

General Certificate of Education
January 2006
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 3 Features of a Representative Democracy

GOV3

Wednesday 11 January 2006 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is GOV3.
- Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
In Section A, answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
In Section B, answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

Advice

- You are advised to read through the examination paper before you attempt the questions.
- You are advised to spend the same amount of time on each question.

Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

SECTION A

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

1 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Parliaments

The main centres of power in the European Union (EU) are no more accountable to the British Parliament than to the European Parliament. The Council of Ministers, the main executive body in Brussels, is composed of representatives of national governments. If MPs wish to influence the Council they must do so through the British Parliament. This, of course, gives the government a decisive role. Thus the *democratic deficit* evident in the European Parliament reinforces 'elective dictatorship' at Westminster.

On European matters, just as with everything else, ministers may take note of parliamentary opinion but they may also ignore it. EU membership, therefore, provides reinforcement for the view that, in Britain, Parliament is dominated by the political power of the government.

Source: adapted from I BUDGE *et al*, *The New British Politics*, Pearson Education Limited, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *democratic deficit* in the context of the European Parliament. (8 marks)
- (b) 'In Britain, Parliament is dominated by the political power of the government.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

- 2 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

The Socio-economic Profile of Elected Representatives

The socio-economic profile of *elected representatives* remains controversial within British politics. Although successive British governments have outlawed discrimination against disadvantaged groups, this has had little effect on helping those groups gain more representation in public life. For example, women, ethnic minorities and working-class men are all under-represented in the House of Commons. However, before the 1997 general election, the Labour Party changed its selection procedures to ensure that many winnable constituencies chose a candidate from an all-women short list, and this did result in substantially more women MPs. Although this selection procedure was subsequently ruled to be contrary to the Sex Discrimination Act, Labour then adopted a new selection policy for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly elections which had the desired effect on the gender balance in the two bodies.

Source: adapted from J FISHER and D DENVER, 'Enduring Questions about Politics' in J FISHER *et al*, *Central Debates in British Politics*, Pearson Education Limited, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *elected representatives* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Many social groups are still under-represented in Parliament and in other representative institutions within British politics.' Discuss. (22 marks)

Turn over for the next Section

SECTION B

Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

3 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Text from P COCKER and A JONES, *Contemporary British Politics and Government*, Liverpool Academic Press, 2002, pp212-213. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

- (a) Explain the term *anonymous* in the context of the civil service. (8 marks)
- (b) 'The potential for power within the higher ranks of the civil service remains considerable.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

- 4 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Government Departments and the Cabinet

The British constitution gives exceptional power to governments supported by a majority in the House of Commons. The Prime Minister is the most powerful member of the Cabinet and the Cabinet effectively is the government. The way they work together raises important and controversial questions. Has the Prime Minister been transformed into a completely dominant political leader? Is the Cabinet still the effective centre of all important decision-making? Is the Prime Minister just a colleague of Cabinet ministers or their boss? How independent is the Cabinet anyway when the main job of each Cabinet minister is to defend his or her own *government department*?

Source: adapted from I BUDGE *et al*, *The New British Politics*, Pearson Education Limited, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *government department* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'The Cabinet is still effectively the centre of important government decision-making.' Discuss. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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