened or weakened prime ministerial power?

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**(Total for Question 3 = 40 marks)**

**OR**

- 4** 'The House of Lords is now more effective than the House of Commons in checking government power.' Discuss.

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**(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)**

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**(Total for Section B = 40 marks)**





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