



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED
General Certificate of Education
January 2010

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit A2 1

Comparative Government

[AQ211]

FRIDAY 22 JANUARY, MORNING



AQ211

TIME

2 hours 15 minutes.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided. Choose **either Option A:** the United Kingdom and the United States of America **or Option B:** the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

From the questions in your chosen option, answer **1, 2, 3, 4** and either **5(a)** or **5(b)**.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 100.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in Questions **1, 3, 4** and **5**.

Figures in brackets printed down the right-hand side of pages indicate the marks awarded to each question or part question.

ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

You are advised to take account of the marks for each question in allocating the available examination time.

For your chosen option, you should spend approximately **40 minutes** in answering the question in Section A and should make reference to the Source in your answer.

Option A: The United Kingdom and the United States of America

Section A: The US Constitution

Study the source below and answer the question that follows.

Source

Failures in the 1970s and 1980s to manage the economy, to combat poverty, to provide proper welfare services, and to protect the dollar began to be explained as a failure of the political system. The system of separation of powers, if it did not actually cause governmental failure, encouraged it. Members of the Congress were obsessed by the need to win the support of their districts in order to gain re-election. The President, elected from the national constituency, reflected a different set of popular wishes. In such a situation, it is difficult to provide effective government.

Adapted from Singh.R., *Governing America: The Politics of a Divided Democracy*, Oxford University Press. 2003

- 1 With reference to the Source and any other relevant information you have studied, discuss the extent to which the US Constitution has provided a framework for effective government. [30]

Section B: Government in the UK and USA

Answer all four questions.

- 2 Explain what is meant by the term 'lame duck' President. Support your answer with a relevant example.

- 3 Explain how the Senate can influence presidential appointments. [10]

- 4 Compare and contrast the effectiveness of the US Congress and UK Parliament as representative bodies. [25]

- 5 **Either**
 - (a) "American Presidents are less constrained by their Cabinets than their UK counterparts." Evaluate this view. [30]

- Or**
 - (b) "Executive control over the legislature is more complete in the UK than in the USA." Evaluate this view. [30]

Option B: The United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

Section A: The Irish Constitution

Study the source below and answer the question that follows.

Source

The 1937 constitution guaranteed the usual liberal democratic rights – habeas corpus, free association, free speech and so on. The articles setting out these rights were influenced by Catholic social thought. In some cases there is nothing visibly Catholic about the language used in Bunreacht na hÉireann. However, in other cases the Catholic flavour is obvious, such as the prohibition of divorce. Two clauses of Article 44 gave Roman Catholicism a unique status while the State merely “recognised” a list of other and presumably less significant religions.

Adapted from John Coakley and Michael Gallagher Politics in the Republic of Ireland PSAI Press. 2nd Edition. 1996. p54.

- 1 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, discuss whether twenty-first century Ireland needs a new constitution. [30]

Section B: Government in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

Answer all four questions.

- 2 Explain what is meant by the term 'coalition government.' Support your answer with a relevant example. [10]
- 3 Explain how any Irish government is able to dominate the Seanad. [10]
- 4 Compare and contrast the scrutiny powers of the House of Commons and Dáil Éireann. [25]
- 5 **Either**
- (a) "British Prime Ministers are cabinet 'Chiefs'; their Irish counterparts have far less control." Evaluate this view. [30]
- Or**
- (b) "Executive control over the legislature is more complete in the UK than in the Republic of Ireland." Evaluate this view. [30]

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER

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