Pre-amble

This document is not to be regarded in any sense a forecast of how the EU will be examined – it is to emphasise and re-enforce its applicability, relevance and continuing connection to the specification.

Why is the EU on the specification given that the UK officially left in January 2020?

The DfE insisted that the EU should be part of the new specification, and there is no suggestion that the specification will be changed now that the UK has left the EU. The relationship between the EU and the UK has continually evolved since the time we joined and continues to evolve now. Within the context of this obvious and ongoing fluidity, we are required to adhere fully to the remit given by the DfE.

Where is the EU is explicitly mentioned in the GCE Politics specifications?

The EU appears in the A level specification and AS specification in Component 2 UK Government.

- In Section 1.1 there is reference to The European Communities Act 1972 and also European Union law which has become part of the UK’s constitution.

- In Section 4.3 there are details of the aims, role and impact of the EU on UK government. This section has the most comprehensive and explicit reference to the EU. This covers the ‘four freedoms’, the role of the EU in policy making, and finally the impact of EU polices on the UK political system.

Where can we see implicit application of the EU in 9PL02?

In truth the impact and scope of the EU reverberates throughout much of the specification. The list below is illustrative – it is not exhaustive in any way, and events will change the dynamics of the context:

- How does EU law impact on the UK?
- What impact does the UK’s past, present or future association with the EU have on the UK constitution?
- How has Scotland responded to Brexit?
- How is Parliament influenced by the EU?
- How has Parliament struggled with/reacted to the EU?
- How are Ministers and in particular Prime Ministers affected by the EU?
How relevant is Brexit?

In a contemporary subject such as Politics, candidates are expected to be aware of subsequent developments, such as results of general elections, the appointment of new Prime Ministers, the impact of minority, coalition and majority governments, and the election of new US Presidents, and Brexit falls into the same category. This term – so much a feature of current UK politics – thus has no formal mention on the specification, but cannot be disregarded. In many senses Brexit is the biggest political event in recent history and it is correct therefore that the EU remains a key contemporary political issue.

Re-cap on the specification remit

Component 2 section 4.3 on the specification has a clear focus. It is not on the operative institutions of the EU but rather how the EU has an impact on the UK government. This is the approach the specification takes to viewing the EU. It is also central to consider the importance of the ‘four freedoms’, and how it and various other policies will be central to the Brexit negotiations – this ties in neatly with the requirement for Politics to be a living, contemporary subject. Answers to possible questions should focus on the current position (i.e. subsequent to the UK leaving the EU) rather than taking a purely historical view, unless that is the perspective specifically required by a question.