



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Subsidiary Examination
June 2014

Government and Politics

GOVP1

Unit 1 People, Politics and Participation

Tuesday 20 May 2014 9.00 am to 10.30 am

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 **Paper Reference** is GOVP1.
- Choose **two** topics and answer **all** questions on 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.
- Questions **0 2** and **0 3**, **0 5** and **0 6**, **0 8** and **0 9**, **1 1** and **1 2** should be answered in continuous prose. For these questions 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 **all** questions on each topic.

Each topic carries 40 marks.

Topic 1 Participation and Voting Behaviour

Read the extract below and answer questions

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 and

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 which follow.

The media and elections

‘Pluralism’ goes hand-in-hand with a free press, with voters naturally getting much of their information on politics from the media. Television is a crucial medium, particularly with the advent of leaders’ debates in 2010. One in four voters said that they changed their mind on how to vote after the first debate.

Studies of the impact of newspapers on voting behaviour have not produced a definitive verdict. Rather, there are three broad perspectives:

1 Influence

The view that newspapers have direct influence over the voting behaviour of their readers.

2 Reinforcement

The view that newspapers simply reinforce the views already held by their readers; that most people read a newspaper that reflects their political views and rely on television news for non-partisan coverage.

3 Agenda-shaping

The view that the press is unlikely to have a direct influence on voting, but does help to shape the political agenda.

Source: adapted from P Lynch and P Fairclough, AS UK Government & Politics, reproduced in adapted form by permission of Philip Allan Updates, 2010

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 Explain the term ‘pluralism’ used in the extract. [5 marks]
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 Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, consider the part played by the mass media at UK general elections. [10 marks]
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 ‘There is no participation crisis in the UK.’ Discuss. [25 marks]

Topic 2 Electoral Systems

Read the extract below and answer questions **0 4**, **0 5** and **0 6** which follow.

Referendums in the UK

Following the General Election of 2010, the 'coalition government' proposed a national referendum on whether to adopt the Alternative Vote system (AV) for elections to the Westminster Parliament. After some controversy, Parliament legislated for the referendum to be held on 5 May 2011. Following a campaign that lasted several weeks, the vote duly took place. The result was a decisive 'no' to the introduction of AV.

Although the turnout (just 42.2%) demonstrated a high degree of public apathy, the scale of the defeat for those who favoured reform was resounding. The government immediately announced the abandonment of proposals for electoral reform for 'the foreseeable future'.

On the surface, it could be said that the AV referendum of May 2011 was a success. It produced a clear result that resolved a major political controversy. It also prevented the government from introducing a reform that did not command widespread public support.

Source: adapted from N McNaughton, P Fairclough and E Magee, UK Government and Politics Annual Update, reproduced in adapted form by permission of Philip Allan Updates, 2012

- 0 4** Explain the term 'coalition government' used in the extract. **[5 marks]**
- 0 5** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** ways in which referendums can be said to enhance democracy. **[10 marks]**
- 0 6** 'The case for retaining the First-Past-the-Post system for use at UK general elections is overwhelming.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

Turn over for the next question

Turn over ►

Topic 3 Political Parties

Read the extract below and answer questions **0 7**, **0 8** and **0 9** which follow.

Political parties and their members

The main UK political parties are so much more than collections of elected local councillors, representatives serving in devolved bodies, Westminster MPs, and MEPs sitting in 'transnational party groupings' at the European Parliament. They are also mass membership organisations that might reasonably be expected to give grassroots members some say in how things are run.

The ability to shape policy is the most significant index of power within a political party. There are two extreme models: top-down, in which the regular members obediently play follow-my-leader, and bottom-up, where they see MPs and other elected representatives as their delegates. Most mainstream UK parties are seen as falling somewhere between these two models. However, in recent years, commentators have criticised the three largest UK parties for reducing the influence of rank-and-file members and placing more power into the hands of party leaders. Labour's move towards a two-year policy-making cycle in the 1990s, for example, was said to have reduced the power of the party's annual conference.

Source: adapted from J Kingdom, *Government and Politics in Britain: An Introduction*, Polity Press, 2003

- 0 7** Explain the term 'transnational party groupings' as used in the extract. **[5 marks]**
- 0 8** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, consider the extent to which ordinary members of the main UK political parties influence party policy. **[10 marks]**
- 0 9** Evaluate the view that UK political parties are now simply catch-all, election-winning machines. **[25 marks]**

Topic 4 Pressure Groups and Protest Movements

Read the extract below and answer questions **1 0**, **1 1** and **1 2** which follow.

Internal pressure group democracy

Discussion of pressure groups and democracy often focuses on the existence of insider groups and well-established, tight 'policy communities'. However, most pressure groups are not themselves internally democratic. Even where leaders are elected, the electoral processes in place often lack transparency. While there may be elaborate networks of committees to discuss policy, direct consultation of the membership may be limited to the occasional questionnaire or internet poll. In some ways, the internet makes it easier to engage in superficial forms of consultation that can act as a mask for the absence of proper democratic arrangements. Members may really be supporters, providing funds and campaign support but with few opportunities to challenge group policies or strategies. Many members may be content with a passive role. However, if groups fail to offer an opportunity to participate in decision-making, their representative legitimacy may be called into question.

Source: adapted from W Grant, Civil Society and the Internal Democracy of Interest Groups, a paper prepared for the annual conference of the Political Studies Association, 2002

- 1 0** Explain the term 'policy communities' as used in the extract. **[5 marks]**
- 1 1** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain why it might be desirable for pressure groups to be internally democratic. **[10 marks]**
- 1 2** 'Despite widespread interest in their activities, pressure groups rarely have any significant influence over government policy.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

END OF QUESTIONS

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