

General Certificate of Education  
June 2007  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**  
**Unit 1 Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour**

**GOV1**

Tuesday 5 June 2007 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 GOV1.
- 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 to be marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**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.

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

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**SECTION A**

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

Each question carries 30 marks.

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**EITHER**

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

**By-elections**

Some parliamentary seats fall vacant between general elections as a result of the death or resignation of a sitting MP. Under the British system these vacancies result in by-elections to fill the seat. By-elections differ from general elections in a number of important ways. First, the unique circumstances of a by-election may result in very different voting patterns from the previous general election. Lower turnout, protest voting, local candidates and local issues all shape by-elections in a way that does not occur at national elections. Many of the seats currently held by the Liberal Democrats were first won at by-elections. Secondly, the intense concentration of publicity may encourage an assortment of *protest candidates* and parties to stand.

Source: adapted from G PEELE, *Governing the UK*, Blackwell, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *protest candidates* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Large swings and low turnouts were once only typical of by-elections. Today they are typical of **both** general elections **and** by-elections.' Discuss. (22 marks)

**OR**

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

Extract removed due to copyright constraints.

Source: adapted from J KINGDOM, *Government and Politics in Britain*, Polity Press, 2003, page 185

- (a) Briefly explain the term *political values* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) To what extent do young people share a political culture that differs from the political culture of middle-aged and elderly people? (22 marks)

**Turn over for Section B**

**Turn over ▶**

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**SECTION B**Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.Each question carries 30 marks.

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**EITHER**

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

<b>The General Election of May 2005</b>		
	Share of the Vote (%)	Number of MPs returned
Labour	36	356
Conservative	33	197
Liberal Democrat	23	62
Others	8	30

Immediate results of the 2005 General Election gave Labour a much reduced *majority in the House of Commons*. With turnout at 61%, this meant that barely one in five of the electorate voted for Labour. Indeed, almost twice as many abstained as voted for Labour. In England, Conservatives won more votes than Labour but were rewarded with 93 fewer seats. Electoral support was low for the party of government and also for the main opposition party, which has resulted in genuine three-party politics becoming a reality in Britain.

- (a) Explain the term *majority in the House of Commons* used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Labour lost support in 2005 and won fewer seats, showing that the First-Past-The-Post system can and does respond to changing electoral opinion.' Discuss. (22 marks)

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**OR**

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

**Referendums**

Referendums are not necessarily the populist democratic device that their supporters sometimes claim. In the UK, they are not *binding on the government* and the timing can be important in determining the outcome. The differences in the resources available to competing groups in a referendum campaign may prevent equal presentation of competing opinions during the campaign. Finally, referendums force complex questions to be reduced to simple yes or no answers.

In 2004 78% of voters in the North-East of England said 'no' to the idea of setting up an elected regional assembly. The Government accepted that a clear message had been sent to Westminster by the voters and that the idea of English devolution was now dead. However, turnout in the all-postal vote was only 48%, and only months prior to the referendum the 'yes' campaign had been 21% ahead in local opinion polls.

Source: first paragraph adapted from A R BALL & B G PETERS, *Modern Politics and Government*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

- (a) Explain the term *binding on the government* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Referendum results rarely show what the electorate wants.' Discuss. (22 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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