



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Examination
January 2011

Government and Politics

GOV3A

Unit 3A The Politics of the USA

Friday 21 January 2011 9.00am to 10.30am

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or black 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 GOV3A.
- Choose **two** topics and answer **both** questions in each topic.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - 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 topic.

Choose **two** topics and answer **both** questions in each topic.

Each topic carries 40 marks.

Topic 1 The Electoral Process and Direct Democracy

0 | 1 Consider the significance of the 'invisible primary' in the presidential nomination process. (10 marks)

0 | 2 Evaluate how democratic, in practice, initiatives and referendums are in making public policy decisions in the USA. (30 marks)

Topic 2 Political Parties

0 | 3 Why may it not be totally accurate to describe the USA as having a two-party system? (10 marks)

0 | 4 'Two broad coalitions with more ideological differences within them than between them.' To what extent is this still an accurate description of the Democratic and Republican parties? (30 marks)

Topic 3 Voting Behaviour

0 | 5 What are 'swing voters' and how important are they in US elections? (10 marks)

0 | 6 'The huge social diversity within the US electorate means it is impossible to predict voting behaviour accurately.' To what extent do you agree with this view? (30 marks)

Topic 4 Pressure Groups

0 | 7 Consider the role and significance of political action committees (PACs) in the USA. (10 marks)

0 | 8 'The democratic advantages of the activities of pressure groups in the US political system far outweigh any concerns regarding their power and influence.' Discuss. (30 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS