



General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics 2151

GOV4C Perspectives on Modern Politics

Report on the Examination

2010 examination – June series

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Government and Politics

GOV4C – Perspectives on Modern Politics

General

This was a small cohort. However, it did contain two quite large centres. These produced some very good work showing that, where centres chose to concentrate in the areas, the paper is quite accessible. This was the first sitting of this paper. While three of the topic areas appeared in the previous specification, one of them, globalisation, is entirely new. Interestingly, this proved popular and was generally very well done. The topic of Change and Continuity was also popular, noticeably more so than previously. In general, it was apparent that candidates did not appear to have found the 10-mark questions any easier than those carrying 30 marks. In a few cases, candidates did not even attempt the 10-mark question. This may be because these questions allow less scope for discursive treatment and call more for factual knowledge.

Topic 1 – Participation and Representation

Question 01

Many candidates had difficulty with this question. They obviously chose to attempt it because they wished to answer question 02. Although the two terms in the question are featured in the key concepts of the specification, candidates simply did not appear to be familiar with them. Some were able to deduce the meaning and thereby give a reasonable description of the activities, even if they could not associate them with the respective functions of political parties and pressure groups. However, a surprising number of candidates were unable to do this. It appeared that the word 'aggregation' was not understood. Some appeared to take it to be related to, or derived from, 'aggression' and therefore argued that the term denoted interest groups, or individuals, that resort to violence.

Question 02

This was a popular question for which many candidates appeared well prepared. Candidates discussed the nature of participation and the various forms it might take. Weaker candidates tended to concentrate more on voting, some even treating it as a question on voting behaviour and the problems of apathy. The stronger candidates identified a range of forms of participation such as voting in referendums, campaigning, joining a party, lobbying, demonstrating, pressure-group membership, direct action, party funding, meetings with bureaucrats, and so on. The best candidates responded to the key discriminator in the question by identifying and analysing unequal levels of participation related to factors such as access to government, wealth, position, class, professional status, expertise, and so on.

Topic 2 – Globalisation

Question 03

Generally speaking, this question was well done. While few candidates detailed all the features in the mark scheme, they made intelligent use of their knowledge. Some were able to trace the history of the development of the concept of the nation-state.

Question 04

This proved a popular question. The strong candidates appeared very well informed on this central aspect of globalisation, and wrote with confidence and enthusiasm. Most were able to illustrate their discussion with a good range of telling examples. In addition to transnational corporations and governments, they were able to consider other actors in the global arena such as international economic institutions like the World Bank and IMF, and also to make reference to the activities of anti-globalisation movements.

Topic 3 – Change and Continuity

Question 05

Although the topic was quite popular, some candidates did not appear to recognise the way in which this question related to the issue of change and continuity. A number did not appear comfortable with the word ‘entrenched’. Some took it to mean ‘written’. This led to discussion of flexible versus rigid constitutions, which was worthy of credit. However, the best answers were those that addressed the normative thrust of the question.

Question 06

Candidates recognised that this question lies at the heart of politics and political debate. They were generally able to give valid examples of the policy positions of parties in opposition and in government. Many were able to refute the proposition in question, with the examples of the Attlee and Thatcher governments adduced in support. The 1997 Labour government was regularly cited to support the proposition. Most candidates were able to produce evidence for and against the proposition and tended to reach an intermediate position.

Topic 4 – Territorial Politics

Question 07

These two concepts were basic to the topic area and candidates appeared well equipped to address them. Examples chosen as illustration were usually Britain and the USA. Most were able to consider devolution as a relevant factor in the discussion. There were also several who brought in the development of the European Union.

Question 08

Candidates were generally able to address this question and showed some basic knowledge of key historical events. The time scales chosen for the analysis varied, with some candidates considering only relatively recent factors.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.