



Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE Government and Politics 6GP03 3A

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Introduction

This paper saw a more even spread of responses across the short-answer questions, suggesting that candidates and centres are becoming more confident with the teaching of all topic areas. It was particularly pleasing to see the wealth of knowledge of recent policy in some areas, such as the coalition's NHS reforms and recent proposals to change sentencing which was referenced in many responses to question 6.

There was, however, a noticeable difference in the quality of answers across certain areas of study, especially on the economy and the environment, demonstrating that candidates are still uncertain of these topics. Such questions often saw candidates repeat knowledge that they had learned for past papers, and so lose marks for a lack of relevance. This was particularly true of question 5 and question 8.

There was also a significant minority of candidates -often excellent candidates- who unfortunately got carried away with demonstrating the depth of their knowledge on certain questions- generally question 1 on the coalition's NHS reforms. These candidates then spent too long answering this question and either missed out one short-answer question or had to finish their essay in bullet points due to a lack of time. Bullet points severely limit the marks accessible to candidates across all assessment objectives, so pointing to a need to re-emphasise the importance of time management to candidates.

Nonetheless, there was a marked improvement in synopticity marks, with far fewer level 1 marks being awarded. This is particularly true for question 6, where many candidates were able to directly and explicitly compare and evaluate the ideological stances of the two main parties on law and order. This was also often well done in question 8, where many candidates could analyse the extent to which party disagreements on the deficit could be said to have substance with comparisons to pre-2010 policies.

Question 1

This was the most popular short-answer question, and many candidates were able to display their up-to-date knowledge of the coalition's proposals.

Many candidates had a fairly good grasp of the proposed changes. However, some were not able to explain the reasons why the changes were necessary in the eyes of the coalition- so missing out the 'desirable' part of the question and so limiting their marks to a level 2 because of the lack of balance.

Generally speaking, candidates displayed much more awareness of GP commissioning proposal than of implications for hospitals. Such responses were able to reach the top of level 2 if they were accompanied by a strong evaluation of 'necessary' and 'desirable'.

Level 3 responses were balanced in terms of the arguments supporting and criticising the proposed reforms. Top level 3 responses were able to explain the coalition's defence, the criticisms from the Labour Party and also from the wider health professional field. Some excellent answers also noted that the proposed changes were not necessarily in the manifestos for the Liberal Democrats or the Conservatives, and so questioned the mandate for such reforms.

This is an extract from a level 3 response.

Thirdly, the proposed allowance of a private sector. It can be praised, it will mean competition which also increases standards. Something that is desirable and necessary to all. However it will also mean the possibility of creating a "two-tier" service in what you get- what you pay for. In other words the rich get a better healthcare. This is not the principle of the NHS and is undesired by many. Furthermore an independent NHS commissioning board means an unelected, unaccountable body will be allocating resources, and an example of democratic deficit.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good example of a candidate who addresses all parts of the question concisely. They begin by stating clearly one proposed reform- to use the private sector more- before explaining why this has been proposed **and** then explaining why this has been criticised. Because the candidate made 3 clear points on 3 different proposals in this way the candidate was able to access level 3.



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Examiner Tip

To reach the top of level 3, the candidate should have linked their analysis of the "desirability and necessity" of the reforms to political parties **or** other bodies (eg the BMA) viewpoints.

Question 1 ✕

Question 2 ✕

Question 3 ✕

Question 4 ✕

Question 5 ✕

GP Commissioning Abolishing PCTs efficiency
↳ autonomy, choice, effectiveness

Nurses & doctors/hospitals added to Commission
Ideology - Fear of dependency from state

Funding - budget deficit - ^{less} ^{public} spending Neo-liberalism
& dependency culture Similar to Thatcher's privatisation
free market ideology - Still choice to deliver way.

The Coalition's plans for restructuring the NHS have been formulated by Andrew Lansley, in ~~order~~ focus of improving efficiency & excellence in ^{our} ~~the~~ beloved Health Service. The foundations of the welfare state sought to allow universality, free at point of delivery, state control and offer equality; however desirable it may be for a conservative led government to implement neo-liberal ideology and restructure the system, such aspects remain necessary and rigid (in maintaining essentials of w. state).

introduction

The ~~command~~ of GP commissioners is the fundamental change proposed for the health service, providing full autonomy to the GP as an individual and removing bureaucracy from Primary Care Trusts. Funding direct to the GP will develop a GP role into not only one to implement care, but also to find the best deals on the services to which it may provide. The controversy stems however from the GP's not wanting such autonomy as it goes on free market intervention and an overload of responsibility and work for one individual. The GP is not trained as a businessman, and has not become a doctor in order to become one. This may therefore, may be seen as a desirable and unnecessary decision made by the Commission in order to bring pressure of government funding with the increased use of private sector and also cut out bureaucracy by abolishing PCTs. (The government's main aim underneath reform is to cut the budget deficit and it can be argued ~~all~~ many changes are unnecessarily being made in order to save money, rather than desirability of improving NHS. // There is also the argument for a return to neo-liberal principles. The conservative led coalition will bring with it an ideology of fear towards ~~the~~ 'big state' and fear towards a

It could be argued that the changes are necessary in the long term to rectify the poor productivity record the NHS had under New Labour. In the long run the changes could pay for themselves, and as the economy recovers, the private sector will take on the unemployed.

Thirdly, the proposed allowance of a for the private sector. It can be praised, it will mean competition which also increases standards. Something that is desirable and necessary to all. However it will also mean the possibility of creating a "two-tier" service in which you get what you pay for, in other words the rich get ~~more~~ better healthcare. This is not the principle of the NHS and is undesired by many. Furthermore an independent NHS commissioning board means an unelected, unaccountable body will be allocating resources, and an example of democratic deficit.

The proposals ~~are~~ can be viewed as necessary in the long term, but in ~~meas~~ times of austerity, the proposals can be viewed as definitely not desirable and unnecessary.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a structured response, with an introduction, main body and conclusion.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The candidate clearly understands the main reforms proposed on GP commissioners and the abolition of Primary Care Trusts, and is able to give a balanced analysis of the potential impact of the reforms and the political ideology behind them.

This is done succinctly, with a clear focus on the question throughout and deserves the top award possible- level 3, 15 marks.

Question 2

Surprisingly, many candidates were only able to answer this question in very basic terms by discussing government manipulation of crime statistics. While this is a valid point- and one which is referenced on the mark scheme- as the sole reason given, and with very general analysis of the impact and no exemplification, such responses were limited to the bottom of level 2.

Most candidates understood the way in which figures can be manipulated and the difference between the two competing crime set of statistics, but many candidates lost marks for not addressing the 'politically controversial' part of the question and merely describing the differences between the two types of statistics.

There were, nonetheless, some precise and well-targeted answers from candidates who knew their material and were able to address the issues of methodology, popular perception and political purposes- developed explanations for such points merited a level 3. There were, however, few examples offered on this question, even by candidates who clearly understood a range of points from the mark scheme. For example, many candidates referred to changes in the way crime is recorded, but were unable to exemplify this with specific examples such as knife crime or serious crime, but instead relied on generalities.

There was a worrying minority of candidates who only answered in terms of quoting increases/decreases in crime statistics, followed by an explanation of how these changes in statistics were a problem- but with no valid reference to governments or reliability of statistics or perceptions of crime.

There are a number of reasons why the use of crime statistics have been politically controversial. Firstly, there is controversy over the methods used to collect such statistics. This is because,

crime statistics differs in ³ ~~2~~ ^{year} ones definition, for example of 'serious' or 'violent' crimes. These sorts of measurements are also prone to changing over time i.e. the definition of 'violent crime' could have been more ~~in~~ serious in the '90s than it is today. ^{A specific controversy arose in particular} ~~This was the case when~~ the Labour government ~~re-~~ labelled drugs offences in 2005, and confusion was

→ making past records almost meaningless
caused over what fell in which category.

The use of crime statistics has also been politically controversial because often the actual incidents of crime differ from the perceptions of citizens about crime. For example, 44% of tabloid readers in 2008 stated that they believed crime had risen 'a lot', when actually most crime has decreased from 1995 onwards, such as a 66% decrease in the incidences of vehicle crime. It is these such perceptions that recently led many critics of the ~~late~~ Labour governments to levy the charge at them that their statistics had been used to "obscure" the real crime levels and hide the fact that UK citizens are now more in danger than in previous years.

Crime ~~statistics~~ statistics have also attracted political controversy because of the fact that police records differ greatly from statistics recorded by the British Crime Survey. The former Labour government could point to the former set of figures, which give

lower records of crime, and so the opposition could use the BCS's figures to indicate that crime was more of an issue, and had not been dealt with as successfully as the Labour government had claimed. This is due to the fact that the police records only contain ~~recorded~~ reported crimes, whereas the British Crime Survey interviews a significant amount of the population and so include crimes which perhaps have only been witnessed, or not reported to the police.

~~✗ ✗~~ This causes controversy when citizens accuse the government of not dealing effectively with crime, when really the incidences could be lowering.

~~Political~~ Political controversy is also apparent, therefore, when the media overinflates statistics and causes more concern among citizens than is necessary.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an excellent example of a level 3 response- the candidate has written a structured answer with a clear introduction, with three main arguments specified within their answer. Each point that is made is developed, and includes a number of examples as evidence.

Crime statistics are, by their nature, incredibly difficult to require, analyse and form policy from. The paradox created by the statistics is that if more criminals are being arrested, that means crime rates are going up, which appears to be bad. However, it could also mean that the same amount of criminal activity is occurring, but the police are being more effective at finding and stopping it. To this end, it is incredibly difficult to ever discover how much crime is actually taking place in the UK, which provides difficulties for the government. The reason the use of these statistics is controversial is that ~~either~~ both the government and the opposition can manipulate the same evidence to reach a different conclusion, and the apparent 'fall' in crime rates, particularly petty and violent crimes since 1997, has

been used by the coalition as a springboard for cutting the police budget, which has proved very controversial and has meant a constant rebuff both from the media and the opposition.

Tony Blair's famous 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' & promise ~~in~~ entering his second term of ~~poli~~ ~~the~~ majority government also used crime statistics to manipulate public opinion. Between 2001 and 2005 almost all areas of criminal activity reported a drop in frequency. Tony Blair used these statistics to show that street-level crime was going down, and so was able to ~~shift~~ 'redirect' considerable amounts of the police budget towards anti-terrorism. Terrorism, particularly in the early years of the millennium, was a top fear for the public and there is little doubt that the reason for this was the apparent increase in terrorist activity as reported by the government. These statistics made it much easier for Blair to gain public (not parliamentary) support for policies like ID cards, the storage of DNA and increase of terror-suspect prison

time.

Overall, the ~~the~~ use of crime statistics is so controversial because it is incredibly easy to manipulate, which can be used for cuts in spending, or much more seriously, extreme violations of citizens' personal and civil liberties.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate makes 3 clear points, but the analysis is more generalised and lacks clear exemplification. The paragraph where the British Crime Survey is compared to Home Office and police data, for example, does not clearly develop the issues surrounding the use of the data in the British Crime Survey.



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Examiner Tip

The lack of development of some points limits this to the top of level 2- 10 marks.

Question 3

This was a "double-barrelled" question that asked candidates to explain **why** changes have been proposed to retirement pensions as well as **what** has been proposed. Many weaker candidates, unfortunately, limited their mark by only addressing one part of the question—usually the 'why' part.

There was, however, a significant number of responses that were able to outline the coalition's recent proposals, from raising the retirement age to the reform of public sector pensions and the "triple lock" guarantee. Such responses were rewarded accordingly, and could enter level 3 if they were accompanied by an explanation of why such reforms are being proposed.

A number of candidates were also able to compare the coalition's proposals to 2010 manifesto pledges, or to Labour's policies whilst in power. However, there were also some spurious examples given of benefits awarded to pensioners under Labour, such as the Winter Fuel Allowance and television licences for the over-75s which were not relevant to a question specifically targeted at retirement pensions.

A number of candidates unfortunately wrote answers based on the Thatcher and Major eras, which on a Key Issues paper are much too historical. Centres should try to focus their teaching on current or very recent party policy as much as possible to avoid such issues.

The major parties have proposed several radical changes to retirement pensions in which the retirement age will be raised to 66 and therefore people will be forced to work for longer, pay more into the system, but receive less pension pensions.

~~Because the report is~~ There is a political consensus between the major parties on this issue. One reason they all propose a higher retirement age is because on average, people in the UK are living longer than ever and are ~~also~~ ~~more~~ healthier for longer parts of their lives.

Therefore the parties ~~broader~~ argue that if people are living longer, then ~~they~~ the retirement age should be increased to keep up to date. They believe that if people are becoming ~~the~~ more able to work at an older age on average and general health is improving, then people may as well continue to carry on working.

Another reason for the proposal is that the government simply cannot afford to continue paying out pensions at the current rate. Therefore there is no other option but to increase the retirement age. The coalition government is attempting to major significantly cut welfare expenditure to help the economy recover and ~~there are other options available to the government~~

they argue that ~~raise~~ the retirement age must be raised to help the economic situation.

However, perhaps the proposals are ideological as the Conservatives traditionally prefer minimal state intervention ~~in~~ on welfare and perhaps the proposals on raising the retirement age are not economically driven, but ideological. ~~the~~ ~~conservative~~ ~~labour~~

However, Labour also recognises the need to increase the retirement age to create a more sustainable pension system therefore it is unclear whether the Conservatives' proposals are ideologically driven or truly necessary in the current economic climate.



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Examiner Comments

This is a well written response where the candidate clearly understands why there is a need to reform the pension system. However, the candidate has limited their marks by failing to fully address the first half of the question- on **what** reforms have been proposed. The only reform mentioned is the raising of the retirement age.



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Examiner Tip

This limitation then restricts the mark awarded to a mid level 2, as the candidate should have been able to demonstrate their awareness of political party policy as required by the question.

Question 3

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1 ☒

Question 2 ☒

Question 4 ☒

Question 5 ☒

tory = choice, help
private tax relief
lib dem = reduce triple
lock
Question 3 ☒
labour = when we have
enough we should
retire

Ideologically the stance on pensions is very similar so we see that the changes proposed do not differ greatly. Pensions are a fundamental part of the welfare state and there is a recognition that they need to improve.

The conservative party propose to increase the age of the state pension considerably. ~~known~~ They want to slowly ease this in starting with a raise to 66 by 2020 for both sexes. This is a direct response to the issue of the ageing population. When the pension was first introduced people used it for a lot less time before they died so it was not such a burden on the tax payer. But now that a large percentage of the population are ~~an~~ elderly it has proved to be a burden on the tax payer. This policy is now a part of the coalition policy.

The conservatives also wanted to introduce choice into the state pension and argued, ~~rather~~ against labour, that instead of giving pensioners winter fuel allowance and bus passes the government should give them £400 to spend how they choose. This was largely ideological and in line with the ~~tradition~~ neoliberal policy of individualism. This did not make it into coalition policy and we still have the winter fuel allowance.

The conservatives have not been strong advocates of restoring the link to earnings because of the financial implications.

The labour party have been slow to get policies out under their new leadership and cabinet. However the public can still remember labour's promise to restore the earnings link once the economy is in a good enough state. However this is ambiguous and a little empty. The labour party know that pensions are not enough but are also concerned with the financial implications of restoring the link.

The liberal democrats are heavy advocates of restoring the link. They not only recognize the fact

that pensions are not enough but also want to tackle this head on. In times of austerity this has proved to be impractical and has not made it onto the coalition policies.

The conservative party have also proposed bringing back tax relief to private pensions to encourage more people to take out private pensions. The reasons for this are numerous.

Firstly there is a recognition that the state pension is not enough to live on and needs to be topped up. Secondly they do not want people to be so dependant on the welfare state - this is ideological.

Thirdly they think it will be less pressure on taxpayers if people just used private schemes.

The motivation behind all major parties policies is a NEED to reform the pension system. All parties believe in the welfare state and the pension represents the fundamental relationship between state and the individual. Furthermore, as the population ages the pension lobby becomes stronger and groups such as Age Concern put considerable pressure on the government. Good pension policies are a vote winner as pensions are such an emotional issue.

(Total for Question = 15 marks)



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate adopts a party-by-party approach to the question. They clearly outline proposals made and then develop the point by explaining the reasons for the proposed change.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The inclusion of a range of party policies, including the coalition, and the conclusion where the various reasons for reform are drawn together, merit a top level 3 award. The depth of knowledge and explanations of motivation behind the proposals allowed this response to be awarded full marks.

Question 4

This was another "double-barrelled" question, and again one where candidates failed to address both parts of the question, often limiting their marks to the bottom of level 2.

Many candidates were able to clearly define the key concept of economic globalisation, but then struggled to explain its impact on economic policy-making. Many responses instead focused on the general impact of economic globalisation, or drifted off into a discussion of the impact of the global recession on the UK, which was not entirely relevant to this question. Such responses would remain at the bottom of level 2.

There was often little development of the restrictions economic globalisation places on government action. However, stronger candidates were able to discuss the concept of economic sovereignty. Many candidates made reference to the IMF and membership of the EU- these were relevant points, albeit slightly indirectly. Answers which focused on these points alone, however, would not have progressed beyond the middle of level 2.

The strongest answers focused on measures the UK has to take in order to keep the UK competitive in a fast moving international globalised market place, often with reference to the impact of the global recession and how the UK has coped with that in comparison to the Eurozone countries. As long as such responses kept their focus on policy-making rather than a general discussion of the recession, candidates could access level 3.

Economic globalisation is a relatively current phenomenon. Because of the international bodies, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), that influence things such as inflation, and international trade, economics ^{worldwide} have become interlinked. Economic globalisation is the idea that economics has become globalised; any change in a single country's economy can affect the economy of many countries across the world.

Economic globalisation affects economic policy-making in the UK because it requires that the UK make economic decisions based on not just their country, but others across Europe and the world. The Recession showed how economic globalisation can have detrimental affects.

The collapse of the sub-prime mortgages and the housing market in America caused banks in the UK to collapse due to money lending. Northern

Rock collapsed because they had been involved in sub-prime mortgages and were heavily reliant on American banks. ~~this~~ ~~these~~ ~~global~~ ~~banking~~ International lending between banks means that each country has to be ready for how they will react in an emergency. This happened after the government in ^{the} UK stepped in to save Northern Rock. It was nationalised and each customer was guaranteed up to £35,000.

The decisions made by the government after the recession show how they have to react to global economic situations. Furthermore, things like food prices from other countries and the value of the euro or the dollar are other factors that can affect inflation in the UK.

The Bank of England and the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) set the interest rate in the UK. Though this is independent from government, they have to keep the rates viable with those across the world to allow for trade and reasonably priced imports and exports.

The globalisation of economics affects basic policies and economics in the UK quite significantly, through the IMF, the value of money and ~~is~~ international banking.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The response begins with a clear definition of the key concept, so addressing the first part of the question. The candidate then goes on to address the question directly, and is able to discuss how globalisation can affect economic policy-making. However, this is done largely in quite general terms- for example, stating that the recession shows how governments have to react to global economic situations- but with no evidence to back this up.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

While the candidate does clearly understand economic globalisation, the limited specific evidence of economic policy-making that has been affected limits this to a mid level 2- 9 marks.

Question 4

Economic globalisation is the expansion of trade facilities and opportunities. the sharing of ideas in economy and technology, globally.

It has effected UK policy making by the ~~all~~ channels that facilitated it, such as transportation, dissemination.

Since the wave of globalisation, many businesses have migrated, into and out of the UK. UK policy comes in here, ~~other~~ in matters of competition law, foreign investment and taxation such as corporation tax.

It could, for example be argued that corporation tax is at a much lower rate since the wave of globalisation first swept in, because the government does not want to deter foreign investment.

Also, as the UK wants to compete globally in many aspects, quality and efficiency standards have been pushed up. Especially since

~~the 1980s~~ 1980's of privatisation programmes, agencies and agencies have been put in place where "natural monopolies" have been made public ownership. For example OFGEM has been brought into existence to control efficiency in the privatised gas industry. Other key agencies ensure other services are run efficiently so that UK can compete globally and be up to European standard.

Another influence on policy making have been organisations such as the OECD and the WTO (World Trade Organisation). These initiate economic strategies as well as drawing up plans for economic management for many countries including the UK.

Transport and the use of satellite have been affected much as well. Globalisation affects UK policy in terms of those technological advances. The UK has to keep up with the rest of the world and especially Europe. ~~so far as~~ Technology has ~~been~~ seen such and coming on in the UK that ~~in~~ between 1970 and 1990 the use of satellites for broadband has decreased 92%. This can be said to influence UK policy in numerous areas.

Another major policy affected by economic globalisation is the setting of tariffs on imports, as well as quality and quantity ~~stand~~ limits of imports and exports.

Since joining the EU and the Single European Act, globalisation has also meant the free circulation of people, ^{services} goods and capital. This has largely impacted Britain in terms of immigration policy, foreign workers and UK workers going abroad, it has increased the importance to have a skilled workforce to keep up with the skills of ~~foreign~~ ^{other} centres. It has also highlighted the need for more cultural exchange and awareness, modern languages in education being an important subject as well as integration of migrants becoming a major public debate.

Britain has had to adopt new and modern policies that deal with problems of out-sourcing, namely not to take all the skilled workers or workers in the particular country into Britain by offering them better deals and better work conditions.

Overall, economic globalisation has meant change in policy ~~for business~~ in terms of migration, labour markets, transportation ^{and}, especially technology, to meet a more international ~~climate~~ ^{stage} economic climate.



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Examiner Comments

This is a wide-ranging response, where the candidate clearly understands the issue of economic globalisation and its impact. The response is not always entirely focused on economic policy-making- the bottom of the second page, for example, drifts into a tangent about the impact of globalisation on the UK in general. However, the majority of the response is focused on moves the UK government must take in response to globalisation; for example, the impact of EU membership, the need to ensure the UK has a skilled workforce to compete globally.



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Examiner Tip

The depth of knowledge and understanding of how globalisation can affect a government's decisions merit a level 3 award- 13 marks.

Question 5

A number of candidates chose to make this question a general one about environmental policies rather than wind power, thus repeating the same mistake made in January.

Many candidates were able to identify the reasons why the use of wind power in the UK is problematic, but often in very narrow and general terms- focusing largely on the issues of ruining the countryside or noise. Provided such points were well developed, candidates could attain a mid-level 2. Some candidates were able to link such points to the political impact on MPs, discussing how the sitting and approval of wind farms could affect the electoral chances of Conservative MPs in particular, and how this could affect individuals or the party's perspective on the issue. Such responses could then access the top of level 2, again if they were well developed.

Few candidates, however, were able to address the 'political' controversy aspect of the question except in the most basic terms of the need to address the budget deficit being a higher priority for governments, again limiting their marks to level 2.

Level 3 responses saw candidates discussing the political impact explicitly- some chose to compare the desirability of policies on wind power to recent party preferences for policies on nuclear power, while some were able to develop points about the financial impact of the expansion of wind power on the deficit in terms of the cost of building and the economic feasibility of wind farms, particularly with the closure of the UK's only wind farm factory.

As non-renewable fossil fuels such as coal and gas are quickly running out, governments across the world are looking for alternative sources of power. Renewable sources of energy such as solar, hydro-electric and wind power are all safe, cheap examples. Although these renewable fuels are popular with pressure groups such as Greenpeace and parties such as the Green Party, they are politically controversial.

For many years the government has planned for the wider use of nuclear power. Nuclear power, although dangerous and unpopular, it is incredibly reliable, ^{powerful} and sustainable. This, a lot of politicians feel,

is the correct route to go down. It would ~~to~~ also create more jobs and therefore enhance the economy. Wind power, however does not produce as many jobs and therefore does not strengthen the economy.

Additionally, wind power takes up a lot of space and therefore reduces the amount of land there is to build on. This, ~~again~~, reduces the amount of space for businesses to expand and enterprise and the economy to flourish.

Finally, if the UK stops buying oil from other countries - in the Middle East, for example - it will have a detrimental effect on ~~its~~ foreign affairs and trade in general. This will do nothing to boost our economy in this time of economic crisis.



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Examiner Comments

This is a classic example of a candidate who does not know the topic - the first point made, for example, is on nuclear rather than wind power. These points would have been credible **if** the candidate had explicitly related the point to specific party policy on wind power, rather than generalities about job creation and strengthening the economy.



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Examiner Tip

The points that are made on wind power are very brief and there is no relation to party or government policy, thus limiting this response to a level 1- 5 marks.

Recently ~~gover~~ political parties have been keen to come across as environmentally friendly, forming policies designed to decrease the use of fossil fuels etc. and resort to renewable ~~energy~~ energies such as wind power.

This has, however been controversial among politicians for many reasons. Firstly, the increase in wind power ~~see~~ as a form of renewable energy has caused concern over levels of energy produced. Wind power does not produce as much energy as alternatives, such as nuclear and therefore has caused some politicians to be worried about the damage it could cause to the ~~environment~~ economy. With the main priority of many political parties being to cut the deficit, environmental policies have taken a back seat and

the expansion of wind power causes concerns that it will ~~be~~ be detrimental to the economy.

Parties such as Labour and the Conservatives are strongly in favour of nuclear power, because it produces a large amount of energy compared to wind power and it is always available, whereas wind power is less reliable. The Lib Dems are strongly opposed to nuclear power due to the possible dangers, they are more in favour of such alternatives as wind power.

The Greens, as expected are in favour of wind power extension, however there is a split within the party, with some, 'light Greens' believing that the economy must also be protected and who are in favour of nuclear power and then there are the 'dark Greens' who are in favour of tough environmental policy that overrides the importance of the economy.

On top of this, wind power is relatively expensive in the short run and the expansion of it at the moment has caused further government expenditure which is unnecessary in

the era of austerity. It's especially controversial due to the fact that wind power is less reliable and doesn't not provide as much power as nuclear.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response is much more coherent, and attempts to address the "politically controversial" aspect of the question by including party policies. However, the policies referenced do not always focus on the issue of wind power, so limiting the marks available to this candidate.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

There are, nonetheless, creditable points on the effectiveness and economic impact of wind power which, when combined with the paragraph comparing policies on wind power to nuclear power- these points allow this response to reach the top of level 2-10 marks.

Question 6

This was the most popular essay question, and saw a range of approaches by candidates- some chose to structure their answer issue-by-issue, while some chose to assess policies party-by-party. Both approaches were equally creditable, and allowed many candidates the opportunity to demonstrate a wide knowledge and understanding of the topic.

Disappointingly, a significant minority of candidates chose to focus their responses on pre-1997 policies under Thatcher and Major. While some credit could be awarded for candidates who were referring to this era for direct and explicit comparison to the change in party stance on law and order for either Labour or the Conservatives- thus fulfilling part of the criteria for synopticity- many of these candidates chose to focus their answers almost exclusively on policies and ideas from the pre-1997 era, limiting their marks to level 1 or the very bottom of level 2.

A number of candidates also turned this question in to a single-issue one- perhaps relying too heavily on revising from past papers, particularly from January- by focusing almost entirely on the issue of anti-terror legislation. While arguments on this area were creditable, the question asked about law and order overall, so expected candidates to be able to refer to a range of policies and party positions. Candidates who made the mistake of focusing on a single issue were limited to a low level 2.

Many candidates gave a rigorous and comprehensive response detailing the obvious New Labour shift to the right and then the subsequent issues over anti-terror legislation, comparing this to the re-positioned Conservative party under Cameron. Such responses were able to score highly on synopticity, provided they were explicitly comparing party stances and how they have changed. Excellent answers picked up on the recent subtle shift in Cameron's junking of Ken Clarke's 'soft' approach and the possible tensions that may exist within the coalition.

Since 1997 it can be argued that there has been a growing consensus between parties on the policy area of law + order.

Traditionally the main parties: Labour and the Conservatives have had extremely opposing views on the policy area of law and order. Traditionally the Conservatives were viewed as the 'hard party' + took an extremely harsh stance on criminals with Michael Howard's 'prison works' viewpoint, ^{in the 80s} wanting punishment to be the main priority when dealing with prisoners.

In 1997, the Labour party under the control of Blair appeared to reach some form of consensus with the Conservatives, with Blair's soundbite 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime', demonstrating

that the Labour party (who were previously viewed by some as taking a softer approach to crime) were now contenders with the Conservatives in providing a secure law + order policy. This saw the Labour government get far stricter on criminals, placing much more emphasis on detention centres for youths for example, introducing ASBO's and trying to deal with the causes of crime, which in a sense differentiated them from the Conservatives as in a sense they wanted to prevent crime and not just try to ~~det~~ deter with harsher punishments. Arguably Labour's shift to the right forced the Conservatives to implement an even tougher policy to differentiate itself from the Labour party.

More currently the consensus is arguably increasing as many of the major parties are now leaning more towards rehabilitation for criminals, as opposed to just punishment, Ken Clarke has also now famously remarked the well known

'Prison works' ideology, as the Justice minister for the Conservatives this illustrates what a complete U-turn the Conservatives have performed, and showing that many parties have now accepted that reoffending rates are extremely high whatever the punishment and that rehabilitation is arguably the way to cut crime, an argument supported by parties such as the Liberal Democrats. Some more right-wing parties would still take the view however that punishment needs to be toughened such as the BNP, with some parties even calling for a return to the ~~the~~ capital punishment.

There has been some adversary politics demonstrated about law & order policy, as some parties disagree about how much involvement police should have in our lives with worries about a 'big brother state' voiced from parties such as the Liberal Democrats. Increases in CCTV surveillance for example

& Labour's failed policy of ID cards have resulted in arguments that the state has tried to go too far in protecting safety - instead infringing civil rights.

¶ Overall I would argue that since 1997 there has been a visible growing consensus about Law + Order policy, how to deal with + prevent crime-in a stark contrast to the extremely ~~adversity~~ & adversity powers of the years pre 1997. Currently there are less completely contrasting opinion with many agreements on what needs to be done in the future.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a well written response, where the candidate obviously understands the changes in the ideological approaches of the Labour party. The candidate is also able to address synopticity effectively by directly comparing traditional approaches in law and order with how they have changed.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

The response is limited, however, by its lack of depth of knowledge on party policy, particularly recent party policy. The discussion of how the Conservative party's policies have changed is also very brief.

Because of this, the response does not progress beyond level 2 on AO1, AO2 or synopticity. Mark awarded- AO1 8, AO2 8, Synopticity 8, AO3 6.

Traditionally, the Conservative party has had an image which was tough on crime, the Thatcher premiership saw such an emergence where she increased police numbers and their powers. This was given great support in the media and also from the public. Conversely, old Labour and the Lib Dems have been noted as soft on crime and as a result when Tony Blair became the Labour Leader in ~~200~~ 1994 and re-wrote Clause IV, New Labour took a much tougher approach to Law and Order to widespread public support. New Labour however went a 'third way' it was 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime'.

From that we can identify to a shift in the political spectrum to a narrowing of ideas on Law and order. Labour abandoned its previously held ideological beliefs in line with the Conservatives and as a result it gained public support. Essentially a consensus on Law and order had emerged but without a doubt there are differences in 1997.

New Labour didn't just tackle Crime as the Conservatives were, but it was tackling the causes of crime. It wanted Social Justice and it believed that by tackling the sources of crime, then inevitably it would lower crime rates, this was the 'third way' a blend of neo-liberalism and conservatism when it came to Law and Order. More recently under David Cameron, the Conservatives have too taken a similar approach to New Labour when it comes to Law and Order in

relation to tackling the Causes of Crime, no longer do the Conservatives simply attack crime. There is a general Consensus in motion that it is significantly important to tackle both crime and the causes of crime, which bring in the element of Social Justice.

However, it can be argued that Labour has totally abandoned its old Liberal values in its implementation of what many call draconian laws in relation to terrorism. In 2000, New Labour passed the Terrorism Act followed by more legislation after 9/11, Prevention against Terrorism Act (PACT) 2003, Criminal Justice Act 2004 and after 7/7, Act against Terrorism 2005. There are now increased police powers to stop and search anyone suspected of terrorism, increased surveillance powers, the power to detain a terror suspect without charge up to 28 days (Labour

has tried for 90 and then 42, both were defeated in the House of Lords) and finally prohibited the public protesting. There by many have been seen to infringe upon people's civil liberties and a debate from many bodies has arisen. The debate can be noted over national security vs individual rights. The Conservatives have highlighted a necessary junction for national security and in a sense the greater good but have opposed the growing surveillance state that has arisen. Britain has the most CCTV cameras per person in the world and Labour's use of DNA and ID cards have been rejected by the Conservatives. The Coalition finally put an end to ID cards in 2010 when they came to power. Liberal Democrats further oppose much of New Labour's legislative security but it is eroding civil liberties.

However, the Coalition of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats have so far done little to change the existing legislation which many say is just as ineffective as it is illegal. Campaign groups such as Liberty say that is taking away our Human Rights, that it contravenes The Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Court of Human Rights. Liberty is just one of many pressure groups which have opposed this legislation highlighting its erosion of civil liberties and how we can establish that on some elements of Law and order

The broad spectrum of politics is more adverse than consensual. This may continue as in the developing world the increasing threat of terrorism is creating this heated debate over national security vs individuals rights with our three main political parties taking different stances.

Another key element of Law and Order comes to Policing and Sentencing and since 1997, there has been many changes. New Labour has greatly increased the police force which saw 17,000 more police from 1997 to 2002, with also 16,000 new PCSOs (Police, Community Support Officers), it too increased funding into the police. This is similar to the Conservative Government which under Margaret Thatcher and John Major saw increased police and in the 2010 Conservative Manifesto, David Cameron pledged to match that of the ~~Conservative~~ Labour party. On this political issue, the main political parties seem to agree as this has given them widespread public support however will be

Co-alition government making large cuts to funding, there is much talk of Police officers jobs at risk. What the Co-alition however is seeking is a re-structuring of the police with less bureaucracy to reduce costs. They too would bring policing to a more local level and as from 2012 will see

Police Commissioners elected which is a Liberal Democrat idea. The Co-alition has thus blended the two parties policies on policing together and essentially a rough consensus can be established. In regards to Sentencing, there has too been changes since 1997. ~~They~~ New Labour passed 1000+ pieces of laws in its 10 year period to 2007 and this saw the introduction of more minimum and maximum sentences for specific crimes such as murder and sexually related crimes. More crimes now demanded a custodial sentence for longer periods which was much so a continuation of Conservative policies. New Labour and Conservatives both tend to favour custodial sentences as a form of deterrence and punishment. However many claim these are ineffective and Liberal Democrats prefer community sentences and rehabilitation and thus oppose the consensus. An ever increasing issue for the political parties is overcrowding prisons. Both New Labour and Conservatives have pledged to the construction of new prisons however with the Co-alition government and cuts in funding, it is interesting to see how these will be funded if they even are. Recently talks about private companies running prisons were discussed as was privatisation of current prisons. New Labour and ~~the~~ ^{the} Liberal Democrats oppose this

believing that neither financially or morally will it be beneficial to the government. Thus there are elements within Policing and Sentencing that have developed Conservatively Since 1997 but there is still much debate on what is the best way to formulate Law and order policy.

1997 Saw the New Labour party come to power with a new method of governance, the 'Third Way' which saw its focus on Crime and focus on the Causes of crime, ~~but many have~~ many saw this fit into line with existing Conservative policy and thus a consensus emerging however, much decisions and policy implemented by New Labour has sparked debate across the Political Spectrum and thus it is important to note that a general consensus emerged from 1997 which moved away from the stark argument of Liberalism vs neo-conservatism. Generally the political parties approach to Law and Order is now a neo-conservative one. It is more a debate on whether you sit at the left or right of that with the parties themselves split. A general consensus emerged Since 1997 but still a debate on Law and order is at hand.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is an excellent level 3 response across all assessment objectives.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

The candidate displays a depth of knowledge regarding party policies in a number of key areas- terror, policing and sentencing, and prisons- and is able to explicitly compare and contrast the extent of consensus between the main parties. This, combined with the initial discussion of how traditional party positions have shifted, allow the candidate to address synopticity effectively as well.

Marks awarded: AO1 10, AO2 11, Synopticity 10, AO3 7.

Question 7

There was a degree of misinterpretation on this question by a significant number of candidates who chose to make this question a very general one on environmental issues- perhaps drawing on knowledge garnered from other subjects- rather than a response on how and why the environment has become a political issue. Such responses would not be able to progress beyond level 1 without specific references to the impact of environmental issues on political party policy.

There were also a number of candidates who chose to answer a question of their choosing on climate change, once again reinforcing the need for candidates to answer the question as set rather than repeating responses appropriate to past papers. Such responses were more credit-worthy, as they were able to reference political issues rather than general points on the green movement, but would be limited to a mid-level 2 on AO1, AO2 and AO3 if the discussion did not move beyond climate change. Synopticity marks were unlikely to leave level 1 if the response focused entirely on climate change, as such responses often focused on comparing party policies on the issue of climate change rather than evaluating whether or not such policies have come about because of the impact of the green movement.

There were, however, a number of excellent responses where candidates espoused a very good discussion of party policy initiatives as well as "public debate". Such responses were able to explicitly evaluate the extent to which party policy on the environment was as a result of the green movement or for other motives- such as a discussion of the contradictions within the Labour government's transport policies, or the coalition's claim to be the "greenest government ever" in contrast to the Conservative preference for expanding nuclear power.

The 'green movement' is the increasing concern over the climate over the past decade, and the increasing policy making areas of the environment to combat climate change (became more environmentally friendly).

The green movement one could argue started in 1988 when Thatcher gave a speech acknowledging the existence and importance of climate change. Since this speech the green movement has encouraged many environmental policies to be put into place. In 1989 The National Rivers Authority and in 2000 the Environmental Protection Act was imposed setting targets on the environment. After Energy White Paper + Transport White Paper policies upon the environment had begun to set out strict regulations.

This green movement had shaped the policies on environment as it implemented and shaped legislation to be more environmentally friendly. The Labour party introduced subsidies upon products (goods + services) that were more environmentally friendly, ~~therefore~~

along with other policies & measures, all encouraging the 'green' movement. The Labour Government ~~had~~ under Blair had led the G8 summit in 2005 and fully committed the UK to becoming environmentally friendly.

The coalition Government, which has called itself (Gordon) the "strongest ever party" has been shifting public debate & policies on the environment. The coalition has introduced the High Speed

Train 2 to act as a substitute for planes (this was put forward through the Dept of transport Richard Hammond). This was proposed due to the increased concern over CO₂ emissions from airplanes, which alone has contributed to 17.7% of CO₂ emissions in the UK.

Furthermore the continuation of the Kyoto agreement and the subsidising goods that are environmentally friendly has been due to the increased concern over the CO₂ emissions increasing in the UK and the encouragement of the 'green movement' has led to this legislation being implemented rather.

~~The prime minister, Gordon Brown has taken a step to encourage~~
However although these legislations are implemented through the shaping of the green movement (through the emphasis on being environmentally friendly), the green movement has been ineffective in many ways as the coalition government hasn't been so environmentally friendly.

The coalition G has attempted to privatise the forests in attempt to generate revenue and increase efficiency, showing how the green movement have failed to shape the environmental policies, this proposal was cancelled with outrage from Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace.

Furthermore the abolition of the quango 'Sustainable Development Committee' has been abolished, which used to think or ideas of that the Law the economy can grow but also be environmentally friendly.

The Government also abolished its aim to ~~have~~ make all housing 0 CO₂ emissions by 2016, which would have been a good example of how green movement shaped legislation however

it failed, this was abolished by Dept of Housing under Eric Pickles.

The ~~new~~ Green Investment bank has been extremely restricted to the point where it cannot lend until 2016 and only if the public spending is under control.

The Severn Barrage proposal has been abolished due to cost-benefit analysis and has therefore instead built nuclear power stations which are environmentally hazardous due to nuclear waste. The Green movement is constantly encouraging the use of non-renewable energy such as the hydroelectric power under the Severn Barrage, therefore it has been ineffective in shaping environmental policies.

Vince Cable in July 2010 was caught attempting to lobby against the Climate Change Committee telling the Government that they shouldn't accept the legislation being proposed. This goes behind the party and is undermining his original statement of 1999 green nation.

The proposal, once again by Richard Hammond has been to increase the speed limit on motorways to 80MPH. This would be environmentally damaging as it would increase the CO₂ emissions. Following a storm this a fuel efficiency has been introduced, maintaining the same no. of people on the road therefore being environmentally damaging as it is not discouraging the use of vehicles on the roads. The road duty price was set to increase however has been postponed by Hammond, which has cost the Government £12 billion in one year, proving both costly and environmentally damaging.

This debate over the environment is extremely controversial and many public debates have sprung from this. The coalition

decision has led to upper non friends of the earth and Greenpeace, along with political parties such as the Green Party. Much public debate has been shaped by the Green Movement as it has alerted the public of the issues and educated them. Therefore advanced legislation and debate is bound to take place.

~~To adjust extent~~ The green movement has shaped and driven much political debate as well as public debate, however recently under the coalition I believe that the green movement has shaped the policies of the environment less so a extent than under the labor, therefore arguably become more ineffective. The public debates have been shaped through the green movement as pressure groups, political parties have slowly been rounded on the principles and basic foundations of the green movement.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response begins promisingly, with an outline of the first government steps towards green policies, including references to Labour. However, the response then turns to describing the coalition government's proposals and policies, rather than addressing the extent to which the green movement has impacted on such policies.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

There are some attempts by the candidate to analyse the 'green' credentials of the coalition, but these are done in very general terms and so limit the synoptic marks awarded to level 1.

Overall marks awarded: AO1 6, AO2 5, Synoptic 4, AO3 4.

The green movement is one that has only really been on the agenda since the 1980s, ^{having never traditionally} ~~been~~ ~~not being~~ seen as a major vote winner. However, more recent scientific evidence of the danger of climate change ^{from} propelled it into the limelight from then ~~it~~ on, and recently the greenish Conservative leader, David Cameron, has been seen to pick it up. The extent to which the need to be green has influenced policies is illustrated by policies by the coalition recently. For example, a scheme that is piloting in Windsor involves giving people restaurant vouchers in return for their recycling, which suggests that the Government is serious about making the country greener, to the extent where they are offering rewards to people that are. However, arguably this is just a voter pleasing scheme, which represents a coalition more committed to the environment in rhetoric than in reality. Evidence of this is the fact that despite using the issue of the environment in his election campaign - "we can't afford not to address climate change", David Cameron ^(and the coalition) have been relatively quiet on the subject since.

Also, although the current Government have been encouraging people to be greener, there is little evidence of them ~~for~~ using legislation to support this, therefore the 'green movement' has not influenced their policies to the extent that the statute book affects this yet.

the 'green movement' could be said to have influenced the previous Labour government, for example in regards to their moving of transport and environmental policy to an extent. Ken Livingstone's congestion charge and a white paper on extending and improving public transport seemed like possible steps towards cutting down on car use and harmful emissions. However, the congestion charge was greeted with protests from Labour and there was little progress on the 1999 white paper, suggesting the 'green movement' did not influence their policy to the extent that transport became drastically greener.

In other instances, the Labour Government were seen to put environmental concerns above the environment, for example, ~~not~~ because of rising pressure from motorists in a time when oil prices were high, Gordon Brown agreed to lower the high fuel duty, despite his government's supposed emphasis on finding and encouraging more environmentally friendly forms of fuel. This demonstrates

how ~~also~~ the Labour Government found it difficult at times to reconcile all the different interests when legislating on matters affecting the environment, hence the lack of coherence in their overall policy. → It also suggests that economic policy could be said to affect environmental policy more than environmental concerns as this is traditionally more of a vote winner and the government's biggest concern. This is especially true in times of recession, and is reflected in the

Coalition's policy. They have cut some environmental funding due to the budget deficit, and also are talking of using the £60 million that Labour earmarked for the improvement of ports to encourage foreign investors to invest in wind turbines there. Therefore to a large extent economic policy still and the need to be prudent is more of a consideration in environmental policy than 'green' concerns.

This being said, there is evidence that 'green' concerns have had enough resonance in political circles for Britain to take a leading role in the implementation of environmental policy. ^{The UK} Britain was instrumental in agreeing the 2% cut in carbon emissions that the EU was to undertake in the Kyoto agreements, and proceeded to meet and then exceed their target. This agreement, which was steeped in environmental concerns

led to measures like the introduction of a House of Commons ~~audit~~ Environmental Audit Committee, to hold the Government to account and ensure they ~~stick to their~~ pursued low emission policies. This suggests that the Government were very committed to being green in environmental policies to a large extent - as is demonstrated by their presence in environmental initiatives on the world stage.

A key aspect of the 'green' movement is finding alternative fuels in order to ease reliance on damaging fossil fuels and find renewables. This priority was evident in UK policy to a

Large extent, for example in ~~tax~~ to tax incentives on low emissions and hybrid vehicles under Labour. Labour were also enthusiastic about producing biofuel, which the UK rural industry then began to produce in vast sums (more because it was cheaper to make than because of environmental concerns). Unfortunately this initiative led to food shortages and so had to be dropped, therefore showing that although some Labour initiatives had green intentions, they were not always well thought through. This perhaps alludes to the Labour Government's ~~para~~ ~~possibility~~ pursuing green measures to tick off their green credentials, rather than

out of ~~from~~ genuine concern.

The Coalition have been seen to uphold their search for greener fields to an extent. The Liberal Democrats in particular support wind turbines and ^{using} ~~the~~ more sustainable fuels, suggesting that green technology may prevail because of their influence. However, the stronger section of the Coalition, the ~~British~~ Conservatives, have so far been seen to be less ~~of~~ been. Although their emphasis on ~~carbon~~ making coal fired power stations adhere to ^{certain} carbon levels is green to an extent however ~~they~~ ^{they} have been criticised as not ~~doing~~ ^{prefering to let the market share} enough emphasis on new, cleaner technology. There is division in the coalition over Nuclear power (with the Liberal Democrats abstaining from votes on its problems of its long used), and although

There are proposals for a Green International Bank with £2 billion to be raised, & these measures have not been finalised yet. Although the Liberal Democrats, who have appeared to have ~~was~~ the most green credentials, suggest a promisingly green approach with their presence in the coalition, the coalition's environmental policies are not coherent yet. They have agreed to ^{and advocate} green corridors and space, ~~emissions too~~. However the extent of their financial cuts in all other areas suggests that environmental policy is likely to be dictated

to a large extent by the need to be prudent, rather than by the pressure of groups like Greenpeace and other green concerns.

The Green Movement is one that has seemed to have a notable influence on the public and policy making, more so now than in previous generations. The extent of this is demonstrated by the UK's commitment to be green in global forums, which has often dictated environmental policy back home.

However, the lack of cohesion in environmental policy ~~is~~ ^{is} a recurring trend, which suggests that a multitude of interests are being catered to.

The prevalence of the economy, despite Tony Blair's ~~feeling~~ ^{feeling} that the environment and the economy could both be catered for has featured

more heavily in ^{environmental} policy than green concerns to a

large extent, both in Labour's terms (Gordon Brown making fuel concessions) and in the coalition's

cutting of environmental quangos. This suggests that

The green movement has taken a backseat ~~to the~~
to the economy. The fact that the economy is
a vote winner more so than the environment
(hence the Green party's failure to make a
dent in UK politics) is highlighted in reflecting
another trait of ~~current~~ environmental policy.
This is that it tends to focus on what

appeases voters. (for example the coalition cancelling
Heathrow's third runway will please those ^{nearby} who are
more concerned with the noise and traffic implications)
Therefore although the green movement has shaped
environmental policy to an extent, it is
subsidiary to economic concerns and the need
for politicians to appease voters to a
large extent.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response is an example of a level 3 across all assessment objectives. The candidate is able to outline a range of party attitudes and policies, and uses these as a platform for a discussion about the extent to which such policies are motivated by 'green' concerns.

Overall mark awarded: AO1 10, AO2 10, Synopticity 10, AO3 7.

Question 8

This was the least popular of the essay questions and often used by candidates as a vehicle for their revision of welfare policies rather than focusing on economic policy. A number of candidates embarked on a general survey of education, social care and health policy some of which was credit-worthy as long as it explicitly related to how and to what extent this demonstrated differences between party approaches to tackling the deficit- but more often than not were the sole focus of the response, and therefore not entirely relevant. This then limited such responses to a level 1 or a low level 2.

A number of candidates did not fully engage with the question set, and instead spent too much time discussing who was to blame for the deficit- once again suggesting that a significant number of candidates were answering a question of their own choosing from previous papers.

The strongest answers were able to provide detail on how Labour would have had to cut substantially had they won in 2010 and how this illustrated that the debate was large 'rhetoric'. There were also a number of answers where candidates were able to discuss the change in Liberal Democrat policy once in government, and could directly compare pre-coalition policies for all parties to the current stances.

Plan

- ~~Labour~~ - most Labour + conservative parties plan to reduce the budget deficit through the use of fiscal constraint
- Labour - would go back to ideological Keynesian policies as they did after the 2008 economic crisis
 - increasing spending
 - increasing jobs
 - raising of taxes
- conservative / coalition
 - major cuts in the economy's spending
 - Cuts in front line services
 - ~~not~~ not increase taxes - incentives for business
- conclusion - although it's impossible to tell as we are only starting to see effects of what the gov + one doing - it's becoming apparent - whereas Labour in opposition - promises are vague and new leaders haven't drawn up a great plan.

* budget deficit refers to public debt
→ The current state of the budget deficit remains one of the most pressing political, as well as British issues of all time. With the

guess money spent on front line services

coalition government constantly blaming Gordon Brown for not being prudent enough, that he should have 'held on his pot' for longer, and not broken his 'Golden rules' by redefining the term economic cycle and increasing spending significantly. (Heath 80+.) The current government have therefore blamed the previous government for their lack of control on the finances, which has now resulted in a budget deficit of unless all parties propose ideas to tackle it, although some are more realistic than others.

It could be said the coalition government are sincere in what they are proposing as they are eager to prove that they are a changed party of what Thatcher's 'laizze-faire' government was. They are currently proposing an idea of fiscal restraint, where by many cuts to public services, including military forces such as the RAF. They believe that such cuts will allow them to almost halve the structural deficit in 4 years. They also wish to encourage that taxes do not ~~fall too low~~ ^{increase}, as they take on the neo-liberal idea that high-taxes, especially on the new ones, are inefficient to work and enterprise, unless

are both key factors that will increase the chance of economic recovery within the economy, which will eventually lead to the reduction in the budget deficit. This is an effective plan which they are already begin to follow up, particularly in many professions such as police forces. In terms of using a relatively modest tax to increase and encourage business activity, they are running against Labour plans of lowering the amount of money that the highest rate of tax which is 50% now, should be paid on. Whilst Labour want to impose it upon incomes of £100,000, the Conservative coalition government still think it should be an income above £150,000. For such factors show that some of the neoinstitutional aspects are kicking in as to raise ~~tax~~ ~~total~~ to £100,000 incomes, would be a lot of money and revenue that the government could use to invest, although it appears that the dominance in the countries of the Thatcherite conservative, ~~and~~ this can't to seem 'business friendly' even in times of uncertainty such as these. This shows that there is some substance in dealing with the budget deficit through

plan to reduce the budget deficit. The current Labour government, under the leadership of Ed Miliband and newly appointed Chancellor Ed Balls, have decided to take on a more traditionally associated ideological stance of the Labour party. They have adopted some Keynesian policies, as did Gordon Brown when the economic crisis hit, by proposing certain interventions within the banks. They agree with the coalition on using spending cuts as a means of reducing the deficit, although the coalition cut much less as they believe the coalition is cutting "too much, too fast" and that these cuts will effect the poorest sections of the community the most. They are therefore proposing the idea of creating more public sector jobs, instead of cutting them, encouraging employment to use redundancy to ~~p~~ therefore increase consumer confidence and spending, along with stimulating the economy. As mentioned before, they also want to increase the lower the threshold ~~p~~ ~~being paid~~ of the additional tax tier to £100,000. These initiatives go along with the idea that green measures should be used ~~as~~ to cut

a budget deficit, although the clarity and
sight of these procedures cannot be to do
with the fact that Labour wants to be seen
as a caring party once again, ~~by keeping~~
assuming that those on lower incomes are
not affected by cuts. However it
could be said that most of this cannot
be used as a form of rhetoric, as they
could be using less harmful policies in order
to make the coalition high spending
cuts look more drastic than they
are. Their increase in spending, not as
many have ~~and~~ can be seen as a threat
to many voters and the public,
although it is incredibly difficult to work
out which of these policies have
substance and are realistic, due to the
fact that the current Labour government
in opposition so cannot implement
any of these plans, along with the
fact that the Labour government has
not formed its own response to
the economic crisis as before it was
incredibly vague of the measures most
of opposition would implement in
response to the ~~state~~ budget deficit.

Overall, it appears that both of the political parties do have certain ways of attacking the budget deficit, although they are more similar than oppositely. It seems that the conservative and liberal coalition is putting forward a strong strategy plan to reduce the deficit, with many liberal democratic policies being implemented such as raising the tax threshold to 10,000 which could be seen as a means of encouraging consumer confidence in spending. They also remain concerned about making the economic indicators such as interest, unemployment, inflation and interest rates being used to increase public saving and investment. However, Labour remain key to continue such action, although there is not enough clarity in their policies to create substance and an overall response to the budget deficit.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate displays an excellent knowledge of recent events- as required by the question- and is able to directly compare and contrast Labour government and coalition proposals, as well as discussing earlier actions and policies.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Throughout the response, the candidate focuses clearly on the question and is able to analyse actual and perceived differences between party policies and claims. Overall marks awarded: full marks on all assessment objectives.

The UK parties are currently faced with serving a country that is currently in the midst of an economic crisis. Both the main parties need to act in a way to make the public believe they can solve the deficit because of this parties may exaggerate figures to ensure votes. However, the current deficit is not a moral panic and is affecting the UK.

It can be argued that the current budget deficit is not ~~not~~ rhetoric for a number of reasons. One is because of the current state of the British economy. While, the average national debt level is 40% of the national GDP, the previous government managed to lower it to 36% of the GDP, this displayed the economy was working in a perfect manner. However, due to the economic crisis that began in 2007, the UK's ~~now~~ structural deficit stands at 60% of the country GDP. This is definitely not rhetoric especially as the UK is described

as having the worst debt within Europe. This displays substance in arguments over the deficit as the UK is doing worse economically than many countries in the EU (e.g. Portugal).

Another reason why it can be argued there is substance in debates about the budget deficit is because of the actions

of Gordon Brown as Chancellor. He pumped a lot of money into the public sector to ~~fund~~ create jobs. Because of this, the economy was experiencing growth as expenditure was rising and government gained revenue due to taxes from new workers. Debt was also piling up along side this growth. Brown refused to let Labour appear as a tax and spend party thus ~~borrowed~~ heavily. This is highlighted by the fact that economists with no political bias warned Brown he was 'borrowing too much too fast', adding to the debt in an unsustainable way. Therefore the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats are justified to claim that Labour mishandled the economy.

Another reason as to why UK parties can argue there is substance in a

budget deficit is because of the terrible state the ~~banking~~ ^{government was} left in due to the economic crisis. When banks such as Northern Rock collapsed, Gordon Brown acted by nationalising it and liquidating it to ensure it could continue. ~~This~~ Although Gordon Brown was praised for his actions globally for saving the banking system in that way so quickly, it added to the large debt that was already present due to excessive borrowing. Adding

to this, Gordon discouraged saving e.g. taxing the pension fund in 1998 which amounted to reduction in savings. Savings stood at 12% of the GDP in 1990 and is now at 0%. This adds more substance to the coalition claiming Labour did not handle the economy as confidence fell which is why savings fell and if they didn't the economic crisis could have been cushioned.

In an opposing view, it can be argued that the coalition's arguments ~~one~~ that there was a mishandling of the economy is spurious thus rhetoric. This is because the Labour government stayed within

Tore spending limits ~~and~~ for its first three years and at a time of economic prosperity spent a lot of things such as the welfare state. Despite all the extra spending in 2001 under the Big Spend and borrowing the UK does not come into the category of a country that has to be bailed out due to failing banks i.e. Greece and Airc. Because of realities like this, the UK budget deficit is more rhetoric than substance because although the UK has a national debt of 60% of GDP it is currently sustainable.

UK parties debates over the budget deficit is more rhetoric than substance because like other failing European countries, the UK is not subject to some sort of austerity plan, where drastic changes have to be made to 'balance the books' of a failing economy.

Also, the Conservative-Lib Dem coalition involves the Tories who have traditionally been 'low debt, high unemployment'. This suggests that the deficit could be rhetoric for propaganda reasons. The

~~Coalition~~ Conservatives always ^{grown} from upon high public expenditure which took place in the previous governments. Therefore it can be argued that the Tories want to advance their position by claiming that the debt is bigger than it actually is and this will justify the drastic cuts in public expenditure.

Finally the deficit is more rhetoric than substance in the UK because inflation has not rocketed out of control. VFT has increased by 20% but the public opinion shows that basic commodities are still easily accessible. This demonstrates a rhetoric argument over a budget deficit because the public are not directly threatened.

In conclusion, party arguments ~~an~~ over the budget deficit are more substance than rhetoric. This is because Brown did borrow horrendously in office while advised not to, the current national debt is an alarming 60% of our GDP and because the UK does have some of the worst finances in Europe, being just above the need

for a bail out.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate initially wastes a lot of time describing the background to the budget deficit. The response shows a clear misunderstanding of the question, as the candidate discusses how Labour caused the recession and whether or not there actually is a deficit at all.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Very little knowledge is displayed of party policies, and there is a distinct lack of focus on the question itself.

Overall marks awarded: AO1 5, AO2 4, Synopticity 3, AO3 3.

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