



Examiners' Report

June 2009

GCE

GCE Government and Politics 6GP01 / 6GP02

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6GP01

General Comments

Summer 2009 saw the second sitting of the new specification following on from the January introduction of Unit 1. The mean score for all questions was 19 with a standard deviation of 7.04.

Question 1

This was the most popular question. The mean score was 17 with a standard deviation of 6.5. Part (a) was often not handled well.

(a) Power and its distribution is a significant topic and mentioned in the key concepts section on pressure groups in the specification. Hence this question should not be surprising nor be difficult to handle. Many loosely associated it with the concepts of toleration and multiculturalism and indeed there is some connection, but it is not the complete picture. A good number confused the concept with the plurality voting system and gained no marks.

(a) Pluralism is an ideology that there are many different beliefs, acts and people but pluralism is an idea that accepts the fact and believes that people can interact and live with each other ~~nevertheless~~. It also believes that this can happen without assimilation occurring or conflict. Pluralism is the ideology that the UK political system runs by. Labour believe in this system strongly; as well as the Liberal Democrats and they both believe that equality should be reached and that discrimination should not occur; this ~~discrimination~~ is why discriminatory offences are in place around the UK to punish any person displaying hatred - such as ~~to~~ there is an offence to incite racial or religious hatred. The UK is a multicultural country and so welcomes other ethnicities and pluralism to run by.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate begins with a discussion more on toleration and latterly hints at multiculturalism. It fails to focus fully on pluralism and in the process gains 2 marks.

(b) It was clear that many candidates would have preferred to describe the differences not the similarities that the question called for. Hence the differences were sometime alluded to for no particular profit. Here many candidates failed to provide clear examples as to why there may be confusion between separating pressure groups from political parties. Statements were made concerning the two but the connection was not always made clear and detailed.

(b) It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between pressure groups and political parties for many reasons. Although there are obvious differences between the two such as ~~they~~ a pressure group does not put candidates up for election but there are also factors where the lines blur.

Both pressure groups and political parties are organised groups that have set aims and goals; however broad or narrow. This is because they exist for a function whether to influence change on specific issues or a wide range across society. An example of this is; that the Conservative party wish to have more grammar schools and maintain a level of tax that is not extremely high on heritance or income tax. Pressure groups such as Rights for animals simply are against testing on animals and against the particular Bill or Act that allows this to happen.

They both, also, have a higher archy system within the system; they both have ^{a main} figurehead or a few figureheads that represent the group or party; whether in the media or generally when influencing people. The Labour party has Gordon Brown as it's main figure head whereas the

pressure group promoting rights for Ghanakas is Joanna Lingley. In the hierarchy there also

((b) continued) has to be people allocated to different roles such as a treasurer etc.; both groups have this system as it increases efficiency and organisation. Another similarity is the fact that in a sense they both need popularity via the people in society to exist or essentially be successful. This is because pressure groups need members and supporters to gain influence and to have any sway with the government as a whole. Political parties also need popularity to be voted in or even to stay in power as no confidence motions can occur.

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Examiner Comments

This response gains 4 marks (AO1 =3 AO2 =1). The points raised lack depth and scope.

(b) There are many reasons, why sometimes its difficult to distinguish between a pressure group and a political party. This is because both parties share the same roles ~~and~~ or similar.

Firstly, both pressure groups and political parties have input in the legislative process. ~~For~~ Insider pressure groups have input in the government and also the fact that the top pressure groups ~~are~~ that are insiders are funded by tax-payers money. These will include groups like ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) and Greenpeace.

Secondly, similarly to political parties, some pressure groups may hold elections, to elect their representative. This can be done in groups that have large ~~me~~ amounts of members.

When drafting bills and Acts, House of Lord has the option to call upon some pressure groups as witnesses. This then includes them in the legislative process.

Also, both pressure groups and parties centre around the fact of protecting peoples rights and developing (increasing) political participation. Pressure groups do this by members joining up, and promoting a cause or issue and political parties do this by elections, voting etc.

Political parties and pressure groups both inform the public about issues arising. This is another

((b) continued) job that they both share.

Also ~~Finally~~, even though political parties seek leadership, and pressure groups don't, they both have a common goal. Pressure groups seek leadership within the group and not the state.

Finally, both pressure groups and political parties represent a group/section of people. For example, Labour represents working class and Conservatives represents the middle class. For pressure groups, ~~The Royal~~ Fathers4Justice represents fathers trying to get equal rights to their children and ~~Island of the~~ ~~Island of the~~ ~~Island of the~~ The National Farmers Association (NFA) is about farmers getting rights.

Therefore it is difficult to distinguish between pressure groups and political parties sometimes as the roles of the two have somewhat merged.



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Examiner Comments

By contrast to the previous example, the following extract obtains a total of 8 marks (AO1 = 6 AO2 = 2). Here the candidate has referenced political parties and pressure groups, and the level of explanation and detail is much better.

(c) There was often a lack of balance in the response. This arose as many candidates simply asserted that pressure groups had become more important. Assertions were often made without any supporting analysis (AO2). A common comment was that the RSPB now has more members than the combined main political parties. Whilst this is true, what does this mean in terms of importance? The better responses were furnished with contemporary evidence on both sides of the debate, and this allowed access to all assessment objectives.

(c) Pressure groups have been becoming more important over recent years. This is due to many reasons including media, technology, party dealignment and education of the masses.

Firstly over recent years party membership is dramatically declined. This means that due to high membership rate in pressure groups such as Green Peace government has been forced to listen to get representation of society. More people want to be politically active so they are joining pressure groups and are increasing group membership making them more influential and resulting in more important to government.

The media has picked up on the 'great' story of pressure groups by publicising every move and stunt they make. This is raising awareness in the public of these issues that they are protesting against. Making them important to educating the masses.

about certain issues government are not specifically telling the public about.

((c) continued) ~~Pressure groups have been becoming more impo~~. Some stunts such as Fathers 4 Justice climbing the building, direct action such as Green Peace ~~building the~~ buying the piece of land off of Heathrow Airport so they could not build the runway is controversial but people are taking notice and supporting them.

Technology is always being improved and modified which is helping pressure groups become more important. This is because it has made it easier to communicate with each other and organise campaigns and protest such as the G20 protests in London.

Rising living standards means that pressure groups can now focus on other important rights such as animals and the environment. Groups such as Plain Stupid, ACF, Friends of the Earth all contribute to helping these issues. Also major issues such as poverty are helped out by pressure groups.

for example LiveAide and Make Poverty History, both campaigns give

((c) continued) large amounts of money to help combat poverty in poor countries, making them very important to society.

Pressure groups have become more important to society over recent years because they are representing unheard members of society e.g. Help the Aged and other very important areas such as poverty. Also important to government due to party membership declining. Pressure groups is seen as a way of keeping democracy in UK.

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Examiner Comments

This is a good example of a one sided response and no attempt is made to focus precisely on the question. It is brief and although pertinent examples are used, the level of analysis is restricted. It obtained a total of 10 marks (AO1=4 AO2 =3 AO3=3).

(c) Over the years it could be argued that pressure groups have increased in importance for various reasons - one of the most prominent being that there are noticeably more people joining them, however some people argue ~~that~~ offer a different viewpoint, and that ~~in~~ intact pressure groups have not been as influential and therefore intact decreased in importance.

Firstly, one of the main reasons that ~~the~~ pressure groups have become more important in recent years is that their membership has significantly soared for example when ~~is~~ ~~the~~ there was a opposition against the Iraq war - that protest had the largest turnout ~~for~~ ~~at~~ that London had seen over many years. Also due to this ~~growth~~ the actual numbers of political parties are decreasing as Labour's numbers went from ~~4~~ around 400,000 to 200,000; which is a significant drop, once again showing that instead pressure groups hold a lot more influence as people would rather join hence gaining a lot more importance over the ~~of~~ recent years.

Additionally another reason for pressure groups becoming more important is that ~~people~~ they have been successful in many events already as securing ~~of~~ the vote they wanted such as liberty with ~~children~~ Shami Chakrabarti having connections with the House of Lords ~~and~~ etc.

((c) continued) She succeeded in them throwing out the 47 day imprisonment - without a trial act in order to hold terrorists. Also the ^{pressure group for} 'Law Centre' recently have succeeded in Brown going back on his words and re-thinking the immigration ~~law~~ laws for them, which was lead by a celebrity, ~~making it~~ portraying it as more important also.

Furthermore pressure groups have increased in importance due to the sleaze and concerns points today, as the public loose faith and trust in MPs such as Neil Hamilton and 'cash for questions' or even the politicians' ^{expenses} ~~at~~ the moment taking money which is not theirs and claiming for example second houses and ~~more~~ mortgages, in fact due to this sleaze even the speaker has been forced to resign - showing and portraying the distrust of that the public feel towards their politicians therefore it is easier for them to join a pressure group which is more trustworthy and where they are most probably closer to leaders and they can express their say on some political issues, as with a political party - ~~to support~~ in order to support it they have to agree with their whole manifesto however here they can represent and support significant points and issues that are most important to

((c) continued) them.

However on the other side ~~there is also~~ to a certain extent pressure groups have not been gaining importance as some argue that they always have been important not just in recent years, such as the ~~the~~ tax riots against the Conservative Party which took place in Tipton Square as the public was now opposing their Government and their policies. Showing that ~~these~~ pressure groups have always been around such as the suffragets, as they were a pressure group for women's rights. This shows that in fact they haven't increased in importance in recent years but have always been there and been important.

Secondly pressure groups have not gained in importance, especially when as they have been less influential as the ^{opposition to the} war of Iraq failed as Labour had such a large majority and the Conservatives also backed them; showing that the government and parliament are still sovereign and not always do pressure groups succeed, therefore once again not being as important.

((c) continued) Furthermore pressure groups ~~have~~ have not become more important in recent years, ~~due~~ as the government always ~~news~~ the overall say and does not necessarily have to listen to pressure groups as it may not be the best decision for the country. ~~et~~ Furthermore they have lost status due to irresponsible acts such as Fathers For Justice - which failed to exert pressure of the government and also lost the public's support due to their behaviour, showing that there not always significant or important. Also irresponsible behaviour ~~has~~ lost from the Green Party, when they threw ~~use~~ green custard over an MP, lost them support and significance. The government did not take them seriously and due to this lost importance.

Overall Pressure Groups have become more significant and important in recent years and this is evident due to their increase in members.


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Examiner Comments

By contrast to the previous example, this response does address both sides in the debate, and the difference across all assessment objectives is plain to see. This response earned a total of 18 marks (AO1=6 AO2=6 AO3=6).

Question 2

This question had the second highest mean score of 20 with a standard deviation of 6.8. Part (b) allowed a wide ambit for responses and the main discriminator here was accurate and informed material in part (c).

(a) Many candidates wrote more about the liberal element than the democratic element. It was encouraging to see how wide the background for the liberal component was. Candidates failed to score maximum marks as they at times ignored the democratic credentials of this type of democracy.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1** ☒

Question 2 ☒

Question 3 ☒

Question 4 ☒

(a) A Liberal Democracy is where citizens are able to allow government to make all decisions for them on their behalf. They are able to hold the executive to account to ensure that they have their best interest at heart. They do have a choice in who is elected at general elections, which are held within a five year period of the previous one, so they have some choice of who will be representing them in government and ensure that their views are being taken up upon by government itself and ~~which~~ that they are taking action.



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Examiner Comments

This response is concise and deals with democracy, however it fails to develop in full the liberal element of the concept. It scores 3 marks.


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Examiner Comments

By contrast to the previous example, the next extract is a much fuller response. Here the candidate deals with both the liberal and democratic elements of this form of democracy and gains full marks (5) in the process.

Chosen Question Number: Question 1 ☒ Question 2 ☒
Question 3 ☒ Question 4 ☒

(a) The UK is a liberal democracy for a number of reasons. In any liberal democracy, civil liberties are essential and in the UK democratic system, ~~for~~ citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech, association, religion and assembly. This is stated in the ~~the~~ European Convention of Human Rights, which has been incorporated into the UK law.

~~The UK~~ Free and fair elections are also an important part ~~in the UK's~~ of a liberal democracy, which can be seen in the UK.

These elections grant choice for the electorate who have a wide range of political parties to choose from, each with a different manifesto.

In a liberal democracy, the representatives elected on behalf of the citizens are held accountable to the citizens and ~~govern~~ therefore ~~a~~ should not neglect the wishes of their constituents. Nevertheless, the citizens can politically 'sack' an ~~govt~~ MP if they feel that they have not responded adequately to their wishes. Most MPs have been voted against ~~at~~ the next election.

a) continued) for this reason, most recently and controversially for supporting the Iraq War of 2003.

(b) It was rare that candidates could not provide a good range of features of the UK's democratic system. Discrimination arose from the details and scope of the points which were illustrated. Candidates scored well on this question.



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of the many excellent responses which candidates provide on this section, it gained full marks 10 (AO1 =7 AO2=3).

~~The UK~~ Although some could argue that the UK is not as democratic as other countries such as the USA with a codified constitution and a clear separation of powers for effective check and balance of each other, it cannot be denied that the UK has several ^{important} democratic aspects which will be outlined below.

Firstly, the UK has free and fair elections as opposed to some countries ^{like Zimbabwe} where elections are ~~for~~ corrupt. Although the government can effectively decide when to hold ~~an~~ a General Election, it is necessary that an election is held ~~at~~ every four to five years. In these elections, the government can ultimately decide if they want to keep a Member of Parliament or if they want to vote against them. Furthermore, there is a clear choice of candidates and ~~although there are some minor parties which would go to choose from on the ballot paper.~~

~~Also~~ Moreover, the UK's democratic system consists (b) continued) of a two-party, or some may argue three, system where adversarial politics is essential. It could be stated that if the two main parties,

Labour and Conservative were not opposing in some ways, the electorate would not have a clear choice.

The bi-cameral system of the UK also makes it more democratic. To prevent an 'elective dictatorship' as Lord Hailsham called it, the House of Lords can act as a check and balance of the House of Commons. Despite the HoL not being elected, ~~it can~~ they still have important powers to ^{temporarily} block legislation for a year or amend a bill. This proved to be effective for the terrorist legislation to detain a suspect for up to 92 days.

Furthermore, the Human Rights Act is also a ^{notable} feature of the UK's democratic system as the rights of the citizens are entrenched in a document, similar to the U.S.'s codified constitution. The Human Rights Act (1998) states the rights and responsibilities of each citizen of the United Kingdom.

~~The~~ The UK also consists of pressure groups which allow individuals to voice their opinions and influence

b) continued) the government.

~~Also~~ ^{Also} ~~Thinking~~, it can be argued that direct democracy is present in the UK system. This is shown through the recent growth of referendums, which were never heard of until the 1975 referendum ^{of Harold Wilson} on the ~~European~~ ^{UK's} membership of the EEC.

Further direct democracy has been shown through citizen's juries adopted by Brown in 2007, e-petitions such as the ^{recent} one on road-pricing and 'focus groups' to include the citizens and ~~improve~~ ^{more} active involvement with the decisions of the government.

~~That is~~ Finally, the Freedom of Information Act is an important feature of the UK's democratic system which gives the citizens rights to information, including the government's, shown most recently with the information of the MP's expenses.



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Examiner Comments

By contrast to the previous example, the following candidate gained 6 marks (AO1=4 AO2=2).

b) Explain the main features of the UK democratic system.

In the UK, a liberal or representative democracy is in place, however the true democratic nature is questionable.

One of the key features of the democratic system is the electoral system. For the UK, Westminster elections, First Past the Post (FPTP) is the system used. The system consists of single-member constituencies with candidates elected by a simple plurality system; meaning they need not achieve an overall majority i.e. 50% +1, but just obtain more votes than the

second place candidate. This could be said to be democratic due to the direct election by the franchise, however, because of the single member constituencies and disproportionality many electors votes are 'wasted' leaving them unrepresented such as in 2001, Labour won the election on 40.7% of the votes, leaving 59.3% of the electorate unrepresented.

Another feature of the UK democratic system are referendums. This is an example of a less liberal and more direct democracy. Referendums are used to gain insight into public opinion on

((b) continued) a specific issue, such as the 1998 referendum on elected mayors. However, low turn out of only 34% meant that although an overwhelming majority voted for the motion, still at least 66% of possible voters were left unrepresented, which does not lend itself to a liberal democracy. ~~Referendums themselves~~

Another feature of UK democracy is the accountability of the representatives. A government can only be in office for up to 5 years before a general election must be held. Meaning the franchise has the opportunity to re-elect or elect another party.

Having opposition parties is also a feature of the liberal democracy, allowing for those who do not necessarily agree with the policies of the current government other choices.

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Examiner Comments

Most candidates scored well on this question, but this is an example of a weaker script which only collected 3 marks (AO1=2 AO2=1) from this the evidence becomes clear in levels how candidate performance is structured.

(b) The UK is classed as a democratic nation and has many features to make it one. The UK holds General elections for the public to decide who is which political party will run the country for a maximum of the following 4 years. The voting is a secret ballot and is decided on a first past the post basis.

Referendums are used to for by the Government to find out what the Public's opinion on a matter is. The Government use a question that can only be answered 'Yes' or 'No' so that they can get a clear majority. The majority is used to by the Government to change their policy. In 1975 the Conservative government asked Britain if they wanted to join the ~~EEC~~ ECC and a majority voted 'Yes' and so Britain joined.

Another feature of Democracy in the UK is that anyone in the UK can become an MP or even PM as long as it is through the public's opinion. Politicians come from all different kinds of backgrounds and they have all been voted into the House of Commons by the British Public.

(c) Many candidates found no difficulty understanding the demands of this question and provided a reasoned balance. Problems arose where there was a lack of understanding and explanation of the alleged deficit or its counter claim. Performance could be improved if a conclusion was arrived at and reasoned through; evidence that AO3 objectives are required and can be an avenue to improve the overall score. It was good to see that the recent 'expenses scandal' was well used to include in this part of the question.


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Examiner Comments

This is a mid range response, scoring just over half marks 13 (AO1=5 AO2=4 AO3=4). It does address both sides in the debate yet there still remain areas which can be developed and enhanced to reach the higher levels and thus gain more marks.

(c) The UK is seen as a democratic society, but to what extent? And, is there a 'democratic deficit'? =

The voting system in the UK provides the opportunity for a citizen to vote for a candidate they like to be leader of government. Also, by choosing a leader they choose a party to set new laws and govern the country the way they see fit. However, the first past the post system is seen as unfair in the UK, as minority parties such as the Green Party and the UK Independence Party don't have the chance to enter government. The minority vote doesn't count in most cases, and the ratio of votes won doesn't match the number of seats won in the Commons. This could be seen as a 'democratic deficit'.

Another way in which the UK is undemocratic is the House of Lords itself. Most peers are hereditary, and every

peer is 'unelected'. They are chosen by the current government leader, the Prime Minister, and stay there until they pass away. After the 1997 elections which Labour won, Tony Blair was under intense pressure to

(c) continued) get rid of the House of Lords, or at least the unelected peers. He didn't though but now Gordon Brown has plans to reform the House of Lords (that is, if Labour get elected in the next general election). It could be said though, that the House of Lords doesn't actually hold that much power over the Commons. Yes, it can ~~stop~~ ^{delay} a bill for up to 2 years, and it can veto a law, but this doesn't occur very often, and it is the Commons that holds the most power in the Houses. Nevertheless, the House of Lords can be seen as a 'democratic deficit'.

A more recent example of 'democratic deficit' could even be the recent scandal in government of MP's expenses. MP's such as Jacqui Smith and Geoff Hoon have been claiming expenses for ridiculous things such as mortgages and food, and have even been 'flipping', making their second home their first home and vice versa. This is highly undemocratic, and it is also a waste of taxpayers' money. The public are meant to have faith in the democratic society and

((c) continued) government, but events like this just prevent the current leaders from being elected again.

Lastly, people under 18 cannot vote in elections of any kind, which is a 'democratic deficit' because it is often these people who are most affected by a government. There is also the idea of an 'elective dictatorship', which means that once a government is elected, we are stuck with them and cannot change it for five years unless an election is called.

In conclusion, I believe that the UK is a generally democratic country, but there is a 'democratic deficit' which needs to be addressed with issues such as the House of Lords and the overall voting system.

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Examiner Comments

This extract shows some improvement on the previous response. There are a number of points raised (nine in total) and both sides in the debate are touched upon.

d) To what extent is there a 'democratic deficit' in the UK?

The UK is a democratic society however there are aspects of it which could be deemed as 'undemocratic' and have lead to a 'democratic deficit'. I will look at and explore these factors, to come to a conclusion ^{or} ~~to what extent~~ ~~to what extent~~ to what extent is there a democratic deficit.

Parliament is democratic in that the House of Commons (which is the key debating chamber) all the MPs were fairly elected by the public. However Parliament does hold some undemocratic elements. The House of Lords which is the second most important chamber in Parliament is completely unelected. This undermines the Parliament's role as a representative. Also Parliament doesn't have much power to scrutinise the executive as the House of Commons control most of it.

(c) continued) Providing the public with free and fair elections is essential to a democratic government in the UK and the government do provide this. ~~However~~ The voting has been made much more democratic over the years. In 1918 men over 21 and women over 30 ~~who~~ who were middle class were given the vote. In 1928 men and women were given equal franchise. And in 1969 the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. Acts ~~that~~ passed by the government also increased the legitimacy of voting. In 1928 the secret ballot act was passed ~~a~~ which stopped intimidation from other people, increased the fairness of the vote. In 2000 the electoral commission was established which puts checks on the voting. These acts and changes clearly show the UK becoming more democratic towards elections. However, there ~~are~~ still remain some undemocratic elements of the voting system.

Electoral choice is key in a democratic society and is vitally important for elections. However, ~~the~~ the UK has been

((c) continued) said to have a ~~two~~ 'two party system' ~~the~~ being Labour and Conservative. This gives the public much less choice. There is also criticism of political

issues, where the policies for both political parties are very similar and so again ~~narrowing~~ narrowing the choice of policy for the electorate. Also with the targeting of certain groups by parties for votes, much of the public have been ignored and figures show that the poor and disadvantaged of society are much lower in voting. *

voting apathy is also increasing in the UK. People are not turning out for elections. In the 2001 election turnout was 59%, which is the lowest since 1918. Elections rely on participation, otherwise they are deemed much ~~less~~ less democratic. People aren't voting due to a lack of loyalty to ~~the~~ a party. Some believe their single vote won't make a difference and so don't bother. For some, voting is a hassle and if people are abroad ~~or~~ or have other engagements they won't bother.

((c) continued)

Referendums ^{are} also important to the UK's democratic system. They are democratis in that they're a form of direct democracy. However the government chooses the issue on which the referendum should be voted on, when the referendum should take place, and they can manipulate the outcome of the referendum by advertisement

Campaigns and the wording of the question.

~~Devolution allows power from a higher authority to a lower authority.~~

Also the turnout for referendums is very low. In 1997 the Scottish referendum for a Scottish parliament and whether they should have tax-varying powers is an example of a referendum.

In conclusion, I think the UK is facing a 'democratic deficit' as there are many undemocratic elements to the system and with the lack of participation, such as votes a party, the

((c) continued) UK is becoming more undemocratic.

There are
* Other unelected bodies such as the monarchy and House of Commons.
This undermines representative democracy.


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Examiner Comments

This is a weaker response. It scores lower marks on all assessment objectives when compared to the previous two examples gaining 10 marks (AO1= 4 AO2=3 AO3=3).

(c) continued) There is a 'democratic deficit' in the UK. Especially now this statement will be relevant due to the ~~trust~~ expense scandal in the House of Commons and the on-going investigation of cash-for-legislature-amendments. Both of these things will have numerous knock on effects in the health of the democratic system.

Voting apathy - the cause for such a lack of vote to be cast, is a result of such a democratic deficit. People feel it is pointless to vote for a number of reasons; the parties are all too similar, the voting system is not representative and the fact now that whoever is in power will abuse it (see: expense scandal).

People have noticed that the parties which are in the Commons are generally rather central in their ideology - they all have adopted a pragmatic approach to their ideology. As such there is no clear left or right, only the vague area of central parties. As such people will be less likely to vote for any party which stands a chance of being elected due to the nature of consensus politics as a modern phenomenon.

The phrase 'stands a chance' was used due to the majority voting system used to elect governments in general elections being very unrepresentative. Effectively the first past the post system rules out anything

(c) continued) but a 2 party system (Labour + Tory) Other parties are not reflected fairly and so therefore if things are perceived as being unfair, then ~~Sec~~ voting apathy and more generally political apathy will occur.

Democracy should be about everyone being equal, and having the same rules applied to them. However, the recent scandal of expenses as first reported by the Telegraph ~~has~~ ^{has} shown that the so-called political class are exempt from the rules. The anger and frustration of the tax-payers who's money is at the core of the ~~the~~ scandal is clearly ~~example~~ an example of the lack of clear democratic fairness. This anger may translate to tactical voting against parties - therefore ~~the~~ marginalising the effectiveness of our democratic systems and creating a deficit.

Democracy revolves around morality, something which is seriously in question recently - and as such the UK is experiencing a clear ~~dark~~ phase of democratic problems - the expense scandal being the ~~figurehead~~ ^{figurehead} and realization of such a deficit.

Question 3

The question provided the highest mean score of 21 with a standard deviation of 6.5.

(a) Here there was evidence of confusion between the mandate and a manifesto. However the concept of the mandate has been taught well in many centres and its remit was well evidenced and documented.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate in this first response obtains two marks. The material is brief and not especially well developed.

Question 3 ✖ Question 4 ✖

(a) The ~~Doctrine~~ Doctrine of the Mandate is the claim of legitimate government. This is when a government claims to have rightful power after winning an election. An example of this is the Blair government of 1997-2007 which claimed 3 mandates in total.



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Examiner Comments

This next candidate only achieves one mark as there is some confusion with the mandate and the manifesto.

Question 3 ✖ Question 4 ✖

(a) The Mandate is the same as a manifesto. This is what the different parties present to the public outlining their ideas and ~~how~~ what they would do if they were elected into political office as a Government. If they stray from these policies the House of Lords ~~and~~ can declare the ~~proposal~~ and proposal and send it back to the Commons for re doing.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Full marks are given to the next candidate. This extract illustrates that even though the response is brief it is concise and raises five points.

Question 3 ☒Question 4 ☒

- (a) The doctrine of the mandate is the authority to govern, granted to the winning party at an election time. This suggests that a government may implement the measures and programmes in its manifesto. It also suggests that in times of crisis and unusual circumstances, a government may act in the way it sees fit, so long as it has parliamentary approval. This is known as the 'Doctors Mandate'. At the next election, a government will be judged by the electorate on how well it implemented the measures in its manifesto.

(b) Depth and detail were the main distinguishing hallmarks of responses here. Occasionally a minority of candidates did confuse the workings of some electoral systems; most commonly the 'engineering' of STV. At times candidates provide accurate functions with incorrect labels. However once again there was much evidence that the various systems in use in the UK are being well taught by centres and understood by candidates.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response earns a total of 8 marks (AO1=6 AO2=2). Three systems are clearly discussed but there remains some scope to develop further to reach maximum marks.

(b) First point the first or the simple plurality system is a system used in the UK for general elections and in England for local elections. The parties all campaign and votes are cast and whoever has the most votes wins using a simple majority system, so it is fully possible to win by just one vote in the 2005 general election Michael Raker won the seat of Worcester by 2011 votes. This was not more than 50% of the votes cast but more than half of his opponents. Thus he won the election.

The list system is the system used for the European Parliamentary elections. In it there are big multi-member constituencies. Each party will create a list of candidates to fill these seats. When the election is called the voters will be presented with a ballot paper with the name of a party on it. After the votes are made the percentages each party gained are the percentages of the seats they receive. So in the last European

Election the UKIP manage to secure enough of the vote to receive 12 seats in the EU Parliament.

AMS is a system used for the devolved

((b) continued) Assemblies for Wales, Scotland and the GLA. It is a hybrid system that combines the features of FPTP and the list system. The voter on election day is presented with two choices. The first is for a local representative for a single constituency. This is done under the FPTP system. The second vote is for a party multi-member constituency and are additional members for the assembly. These are elected under the list system. In Scotland (Wales) Plaid Cymru managed to secure 12 seats under this system.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Full marks are achieved by this candidate. The response is an example of the best that can be achieved in the time allowed.

(b) 3 electoral systems used in the UK are FPTP, AMS and STV. FPTP, which stands for first past the post is used in the Westminster general elections and English local elections. AMS, or additional members system, is used in both Scotland and Wales to elect their devolved parliament and assembly MPs. Finally, STV, or single transferable vote, is used in Northern Ireland as it ensures a legitimate coalition which suits the cross party regions.

FPTP is a simple plurality system, in which there is one candidate per constituency. The ballot paper is simple as has a list of candidate names with the party they are standing for next to them, and a box in which you place your vote. The electorate votes for one candidate by putting an 'X' in the box next to their chosen name. ~~and~~

The count is simple, and is done by adding all the 'X' marks next to each name - the candidate with the highest number of votes wins

and their party therefore comes into

((b) continued) power.

This provides a single, strong, one party government, however is not proportionate.

AMS, like FPTP, is a single candidate constituency vote, but to decide on the additional members a multi member constituency vote is included.

The system is a proportional representation, meaning votes are turned into seats, and the ballot paper is made up of two parts - one side with an open list of candidate names with a box to put an 'x' next to the chosen one and then a second part with a closed list of party names, which again is voted for by putting an 'x' next to the chosen party.

The count is worked out using the D'Hont formula $\left(\frac{\text{no. of votes}}{\text{no. of seats} + 1} \right) + 1$ which ensures the votes are proportional and by winning a large amount of seats in the constituency based votes you are less likely to then win another large no. of seats in the regional, ensuring each vote is counted.

((b) continued) this system leads to a coalition government.

STV, however, uses only multimember constituencies, and once again is proportional representation.

The vote is done by preference by marking either 1, 2, 3, ... by the candidate name (party in brackets stated next to name), choosing as many or few candidates as you like, as the parties put up as many candidates as they feel can win seats.

The count is done using the D'Hont formula $\left(\frac{\text{no. of votes}}{\text{no. of seats} + 1} \right)$ which ensures

no votes are wasted, and leads to a coalition gov.

By having the preference, voters can choose between wings of parties and that is why its used in N. Ireland.

(c) Weaker candidates did not address the question and instead wrote all they knew about about FPTP and therein lost out on AO3 marks as a result. Hence to score highly on the (c) part required skill in addressing the question and providing insightful analysis (AO2) as to the proposed advantages of the system. However, given that this question had the highest mean score, it indicates that candidates were at ease with the demands of the question and could develop their understanding of FPTP to a significant degree.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response reaches a total of 15 marks. It is worth noting that there is a difference in the AO criteria. (AO1= 6 AO2 = 5 AO3= 4). It enters level 3 for AO1 but then there is some drift from the central remit of the question to account for the declining marks.

a) The First past the post system has many advantages and disadvantages as an electoral system. It is currently used for General Elections in the UK. However many groups such as the Liberal Democrats want it to be replaced with a more proportional system. Many groups however wish to retain it.

The first point given by the supporters of FPTP is its apparent ease of use. The voter is not asked upon to make a very taxing choice. All he or she has to do is put a cross next to the candidate they wish to vote for. Their M.P. will know how the vote will be counted and know how simple the system is. Other electoral systems it is argued are much harder to understand than this such as the single transferable vote.

Another point in its favour is that FPTP

delivers strong government with a majority.
 Since 1945 only one government has not had
 a majority in the house of commons which
 was the second Wilson Government in 1974.
 In 1997 Tony Blair's Labour party won
 418 seats giving him a large majority which

((c) continued) he could get things done by proportional
 systems like AMS. MSs usually end up with coalition
 governments. In Scotland early 2001 the Budget
 was rejected by the Scottish parliament.

Lastly FPTP has been

~~However~~ detectors of FPT

Lastly FPTP provides a direct link
 between constituency and MP. Michael Foster
 was elected the member for Worcester and
 he is ~~directly~~ supposed to work in the interests
 of the people of Worcester. Not all systems it
 is argued deliver this integrity such as the
 list system.

However proponents of electoral reform
 argue that this link can be preserved under
 systems like AMS. Voters in Scotland can
 vote to several MSP's ~~they~~ have a
 representative in their constituency line under
 FPTP and several people determined by the list.
 As a result the link it could be argued is
 strengthened.

FPTP also unfairly disadvantages in
 the 2005 election the Labour party received

35% of the votes cast but 55% of the seats. The Liberal party got 22% of the votes but only 9.6% of the seats. This

((c) continued) because FPTP rewards regional support meaning smaller parties don't have much of a chance. The Green party doesn't have a single MP, however in Scotland where they use AMS they are in ^{a coalition} government with the SNP. No British party has ever received more than 50% of the vote.

It is also argued that FPTP delivers overly powerful governments. Margaret Thatcher lost a majority in 1983 and as a result managed to create civil liberties by ending the power of the trade unions. It is argued that under ~~the~~ a proportional system governments would be more restrained as they are essentially forced into compromises.

Finally Electoral Reformers argue that not all proportional systems are over complicated. AMS has been applied with no problems or major hitches so has the like system. If people had been encouraged more on the workings of STV it would have been seen as ^{interesting} ~~simple~~ in the Scottish local elections.

FPTP has many advantages but also huge flaws which proportional systems can pick up and retain as new advantages.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This script by contrast is much weaker earning nine marks, three for each AO. There is the obvious lack of content and depth which acts as a severe constraint.

(c) The first-past-the-post (FPTP) system is a simple plurality system which allows the party with the most amount of votes ^{to form a} ~~rather than~~ government rather than the majority. This was evident in the 2005 elections when Labour formed a government with 36% of the vote, the lowest a party has ever formed government with. This clearly highlights that the plurality system doesn't have the majority of the electorate's interest at heart so therefore the majority isn't being fairly represented.

The system is easy to use and understand so therefore it is less likely to decrease voter apathy. In the ²⁰⁰¹ ~~1997~~ election voters' turnout was a mere 59%.

however this increased in 2005 to around 60%. This simplicity will make the electorate feel more inclined to vote as they do not need a large amount of knowledge on candidates unlike in the Supplementary Vote system. The turnout for the mayors election was under a third of the electorate using that system.

FPTP creates a strong and stable government. Due to features such as the winner's bonus it means the government has a large majority in government. This therefore increases their power and stops them from being undermined. If there was a PR system was

to be used there would be a higher chance of a coalition government being formed which could
(c) continued) lead to disputes among those in power and some leaders may make deals without informing the electorate.

For a Candidate to run for election they must pay £500 and this is refunded if they gain 5% of the vote. This ensures all candidates which stand for election are reliable and believe they have a good chance of winning. Richard Taylor in the ²⁰⁰¹ 2005 elections won a seat in the House of Commons after promoting his agenda on saving Wye Forests local hospital.

In conclusion FPTP is a suitable electoral system because it creates a strong, stable government and allows participation from the electorate even though it is a possibility that the ~~major~~ party may not win by a clear majority.

Question 4

The mean score for this question was 19 with a standard deviation of 7.0. The new specification detail on political parties was designed to make this topic more accessible and stimulating for candidates and early signs are encouraging in both numbers and performance.

(a) This was not perceived by candidates as a difficult question. Underperformance arose when there was either duplication (the same function in essence described twice) or lack of detail to the chosen functions. It has to be noted that if more than two functions were provided then this could not be used as a means to increase the marks awarded. Where this did arise (it was indeed a rare occurrence) only the two were taken into account, with the best receiving preference for marking purposes.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response is credited with 3 marks. Two points are developed; one of these obtains two marks, the other only one.

(a) One function of a political party is representation the major parties in the UK all employ 'catch-all' policies which appeal to the majority therefore the party which gains ^{a majority of} the most seats can claim a mandate. Another function of political parties is the mobilisation and inclusion of the electorate in politics, this is ~~achieved~~ ^{achieved} because ~~anyone~~ ^{people can} join political parties or they can become involved in their aims.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This response achieves full marks. The depth and detail of two functions is clear and unambiguous.

(a) A political party has many functions. Arguably the most important being the governing function. It is a parties role in a multi-party democracy to compete in elections and contest for seats within the Houses of Parliament.

Another function is the recruitment and participatory function. This allows parties to try and encourage party membership and influence society towards their goals and aims. Labour + Conservatives will have recruitment rallies and will have leaflets distributed to ensure high social awareness is given for the party.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

This final example receives only 2 marks; neither function is especially well developed.

(a)

Two functions of a political party is to be accountable to the public and also have the ability to govern ~~with~~ ^{by using} experience. Parties must have clear policies and also be able to have a good organisational structure to maintain success, B parties with bad organisation like the UKIP end up struggling because of this factor.

(b) Often the main fault line here was contemporary detail on Conservative policies. Weaker candidates tended to spend too long describing Thatcherism rather than on describing the policies currently of the Party. The recovery of the Party in the polls under David Cameron is a topic which surely must be discussed as a moot political point by all candidates.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

As mentioned in the report many candidates failed to bring their response into the contemporary scene. This candidate gains little credit for such a long introduction and provides only skeletal evidence of the Conservative Party since Thatcher. It is given a total of three marks (AO1 =2 AO2 =1).

(b) Thatcherism can be divided into two parts, there are economic Thatcherism and social Thatcherism. Economic Thatcherism is based on several principles. One principle is the emphasis on indirect taxes such as VAT and the reduction of direct taxes. Another principle is that of less controls, to roll back the state, this can be seen in the removal of controls on the value of the pound and the exchange rate. Also, Thatcherism believed in rugged individualism, this meant that less money should be spent on the state welfare. And ~~while~~ the principle of the reduction of union power.

Social Thatcherism can be seen in the idea that there is no such thing as society, only individuals and their families. Thatcherism is concerned with tougher law and order and an emphasis on traditional morals or Christian values.

Today, David Cameron's conservative party are concerned with reducing direct tax, they are also in favour of less regulation (although this has declined in recent months) and

((b) continued) they are also concerned heavily with encouraging social entrepreneurship rather than enable to give support, therefore economic Thatcherism has generally continued.

However, Cameron has made steps to abandon the 'nasty party' persona and ^{has taken} ~~seen~~ the view that there is such a thing as a ~~democratic~~ society, therefore the conservative party have effectively abandoned social Thatcherism.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate achieves half marks 5 (AO1= 4 AO2=1). The response is better informed but still missing many key elements. This final candidate gains 7 marks (AO1= 5 AO2=2) being a more complete response and moving to address the current position of the Conservative Party.

(b) Thatcherism is also known as the New Right.

The New right's core values were mainly about economics and welfare. For instance, abolition of the trade unions, deregulation of the businesses and also low levels of taxation.

The Conservative Party has distanced itself from Thatcherism when David Cameron seized power in 2010 and reformed, modernised the party in 2012.

Initially, The New Right said; taxes must be kept at a minimum level to create more incentives for hard-work and wealth growth.

By However, the Conservative party also wanted low levels of taxation but Cameron and his shadow chancellor George Osborne said, tax levels must be kept at a level which provides good quality public services, even if people said the level of taxes are too high.

Next, the New right always took an authoritarian action against crime and its remedies. However, Conservative party said, more

attempts should be made to find causes of crime and Conservative party also tried to
(b) continued) fight against youth crime.

Next, the New Right said; environment is important but it doesn't over-regulate industry and businesses, whereas Conservative party introduced new and tough policies about environment and Cameron said 'environment is the highest priority and responsibility of all'.

~~Next~~ A further point is, Thatcherism stated that, basic human rights and liberties are not more important than law, order, security. They could be sacrificed for the sake of law and security, order.

However, the Conservatives stated, basic rights and liberties are fixed and cannot be sacrificed for the sake of law and order.

Finally, Conservative party moved away from Thatcherism about education. So, David Cameron ignored selective secondary education and supported Labour policies. They stated that, more colleges and secondary schools should be opened and everyone should be able to go to any school. No matter their social, economic or

((b) continued) educational background is, by contrast New Right stated, the more fortunate should be given specialised education.

To sum up, Conservative party has moved away from the New Right. We can say that, the party moved towards centre.

(c) The two main parties' political principles and ideas are essential to this area on the specification. Here the Labour Party's attitude and commitment to socialism is at the heart of the response. As with many (c) part questions the nature of the answer is one which is contestable. The more able candidate was able to draw on evidence for the adherence to this commitment and equally illustrate how this has been rejected, then arrive at a reasoned conclusion. Many candidates noted that the current economic recession had moved the Labour Party back to 'tax and spend' or more commonly cited 'Old Labour' positions with the recent 'Bank bailout'.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This first example is a good illustration of a level 2 response gaining 11 marks in total (AO1= 4 AO2= 4 AO3 =3) There is the obvious need to develop more material and to provide greater analysis and evaluation in order to advance.

(c) The traditional view of the Labour party has been one of socialism. This can be seen in the ideology of the post-war Attlee government where the social democratic ideology was most effectively used. It was based on several principles. One such principle was that of cradle to grave support. The Beveridge report started the effect of this by identifying 5 'giants' which should be stopped, these were want, disease, ignorance, squalor and poverty. (~~This was the reason for~~) This led to the creation of a national health service. Another principle is economic ^{mixture} ~~combination~~, this meant that the economy should be part private and part national. This idea came from John Maynard Keynes who argued that full employment could be reached whilst also 'regulating the economy' by rationalising the 'commanding heights of the economy'. And finally

This led to the creation of a national health service. Another principle is economic ^{mixture} ~~combination~~, this meant that the economy should be part private and part national. This idea came from John Maynard Keynes who argued that full employment could be reached whilst also 'regulating the economy' by rationalising the 'commanding heights of the economy'. And finally there was an ~~other~~ element of economic management whereby the economy should be tightly controlled and centralised.

However since that time the 'social democrats' of the Labour split from the party and New Labour has formed with its own ~~new~~ ideology.

((c) continued) New Labour under Tony Blair took a free market approach, this meant that there should be little control over the economy.

~~(All This differs greatly from the Keynesian)~~
~~'topside down' system as~~

And some independence with setting interest rates was even given to the Bank of England.

This differs greatly with the Keynesian 'Topside-down' approach. Although since the beginning of the economic crisis Labour under Gordon Brown has tightened controls and ~~put~~ pumped in excess of 800 billion into the banks. There was also an emphasis before the economic crisis on 'supply-side' economics, although this has

shifted towards the more Keynesian 'Demand-side' economic policies such as the recent 'Com-scrapping' scheme. New Labour has also shifted on welfare policies, now there is a larger emphasis on targeted benefits through systems such as the 'Welfare to work' scheme.

Therefore I can conclude that the current 'New Labour party' has taken a far less socialist set of principles, however due to the economic crisis they have shown a number of shifts ^{back} towards the 'old Labour' ideology.


ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This final response clearly shows an improvement. Here the total is 17; reached via (AO1= 6 AO2 = 6 AO3 = 5) This is not maximum marks for there still remains scope to improve, but it should act to illustrate that candidates can achieve high marks and thus high grades by developing and structuring their responses.

((c) continued) On one hand, Labour is still committed to its traditional principles to a large extent. It is also believed that Gordon Brown is more 'old' Labour, ~~than~~, he is often criticized for this, because of the introduction of his new policies.

First of all 'old' Labour believed in ~~the~~ ^{tax} taking ~~tax~~ from the rich and redistributing their wealth. Gordon Brown's policy is that he wants to put on the 50% tax bracket for those who earn over £150,000 a year. This is one of the reasons people are saying that 'old' Labour is coming back.

Secondly since 1997 when the Labour government got elected, public spending on the NHS has doubled and free state schooling has also increased. This is an example of 'old' Labour's policies as they counted free education and healthcare.

Moreover Old Labour believed in Nationalisation of things, and it is evident that recently G. Brown nationalised banks such as Royal Bank of Scotland.

Thirdly, Old Labour also promised to

end child poverty, and since 'new' Labour has been elected in 1997, over 700,000 children ((c) continued) have been lifted out of poverty.

Furthermore New Labour ~~has~~ ^{have} ~~introduced~~ ~~the~~ ~~Welfare-to-work~~ introduced the 'Welfare-to-work' system, which encourages people to go back to work because of the changes in the tax & benefits system. This ~~was~~ was also one of old Labour's traditional principles.

However, on the other hand, the Labour party is not committed to its traditional principles as it could be argued that first of all, the only reason Gordon Brown set up the 50% tax bracket is because the country is in deep recession and he is basically 'slampt' so the Government simply needs money ~~to~~ (desperate) to get us out of the recession.

Secondly even though public spending on ~~the~~ NHS and education increased, it is evident that Labour ~~is~~ has become more fond of politicians. Furthermore, the nationalisation of banks is another example that the Government simply has no money, however when Labour got elected its aim was to give the Bank of England independence.

In conclusion I believe that Labour is not committed to its traditional values to a large extent and it is just taking risky measures

6GP02

General Comments

On the whole centres and candidates seem to have adapted well to the changed examination format and marking system. Certainly the approaches to source based questions was better than it had been typically in the past on the old Unit 3. The clear instructions in question (a) and (b) seemed to help and most candidates responded accordingly. There was also much evidence that many candidates were conscious of the need, in longer answers, to address AO3 and to ensure that they focused on the question. It was also true that candidates seemed to handle the longer essay questions quite well and were aware of the importance of structure. Clearly a good deal of useful preparation on this had been undertaken by centres.

Question 1

(a) As expected nearly all candidates found the three functions and gained at least three marks. Some did not elaborate and so were limited to 3 marks. Most, however, made a good job of expanding on the meaning of the functions and so were able to access 4 or 5 marks. This worked quite well as an 'access' question. Virtually no candidates strayed outside the source.

(b) Many candidates could, of course, identify why government needs Parliament as the source specified the reasons. However, many could not explain legitimacy/consent issues very successfully. Not surprisingly students and teachers tend to concentrate on the role of Parliament in terms of checking, scrutiny, controlling and calling government to account. However, Parliament, especially the Commons also supports government by providing consent and legitimacy. Interestingly a good number said that calling government to account and scrutinising legislation were roles which Government itself needed. The best responses explained that this is something government needs because it potentially improves the quality of legislation and governance generally. A few candidates referred to Parliament's role as a recruiting and training ground for ministers. A few good candidates also discussed the Lords' key role in improving legislation. For the future, it would be useful for candidates to be fully aware that Parliament supports Government as well as checking it.

(c) There was good coverage of some key issues – excessive party loyalty, power of patronage and the whips, size of government majorities etc. However too many did not explain or develop these points well enough and so scored on AO1 rather than AO2. Better candidates discussed more sophisticated issues such as lack of time and expertise, government control of business, weaknesses of both kinds of committees. In general the committee work of Parliament seems to be something of a weakness. A common, positive theme was that Parliament could not successfully represent as it was not itself representative, politically or socially. Surprisingly little reference was made to the current expenses row – this could have been made relevant. It was mainly weaker candidates who, by design or accident, picked up marks by pointing out the limitations of the Lords. Typically such candidates were often weak on the Commons, perhaps because the limitations of the Commons are more subtle. Only a few, however, referred to the lack of legitimacy of either house. This was an analytical rather than evaluative question, so those who decided to treat it simply as an evaluation of Parliament's roles failed to pick up many AO2 marks.

Question 2

(a) As with question 1 most could access three marks, though this was a little more challenging. Fewer, however, could successfully elaborate on the reasons for Brown's proposed surrender of some powers. In particular the issue of open government was omitted, a key point as this is now developing into an important theme following the expenses row.

(b) Candidates tended to struggle with the source material, not realising that patronage, power of dissolution or other prerogatives could be used to enhance prime ministerial power. Prerogative powers are now at the forefront of debate about change in the political system, with challenges to the powers of dissolution, treaty making and warfare. This was very much a question about 'sources of prime ministerial power' and there were clearly problems. AO1 marks could be accessed by identifying the sources of power, and AO2 by explaining why and how they are sources of power. Traditionally candidates are strong on prime ministerial powers themselves, but weaker on the sources of that power. Fortunately, when moving away from the source into their own knowledge, many candidates fared better and gave good accounts of control over the policy agenda and parliamentary leadership in general, with examples often effectively used (Blair, Thatcher especially). Many, not unexpectedly, wrote about prime ministerial power in general rather than his power over Parliament specifically.

(c) Many candidates who struggled with (a) and (b) then did well on (c). This question addressed all the assessment objectives and required a balanced answer. Candidates were required to address the issue of change or 'growth' as the question says, mostly AO1. Most could describe prime ministerial power but too few failed to recognise the variability of the phenomenon. AO2 marks were largely accessed by analysing the changes in prime ministerial power, for example discussing the media and the prominence of defence (war?) and foreign policy in recent years. The weaker responses tended to refer to Blair and Thatcher and how powerful they were. Stronger candidates added Major and Brown as valuable counterpoints. Some good AO3 scoring on this, with many well prepared candidates using good vocabulary, sound structure and firm conclusions. In general it can be said that students who are studying aspects of the prime minister and cabinet ideally should learn about the experiences of the last four prime ministers rather than just two.

Question 3

A very typical response was an attempt to adapt an essay about independence and neutrality of the judiciary to this particular question. On the whole these attempts were unsuccessful. The (perhaps growing) independence of the UK judiciary is indeed a factor in its effectiveness, but is not the central issue. That said, there were some extremely laudable examples of essays which were well crafted, thorough and full of useful, relevant examples. Candidates who omitted the Human Right Act were almost inevitably unable to access many AO1 marks, but those who did and knew its limitations picked up marks on both AO1 and AO2 by describing and analysing the relationship between Parliament and the judiciary over legislation which may appear incompatible with the European Convention. Appropriate exemplar cases were vital if candidates were to access top marks for AO1. Those who also analysed their significance also gained AO2 marks. Fortunately some weaker candidates did pick up a little on AO3 by constructing the answer coherently. The message is the same as ever – if candidates are to attempt answers on the judiciary, they need to be thoroughly prepared. This question yielded many opportunities for good political vocabulary and many AO3 marks were accessed by better prepared candidates. Weaker candidates, however, tended to generalise and so lose out on AO3.

Question 4

A much more popular question than 3. Many candidates seemed to have prepared for a question on whether the Constitution should be codified or remain uncoded, and then attempted to adapt their answer to the question set, with limited success. The issue of a codified constitution was, of course, relevant, but only a part of an answer. Fortunately there were also many relevant responses. Two approaches were equally profitable in accessing all three assessment objectives. One was to examine each of the reform areas and assess the extent to which they have satisfied demands for change or have been effective in meeting objectives. The other – more difficult and sophisticated, with perhaps more opportunities to pick up AO2 and AO3 marks – was a thematic approach, looking at the degree to which reforms had made the UK more democratic, less centralised and more sensitive to human rights. Among those who had prepared for questions about constitutional reform, this was the best answered question on the paper. It was also where most AO3 marks were typically gained. The range was an issue, affecting AO1 mark awarding. Constitutional reform is now a very extensive subject and some candidates missed out simply because they could not address a wide enough range of reforms. With the extra time now available for 40 mark questions, and half the marks given over to AO1, range of issues has become more valuable and essential.

Statistics

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E
6GP01 Government & Politics 1	80	48	42	36	31	26
6GP02 Government & Politics 2	80	47	41	35	29	23

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