

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCE Government and Politics 6GP03 3C

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk.

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

ResultsPlus

Giving you insight to inform next steps

ResultsPlus is Pearson's free online service giving instant and detailed analysis of your students' exam results.

- See students' scores for every exam question.
- Understand how your students' performance compares with class and national averages.
- Identify potential topics, skills and types of question where students may need to develop their learning further.

For more information on ResultsPlus, or to log in, visit www.edexcel.com/resultsplus. Your exams officer will be able to set up your ResultsPlus account in minutes via Edexcel Online.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk.

June 2015

Publications Code UA041709

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2015

Introduction

Examiners' overall impression was that this was an inviting paper which offered the well prepared candidate plenty of opportunities to show what they were capable of.

A pleasing feature of this year's exam was the increased numbers attempting the parties (45 marks) question, and it came very close to the race question in popularity. The parties topic offers candidates a lot of opportunities to use contemporary knowledge, and as a consequence they produce better answers. Race remains a very popular topic, but too many candidates still find it difficult to adapt their knowledge to the question in front of them.

An invariable characteristic of stronger answers is their use of relevant contemporary examples, and examiners were impressed by the extent of many candidates' knowledge. However, it cannot be rewarded unless it is convincingly linked to the question, and much of what candidates wrote about the Ferguson riots was difficult to reward for this reason.

Question 1

This was a question where candidates adopted a variety of approaches, but undoubtedly the most effective was to discuss different reasons for the failure of campaign finance reform in consecutive paragraphs. Some answers gave a narrative account of the history of campaign finance reform or discussed key terms, which meant that the reasons for failure emerged only obliquely. Campaign finance is a technical area and it was a rare answer that was not guilty of at least some degree of confusion or inaccuracy. The distinction between federal matching funds for the primary campaign and the grant for the general election is still poorly understood, and many candidates mixed up donations to parties and donations to candidates; 'soft' money suffers particularly in this regard, and it is surprising how many candidates are unaware that the BCRA banned national parties from accepting it. Unsurprisingly, there was a good deal of haziness around the PACs and super PACs, and PACs continue to be described in many answers as a loophole.

Indicate your second question choice on this page.
You will be asked to indicate your third question choice on page 9.

Put a cross in the box indicating the second question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

One reason is that those who have the power to initiate change are the very people for whom reform will affect. President Obama is such an example, he had promised on campaign finance reform in 2007 but had since dropped any proposal on such reforms. Also, president Obama had promised to take out public funding if his opponent John McCain does so. However, he broken the promise later upon on realisation that the lack of financial funding would put him at a significant disadvantage.

The Federal Election Reform Act in 1974 which set up the FEC to monitor and regulate campaign finance and later the Bipartisan Reform Act of 2002 which introduced capped limits have both been reversed by several landmark Supreme Court cases. The most notable being Citizens United, which effectively granted corporations the same right to political speech as any ordinary citizen. Hence, ~~preto~~ there is the pattern of previous legislation attempts being reversed and limited ~~to~~ in recent years. Further, the success of campaign finance reforms has been limited if perhaps due to the many loopholes of campaign finance regulations. For instance, PACs mushroomed after the cap on individual spending was introduced, while Citizens United led to the proliferation of Super PACs in the 2012 election.

been reversed by several landmark Supreme Court cases. The most notable being Citizens United, which effectively granted corporations the same right to political speech as any ordinary citizen. Hence, ~~preto~~ there is the pattern of previous legislation attempts being reversed and limited ~~to~~ in recent years.

Further, the success of campaign finance reforms has been limited if perhaps due to the many loopholes of campaign finance regulations. For instance, PACs mushroomed after the cap on individual spending was introduced, while Citizens United led to the proliferation of Super PACs in the 2012 election.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a fairly typical low Level 3 answer to this question, in which four different factors are identified and explained, although their treatment is slightly uneven. The first paragraph on lack of political will is probably the best; the Supreme Court's role is clearly understood, although there are relevant cases which could usefully have been considered. It would have been more logical to include the emergence of super PACs in this paragraph than describe it as a loophole, and the candidate makes the common mistake of describing 'regular' PACs as a loophole. Nevertheless, a good answer.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Short answer structure - this answer makes four separate points which works well. It would work equally well to make three points and develop them more fully.

Question 2

This was a popular question and in general answered well. Many answers discussed three different methods and were able to use a wide range of evidence; examiners were pleased to note the use of many modern examples, rather than the ever present *Brown and Roe*. The key issue affecting candidates' achievement was the extent to which they complied with the injunction to 'assess'; many answers simply explained the ways in which a pressure group could attempt, for example, to influence the Senate's consideration of a president's nomination, with no assessment of its effectiveness at all. Even those who tried to assess would typically claim that because several hundred amicus curiae briefs were submitted for a particular case they were therefore effective, which added little to the answer.

The best answers used evidence to construct an argument, for example, that it was impossible to be certain of the effect of amicus briefs, or that for any given nomination probably half the pressure groups involved will be disappointed, or that test cases are only available to groups with resources, with an uncertain outcome in prospect.

Weaker answers discussed generic pressure groups activities such as lobbying, funding, and the revolving door, with no recognition that they were not applicable to the Supreme Court; a surprising number of candidates thought that the justices are receptive to lobbyists and are in need of campaign donations.

Indicate your second question choice on this page.
You will be asked to indicate your third question choice on page 9.

Put a cross in the box indicating the second question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3
Question 4 Question 5

Pressure groups in the USA take a lively interest in the nomination the president makes to the federal courts, especially those to the Supreme Court. This is because the Supreme Court has significant powers, hence why pressure groups seek to influence the decisions of the Supreme Court.

In order to have as much influence on the Supreme Court as possible, pressure groups have been seen in recent years to ~~be~~ be campaigning for presidential candidates who are likely to nominate justices sympathetic to their cause. They do this through running televised ads and publicising writings to promote the candidate who has the closest ideology and intention to their group. This method has been successful in recent years as pressure groups have a great ability at electioneering due to their financial resources and extensive contacts.

However, this method is limited as pressure groups cannot be certain that the justices these presidential candidates may go on to nominate to the Supreme Court are necessarily going to be sympathetic to their cause.

Once the president has been selected, pressure groups ~~can~~ take an active role in opposing or supporting the nomination of certain judges. Pressure groups have certainly used this method to great ~~success~~ success in recent years, ~~and~~ For example, pressure groups were very active ~~surrounding~~ in the Senate hearing surrounding the appointment of Samuel Alito ~~with~~ to the Supreme Court in 2006, with the American Bar Association rating him "well qualified" and many pro-life activists and pressure groups claiming his confirmation a victory to their cause. This

can be said to be an effective method used by pressure groups as the pro life pressure groups achieved their aims in the above example.

However, it could be argued that this method may reduce pressure groups overall influence on the Supreme Court as if controversial pressure groups are seen to be supporting the appointment of a certain judge, for the sake of impartiality the president may not select this judge.

Pressure groups further seek to influence the Supreme Court by offering 'amicus ~~curiae~~ curiae' ('friends of the courts') briefings. This is perhaps the most effective method used by pressure groups and ~~involves them~~ allows them to present their views to the court in writing before any oral arguments are heard.

Pressure groups have been very effective in influencing the court this way over issues such as the civil rights of minorities, gun rights and 1st Amendment rights.

For example, ~~the~~ the NAACP have continued to use this method over issues about affirmative action programmes.

Pressure group methods to influence the Supreme Court are also effective with regards to bringing test cases to the Court to bring about policy change. A recent example of this success is the 2008 District of Columbia v. USA case, in which the NRA used this method to allow it to play a significant role in the landmark case, where the Supreme Court declared Washington DC ban on handguns unconstitutional.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This answer is a typical bottom Level 3 answer. The candidate clearly explains four different methods which pressure groups can use to influence the Supreme Court and makes a good attempt to assess their effectiveness. That said, the analysis is not developed, and the examples cited lack the detail which would make them more convincing - both would need improvement for the answer to rise in Level 3.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Examples - the use of examples supports the points candidates are making but they need to be as detailed as possible to really add anything to the answer. The activity of pressure groups either supporting or opposing the nomination of Samuel Alito is referred to on the second side but only very briefly, and would be much more effective if the explanation was fuller.

Question 3

Immigration and affirmative action were the obvious topics for candidates to select and answer well for full marks. Most candidates were able to identify at least one topic, although it was surprising that very few indeed seemed to be aware of the recent controversy over Republican states introducing voter ID requirements. Quite a few answers made the point that, as partisan divisions over immigration have become more high-profile, divisions over affirmative action have abated, in public view at any rate. Very few answers were immune from error over the details of the different executive actions (e.g. 'DACA' and 'DAPA') the president has taken in recent years. Most were generally rather limited in scope, when candidates had the opportunity both to discuss the reasons for partisan disagreement over affirmative action and the political events which they led to. Many candidates ran out of material relatively quickly and were then forced to improvise, with varying degrees of success; the Ferguson riots were clearly in the minds of many, but it was difficult to find distinctive party positions to comment on, nor was it possible to reward knowledge of disputes around same sex marriage or issues specifically affecting women. The disputes over the status of English as an official language, of the USA as a whole and individual states, were used by some enterprising candidates, and indeed welfare and health provision could both be made relevant, although seldom were.

Indicate your first question choice on this page.
You will be asked to indicate your second question choice on page 6.

Put a cross in the box indicating the first question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3
Question 4 Question 5

The two major parties disagree over immigration reform. The Democratic core values are to provide with an Amnesty for aliens, whereas the Republicans are completely against this. The Republican Party believe that ~~immigration~~ people who have entered the country illegally should be sent back and ~~or~~ should apply for residency legally. The Democrat Party believe that the Constitution, is sovereign, and is tolerant of human rights; therefore they should be allowed to stay. ~~The Republican Party who filibustered Obama's~~ A Republican Senator Jeff Sessions filibustered ~~Obama~~ the

Dream Act in 2010, stopping it from being passed once again. George W. Bush also passed the Secure Fences Act in 2006. This ~~there is evidence~~ was a 700 mile long fence placed on the USA and Mexican border. This shows how much the two parties disagree thus ^{creating division} ~~the~~ the two parties. There is evidence, however, that shows that the two parties do agree on immigration reform. For example, the Bush Guest Worker Scheme can be seen as a piece of policy which the Democrats had agreed with as it gave ^{illegal} immigrants a chance to gain ~~an~~ American citizenship. Also, George W. Bush had tried to pass the Dream Act in 2007. This is a divisive issue in US politics.

Affirmative Action has also created divisions between the main parties. ~~Race based~~ It was introduced by a Republican President Nixon, however, now not many Republicans are very keen on it. Most have turned their backs and feel that it creates a dependent and lazy minority, who want welfare benefits. Ronald Reagan was seen to be very hostile towards them.

~~The~~ Traditionally the Democrat Party has been more sympathetic towards Affirmative Action plans. Clinton's famous speech of 'Don't End It, Mend It' resonated in the hearts of millions of ethnic minorities. The Supreme Court rulings of Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter

V. Balenger, both in 2003, have upheld the use of Affirmation programmes and the Democrat belief to do so too. This shows how divisive this issue is between the two major parties.

~~I think, the two parties~~

In conclusion, I think there are divisions between the two main parties ^{to a large extent} due to racial and ethnic issues. This is because it is such a current issue and the rising number makes it this way. They are unable to come up with a piece of legislation that caters for immigration reform and a way to promote Affirmative Action programmes in a bipartisan ~~way~~ manner.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This answer makes two points, about immigration reform and affirmative action, and unlike a lot of answers attempts to explain both the disagreements of principle between the two parties and the political developments they have led to. Immigration reform is dealt with more fully than affirmative action, and the lack of recent examples on affirmative action might have prompted the candidate to conclude that partisan divisions are less marked than they once were.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Every paper will have some questions which have not appeared before and candidates need to think carefully before writing about which elements of their knowledge can be made relevant. This candidate does it quite successfully.

Question 4

Third parties are the sort of neat self-contained topic which is always popular with candidates, and this question proved accessible to many. The majority were able to provide at least three clear points on why third parties have limited success with campaign finance, with the 'winner takes all' election system and 'co-optation' among the most popular. As was the case for question two, the command word 'assess' was frequently ignored and there were a lot of answers stuck at the top of Level 2, as they identified three limitations but offered no point of assessment. Some made it into the bottom of Level 3 by asserting that a given factor is the 'most important,' but to move towards the top required some sort of argument, for example that the increasing polarisation of the two parties in recent years has made it even harder for third parties to find an ideological niche. An alternative argument, of course, which was advanced by a few candidates, is that polarisation has created an opportunity in the centre for a third party which, for whatever reason, has not so far been taken. Many candidates wrote about 'winner takes all' solely in the context of the Electoral College, as though third party candidates only ever took part in the presidential election, and it was a sign of a better answer when it distinguished between factors which affected different sorts of election.

the most important reason and it means.
Firstly, 3rd party ideology, means 3rd parties have such a limited impact in elections. The Democrats and Republicans are 'umbrella' parties, so there is little room for 3rd parties on the political spectrum. This is why both Bernie Sanders and Rand Paul are running for one of the two main parties in 2016. Sanders has been an independent senator from Vermont and he wants to be president, mainly to repeal the CU-2010-SC ruling. Whereas, Paul is a libertarian and is instead a member of the GOP. Both men realise the only way to become president is via the Republicans or Democrats, not via the Libertarian Party or via as an Independent. ^{Despite this} However, 2012 Libertarian pres nominee Gary Johnson left the GOP to be a libertarian party member, showing that he may not see it this way. However, his electoral success has been low since he left the GOP and no third parties other

than 2 independents are in Congress.

Secondly, money plays a huge part. Without adequate money they cannot effectively advertise or visit lots of states to take their 'message on the road' and campaign. For example, in 2012, Obama spent \$1bn, whereas Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson spent \$1m, Obama gained over 50% of the popular vote, Johnson under 1%, showing how important money is. However, in 2000, Ralph Nader, for the Green party spent less than \$3m and although he did not win any ECV, he did take some votes away from Gore in Florida, showing how some say Nader may have helped decide the presidency. Despite this, this is a rarity, the only 3rd party candidate to get over 15% in a pres election since 1990, was Ross Perot in 1992 (20% pv), but he spent \$45m of his own money showing how important a factor money is. And, money is something many 3rd parties do not have and something they struggle to fundraise.

Finally, legal factors, mean 3rd parties have limited success. 3rd parties need at least 5% of the popular vote to gain state funding and need a certain amount of votes in each state to gain be able to be on the ballot for the following

election. Jill Stein, leader of the Green Party ~~failed~~ failed to do this in 18 states. However, third parties only make real impact at state level, i.e. the Constitution Party who managed to ~~get~~ win the governor race in Minnesota in 2012. Despite this, legal factors can really hit 3rd parties and reduce their impact.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer uses knowledge of the two main parties to develop a point about the success of minor parties in the first paragraph and this is probably the best part of the answer. Another commendable feature is the range of examples used throughout, although they would be more impressive if they were completely accurate.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Examples - as already explained, detailed examples are an essential feature of a strong answer; they need to be evidenced right through the answer and examiners do check the details. Despite the claim on the third side, there was no gubernatorial election in Minnesota in 2012, never mind a Constitution Party winner; the candidate may have had in mind the success of Jesse Ventura for the Reform Party in 1998.

Question 5

This question was not particularly well answered, which was a surprise since essentially the same question appeared as recently as the June 2012 series. Most candidates were able to identify multiple access points which makes the American system hospitable to pressure groups, but after that their knowledge ran out, and they devoted three paragraphs to three different access points, which made the answer essentially one reason. Stronger answers identified access points, developed that with reference to federal and state institutions, and then moved on to two additional reasons, often the first amendment and the cost of elections, while some mentioned the diversity of the USA or developed a point around the weakness of parties as well. One or two candidates misread the question and wrote about environmental pressure groups, which severely limited their opportunities for marks.

Indicate your first question choice on this page.

You will be asked to indicate your second question choice on page 6.

Put a cross in the box indicating the first question that you have chosen.

If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

The US political system is a favourable environment for pressure groups due to many reasons. One reason is due to there being many access points for pressure groups to influence the legislative process. Firstly, due to the Federal system power is held a lot closer to the people, it is more pluralistic than a centralised government allowing access at a local ~~resort~~ and state level as well as ~~the~~ on a federal level. Within government there are three branches. The executive, the president and bureaucracy. The legislative, the house of representatives and the Senate. Lastly there is the supreme court. All three branches have different roles and it is therefore easy for pressure groups to focus their pressure into the area that is most beneficial to themselves.

For example AIPAC a pro Israel America relations group will target the senate as they have the power to ratify foreign Policy treaties, ~~Under Obama's~~

Another reason why pressure groups are in such a favourable position is due to the 'Umbrella' nature of the two main parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. This means the two parties are extremely broad and represent a large number of views on the full spectrum of political issues. Naturally therefore the parties are divided within. For example the 2010 Tea party tidal wave, where fiscal conservatives showed strong opposition to moderates within the party. This adversary politics allows pressure groups to influence within the party. Due to divides within parties it is not uncommon for politicians to vote against party line and for this reason there is a very weak party whip system. With ~~a~~ a weak party whip system this leaves politicians open to ~~influence~~ ^{pressure} from pressure groups to vote in ~~there~~ their favour. This pressure comes in the shape of lobbying or electioneering. For example Max Baucus accepted huge sums of money from PHARMA a large pharmaceutical company who now do to his funding over ~~has~~ huge influence over how he votes. More so than his party.

Lastly, the United States is a hugely diverse society and it is therefore very hard for ~~then~~ all to feel represented by the two

main parties. Furthermore it is extremely hard for an individual to agree with all policies of the parties. There can therefore feel much more closely represented by a pressure group and feel that by joining a pressure group they can campaign purely for the issues they believe in. The American Association of Retired People is the largest pressure group in America with more members than both the parties combined, this is a prime example of the popularity of a pressure group that directly represents you and issues that affect you, in this case retired people.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This is another low Level 3 answer which looks at three different points and explains them clearly, if a little unevenly. The explanation in the second paragraph is well developed but, to return to the point of detail in examples, would be stronger if the Max Baucus example was fuller, and his role in the passage of the Affordable Care Act was referred to.

Question 6

As is almost invariably recorded in these reports, the best answers on the paper were written on the 45 mark parties question. Centres are doing an excellent job in keeping their candidates completely up to date. Contemporary evidence, such as the fallout between President Obama and Senator Warren over the Trans-Pacific Partnership, was impressively deployed in many answers. Stronger answers adopted one of two approaches, either looking at the factions of each party and then giving evidence of divisions between them with recent examples, or focusing on different policy areas and analysing the divisions and unity in each.

Many agreed with the quote that the Republicans are more divided as a result of the rise of the Tea Party pushing them to the right, without apparently realising that this may be better evidence that the party is actually becoming more united. There were lots of references to 'factions' in the Republican Party such as social conservatives and fiscal conservatives, with little recognition that they actually share views on almost all policy areas. It was not easy for many to untangle the differences between the Tea Party and the establishment Republicans they seek to replace, since on areas such as tax and government expenditure they seem to have a lot in common. Some answers were structured around the 2016 candidates and, while these were commendably up to date, some drifted into speculation on their prospects at the expense of policy analysis. Weaker answers tended to focus all or nearly all of their discussion on the Republicans, with the Democrats either ignored completely or only appearing in the conclusion. President George W. Bush featured in many answers, but it wasn't always recognised that his brand of 'big government'/'compassionate' conservatism no longer has a voice within the party, and indeed is seen by many Republicans as an aberration never to be repeated. The 'Blue Dogs' received a lot more coverage than their influence, either past or present, probably merited, and candidates were prone to see the votes of a small number of members of Congress or the existence of a congressional group, whatever its size, as evidence of a significant split.

Put a cross in the box indicating the question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

Both the Republican and Democrat parties have undergone ideological upheaval and reform since the 1960s with the break up of the South for the Democrats and the change to promoting family and traditional values for the Republicans in the 70s and 80s. However, currently it is the Republicans who are seeing more divisions thanks to the emergence and dominance of the Tea party since 2008. The Democrats, although divided over some issues are fundamentally united on their

policy issues, more so under Obama than in previous years.

The Democrat party have more emphasis on 'Big government' and promote healthcare reform and education programmes such as Obama's 'Race to the Top' initiative. They are traditionally socially liberal and support pro-choice campaigns, equal rights and same-sex marriage. The divisions in the party are mainly over specific legislation rather than fundamental ideological differences.

The liberal activist wing of the party have favoured legislation such as the 'Don't ask, Don't tell' repeal by Obama which grants gay military members more rights. They have also supported equal rights with the pushing through of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009. They are also more in favour of social welfare and are strong supporters of PPACA or Obamacare as it is commonly known. The centrist wing of the party includes politicians such as previous president Bill Clinton. It is often on economic issues that they follow more conservative policy such as Clinton's tax cuts. The third wing of the party encapsulates more conservative members, often Catholic who oppose such liberalism on issues such as abortion.

The conflict between these groups is usually unsustained and based on individual pieces of legislation. The Shipak amendment for example, was proposed by House Representative Shipak of Michigan, a Catholic who opposed abortion.

one 1990s under Clinton. when he signed the Republican Welfare Reform Bill in 1996, there was uproar from many Democrat congressmen who saw this as abandoning the people in a time of need however Clinton remained firm and declared that 'welfare was a second chance, not a way of life' this attitude, despite being controversial at the time, has found longevity and it could be argued that it has been absorbed into Democrat policy with the New York Times stating that the Democrats support help for those in need, not "state life support". This shows that despite these conflicts, the Democrat party has been able to evolve with the changing social attitudes and remain a relatively united front. Overall, the divisions that plagued the party during the 1960s appear to have been largely papered over and repaired to some extent, although arguably there are chances that they could be torn apart again in the upcoming 2016 election with conflict already arising between the policy programmes of Clinton and her fellow Democrat candidates over abortion and economic policy.

The Republican party has, over the past thirty years become more and more divided, culminating with the creation of the ultra-conservative tea party in 2008. The Republican party can be categorised into three clear ideological groups. The fiscal conservatives or as they are better known, the Country Club conservatives tend to be the most centred in terms of social policy however believe

in big business and limited government intervention they include names such as Mitt Romney, 2012 presidential candidate. The 'compassionate' conservatives are big supporters of traditional family and American values and was the banner used by George W. Bush during his 2000 election campaign. The Tea party is known as being the most conservative wing of the party in both an economic and social sense with supporters including Rick Warren, Michelle Bachmann and Marco Rubio. The 'country club' conservatives should in theory have Tea party sympathies for limited government however during the economic climate of the past 10 years, they have increasingly come into conflict. The Tea party vehemently opposed TARP and the 2009 auto-bailouts as far too much government intervention however, the fiscal conservatives supported these measures in the most part, as economic recovery measures and economic stimuli. Both the Tea party and the 'compassionate' conservatives are united in terms of social policy, pro-life, anti-same sex marriage and strong supporters of gun rights however they increasingly find dissent among the more centric social conservatives who believe that it is not the government's place to legislate on such issues. Arguably however, the one area that has acted as a uniting force is the opposition to ObamaCare however it is for different reasons that all three wings oppose such policy and therefore can still be seen as relatively divisive. Overall, the ideological

faultlines opening across America are increasingly pulling the Republican party in different directions and unlike the Democrats, the party appears to be forming its own smaller more exclusive tents under the Republican banner rather than joining under one 'Big Tent'.

In conclusion, the Republican Party is now more divided than the Democrat party and appears to be pulling in different directions. However as 2016 looms, commentators are questioning the chances of Tea party prodigies such as Sen. Marco Rubio after many Tea party members were defeated in the 2014 mid-terms. The Democrats are more united as a front however seem to be lacking in much to argue about as Obama enters his lame duck period. The success of the Tea party and the United front of the Republicans will be revealed in 2016.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The strength of this answer lies with the balance of historical knowledge and contemporary detail, which was a characteristic of many answers to this question. Unlike many, it also explains clearly the differences between 'country club' conservatives and the Tea Party over such issues as TARP.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Conclusions - all long answers need a conclusion when the main argument is restated, and this answer makes a reasonable job of it.

Question 7

Election essay questions are usually popular, so it was a little surprising that this was by some way the least attempted of the three 45 mark questions, and also surprising that in many answers there was a lack of detailed knowledge of the 2014 elections, which had taken place only eight months previously. The last question set on the midterms asked whether they were a referendum on the president, and this one required very similar arguments. Stronger answers drew on elections going back to 1994, and most concluded that the increasing 'nationalisation' of the midterms, which had begun then, meant that national factors were indeed more important than local ones. Level 2 answers were typically very generic and discussed local factors in terms of incumbency and gerrymandering, with little or no reference to actual elections or politicians. An example which could have been used in a variety of ways was the primary defeat of Eric Cantor, but in fact it was seen more often in question 6 answers than here. A few answers referred to gubernatorial elections and initiatives and propositions but rarely managed to make them relevant.

At the weaker end, there was confusion over the difference between national and local factors, and the evidence used was often from presidential year elections.

Put a cross in the box indicating the question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

Congressional midterms occur in between the presidential elections. The whole of the House is up for re-election and 1/3 of the Senate is up for re-election. The ~~overall~~ ~~said~~ 'All politics is local' for reasons such as party bias, politics, gerrymandering. The O'Neil is right to say ~~congress~~ 'all politics is local'. However factors such as the ~~catal~~ ~~effect~~, ~~regional~~ midterms being a referendum on the president and national campaigns this is not true. I will argue that local factors are more important than national factors in midterms.

So firstly, the strongest argument to suggest local politics is the most important factor is pork barrel politics. Many house members are required to live in their congressional district by the locality rule. This is a bid to keep many representatives in touch with their districts needs. The King of pork Robert Byrd secured millions of dollars of funding for infrastructure - such as broad improvements and building bridges. As House members have 2 year terms it is very important that they are responsive to district needs as these are the issues that affect the everyday lives of constituents meaning they care more about this in essence, Eric Cantor the majority leader was defeated by Christopher O'Donnell because he fell out of touch in primary congressional primaries in 2014 as he fell out of touch with his voters being caught up more in national issues. ~~As~~ In Gallup polls 46% of people are happy with their representative however in ~~2013~~ Nov 2013 Congress had a 9% approval rating. This suggests that overall, issues that local issues that affect the everyday lives of voters are of top priority. This is exemplified in Eric Cantor's defeat meaning that when it comes to midterms both senators and House members need to have brought home the bacon otherwise it is quite likely they will face defeat. *

However, one might argue that national efforts ~~cannot~~ capture the midterm voters more. Campaigns such as Contract for America which set out ~~ten~~ key policies changes that ~~needed~~ wanted to be enacted, ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~for~~ ~~06~~ Get voters attention more than local issues.

Moreover, ~~6~~ For 06 included ~~6~~ key areas where democrats wanted change. Most ~~the~~ congressmen signed up for this using it as a basis of promotion when campaigning. Some may argue that national efforts like this show unity attracting voters as they see a strong bond. Also the type of people that vote in midterms are more ~~politically~~ interested in politics than in comparison to the voters at the general election so they may be more interested in national ideological ~~efforts~~ policies than local issues.

* Some ~~case~~ fiscal conservatives may not be attracted by bringing home the bacon as they deem earmarks irresponsible spending.

Another local factor that affects congressional elections especially in the house is gerrymandering. This after the 2010 census meant that many congressional districts had to be reapportioned.

As state legislators are in control of this likely by one party many use packing or cracking to maximise the wasted votes of one party to advantage the other. This had an effect on the midterms in 2010 and 2014 as many Republican beneficiary districts had been drawn up such as Texas 2nd district. This local factor greatly affects ~~the~~ House members at elections putting them either at great advantage or great disadvantage. Many liberals are greatly apposed to gerrymandering under state control. Democrats have proposed a gerrymandering bill.

Lastly, midterms act as a referendum on the president and in 2014 Obama lost the Senate to the Republicans by 9 seats.

Midterms can be seen to be affected by national factors such as the coattail effect where many Rep Democrats in 2008 won seats where Republicans normally win due to Obama's great campaign, dissatisfaction with Bush and the war in Iraq. This meant that when Obama did not ~~make~~ ^{make} conservatives angry at Obama care and attempts to reform immigration many congressmen lost their seats.

However, some argue that America is a 100 party system where parties differ from state to state focusing on their issues. For example people in Florida may be more concerned about ~~immigration~~

of pensions as they have an elderly population
by then say Washington DC so their party
and state party committee may focus
more on their issues. *

In conclusion, I think that Tip O'Neill
was right in saying all politics is local
politics during midterms as this is when
the horse is held to account. Moreover,
even Obama in his campaign focused
on issues affecting swing states showing
that overall people care more about
local day to day issues than national
overriding campaigns. *

* This is because of the parties being
big tents and the loss of control
in the national committee.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is typical of the better answers to this question. It is clearly argued and draws on a reasonable range of points, but specific knowledge of the 2014 midterms (and all others) is quite thin; it is one of the few to refer to the defeat of Eric Cantor (although Cantor's vanquisher was not Christine O'Donnell as the candidate claims) but apart from that, and a reference to the unpopularity of the president, there is very little here. It would be surprising if the candidate came into the exam intending to answer a question on the midterms results but, if they are improvising, they do a respectable job. The candidate gets credit for referring to three separate elections, albeit in very general terms.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Introductions - essays need an introduction, in which the candidate explains the nature of the debate the question gives rise to and the direction they intend to take. This introduction makes a reasonable attempt at both, and the Tip O'Neill quote is a nice touch.

Question 8

Race questions are always popular, but not all candidates found this one accessible. As sometimes seems to be the case with the pressure groups topic, a good number of candidates had a prepared race answer which they reproduced whatever the question and, in many answers, the key term of the question, 'doomed to failure', disappeared from view at an early stage. Most answers were a familiar affirmative action success/failure narrative, with the usual dubious-looking statistics on both sides, and these almost all ended up at some point within Level 2. It was surprising that most candidates relied on this battle of statistics and failed to make more of the theoretical arguments around affirmative action and link them to the question. Some did though, and the 'No Excuses' argument, for example, could be very obviously cited as a reason why affirmative action is indeed doomed to failure. The stronger answers were characterised by their clarity and consistent focus on the question. The Ferguson riots were potentially more rewardable here than in question three answers but were only infrequently linked convincingly to the question; candidates tended to focus on the lack of minority representation in the police force and the failure of attempts to increase it, rather than seeing police behaviour as a symptom of the racism which might be held to doom measures to increase equality. The vast majority of the answers were focused on affirmative action as expected, although there was uncertainty in some answers over what exactly affirmative action is, and some distinguished unnecessarily between quotas and affirmative action. Beyond affirmative action, candidates ranged widely: the Civil Rights Act and majority-minority districts were referred to frequently and were rewardable. *Brown v Topeka Board* also appeared, but few made the case that it was indeed as a political measure, and it was also hard to reward immigration reform as a measure to promote racial equality. Few will have studied the Affordable Care Act in this context but, given the disproportionately high number of the uninsured among minority groups, it could be argued very plausibly to be such a measure.

Put a cross in the box indicating the question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

To a ~~an~~ certain extent, political measures to promote racial equality are doomed to failure this is due to the ~~conservative~~ ^{conservative} view that it shouldn't be about equality, but 'equality of opportunity', the fact that affirmative action causes reverse discrimination, it is difficult to phase out a programme such as affirmative action once it has been put in place, measures to promote equality based on race can't end discrimination on the basis of race, people are less likely to trust people who have benefitted

from affirmative action such as doctors and many people simply don't notice the changes made by measures put in place because they have nowhere to start from. On the other hand, you could argue that political measures to promote racial equality are doomed to failure because of the moderate view that they need time to work ^{and} the promising results that we have seen so far.

are doomed to failure firstly because they cause reverse discrimination. In a survey, 61% of people thought that the affirmative action programmes were unfair because they give advantage to some but discriminate against others. Arguably this shows that political measures taken to promote racial equality are doomed because they don't actually promote equality at all; they only lead to reverse discrimination which cannot lead to an equal society.

* (Page 18)

As Clarence Thomas stated, "government cannot make us equal." This would suggest that any measures taken by the government won't lead to equality and that this will only end in a more unequal society. Equality has to come from society changes itself. The conservative view of affirmative action is that it should be ended and that 'equality of opportunity' should be promoted rather than 'equality of result'. This is because

are doomed to failure firstly because they cause reverse discrimination. In a survey, 67% of people thought that the affirmative action programmes were unfair because they give advantage to some but discriminate against others. Arguably this shows that political measures taken to promote racial equality are doomed because they don't actually promote equality at all; they only lead to reverse discrimination which cannot lead to an equal society.

* (Page 18)

As Clarence Thomas stated, "government cannot make us equal." This would suggest that any measures taken by the government won't lead to equality and that this will only end in a more unequal society. Equality has to come from society changes itself. The conservative view on affirmative action is that it should be ended and that 'equality of opportunity' should be promoted rather than ~~'equality of result'~~ 'equality of result'. This is because add to it - equality has to come from society itself.

It is also difficult for a programme, such as affirmative action, based on race to end discrimination on the basis of race. As Chief Justice Roberts said, "one way to stop discriminating on the basis of race, is to stop discriminating on the basis of race." This suggests

that when the government puts so much emphasis on the need for racial equality, it actually makes it seem that race will never just not matter, especially if it is promoted by an unequal society through racial equality programmes. In this respect, political measures ~~designed~~ to promote racial equality are doomed to failure because they simply emphasise the racial gap and don't add to a colour blind society.

It is difficult to phase out such programmes such as affirmative action once they are in place. Racial extremist Al Sharpton has even admitted that the US is way ahead in terms of race than it was in the 1960s.

If these ~~political~~ measures are in place and keep making progress, when can we know to ~~not~~ remove them? Justice Sandra Day O'Connor suggested 25 years, but even then we won't know if racial equality has been achieved.

The fact that we can't remove such political measures suggests that they are doomed because they will ~~not~~ continue to ~~be~~ cause reverse discrimination until they are removed and ~~it~~ it can't be known when the best time to remove them is. Therefore ~~racial~~ political measures to promote racial equality are doomed to failure.

to ~~not~~ remove them? Justice Sandra Day O'Connor suggested 25 years, but even then we won't know if racial equality has been achieved.

The fact that we can't remove such political measures suggests that they are doomed because they will ~~not~~ continue to ~~be~~ cause reverse discrimination until they are removed and ~~it~~ it can't be known when the best time to remove them is. Therefore ~~racial~~ political measures to promote racial equality are doomed to failure.

actually impact the majority of people.

On the other hand, the promising results that can be seen from affirmative action suggests that political measures to promote racial equality aren't doomed to failure. Statistics from a BPS survey show that ~~over~~ 689 ~~black~~ black students ^{out of 2000} applying to universities got into their first choice, furthermore, the amount of black people graduating university has risen from 5.1% in 1972 to 15.1% in 1997. This shows that political measures to promote racial equality are actually working, they are increasing the amount of ~~black~~ minorities who go into further education and are therefore not doomed to failure.

Also, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's view that affirmative action should be no longer needed by 2028 and views with liberals that racial equality programmes are working with the statistics given above shows that the political measures taken to promote racial equality are not doomed to failure, but that they just need more time to work and eventually phase out and no longer be necessary. The results from equality programmes such as affirmative action are promising and show that in time such measures will no longer be necessary. This shows that political measures taken to promote racial equality are not doomed to failure and will one day have achieved results.

* Also, people are less likely to want to go to a doctor who has been given a university place or a job due to racial equality programmes. It is shown that children who go to schools where they aren't clever enough but get in based on affirmative action, end up in the bottom 10% of their class. This means that people who are given advantages aren't always very well suited to the job or form of education and therefore in some cases, political measures to promote racial equality are doomed to failure.

In conclusion, political measures taken to promote racial equality are doomed to failure because they don't promote equality of opportunity, they cause reverse discrimination, they aren't noticed by the majority of minorities, it is difficult to remove them once they are in place, people are less likely to ~~be~~ succeed when they have been given a job ^{or a place} at a university with an advantage and it is difficult for programmes based on race to actually remove racial discrimination from society. There is a slight opposing argument that they aren't doomed to failure because they have had promising results so far and arguably just need more time to succeed, however, overall, political measures taken to promote racial equality are doomed to failure.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The merit of this answer is that it stays focused on the question throughout. The quality of the analysis is not particularly high, and some of the evidence has the anecdotal quality which unfortunately characterises many race answers. The 'statistics' are unimpressive, particularly the references to surveys on pages two and four which, if they weren't made up on the spot, might as well have been. Examiners saw several versions of the comparative figures for black graduation - 1972 and 1997 here - but they were almost always comparisons between the 70s and the 90s, which seem very dated now.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Statistics - unless you can cite a source, or the figures are either very well known or very easily checkable (the percentage of incumbents re-elected in 2014 for example), statistics add nothing to an answer and give the impression you are having to scrape the barrel of your knowledge.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates should:

- Employ a short answer structure - three points developed fully or four points with less detail can both work equally well
- Use examples supporting the points they are making, and make them as detailed as possible
- Think carefully before they start writing about which elements of their knowledge can be made relevant
- Ensure long answers have a conclusion when the main argument is restated
- Use only those sources or statistics or figures which are very well known or easily checkable. Do not cite sources or statistics which add nothing to the answer

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

Ofqual
.....



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL.