

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2011

GCE

Government and Politics 6GP04 4B
Ideological Traditions

Edexcel is one of the leading examining and awarding bodies in the UK and throughout the world. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers.

Through a network of UK and overseas offices, Edexcel's centres receive the support they need to help them deliver their education and training programmes to learners.

For further information, please call our GCE line on 0844 576 0025, our GCSE team on 0844 576 0027, or visit our website at www.edexcel.com.

If you have any subject specific questions about the content of this Examiners' Report that require the help of a subject specialist, you may find our **Ask The Expert** email service helpful.

Ask The Expert can be accessed online at the following link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/Aboutus/contact-us/>

January 2011

Publications Code UA026415

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Edexcel Ltd 2011

General Comments:

Although, because of re-sitting candidates, more candidates entered for this unit than in January 2010, the size of entry for this unit remains small. In this light, the comments below on responses will be brief, as they may apply only to a small number of centres, or possibly a single, large centre.

Question 1

The relationship between liberalism and multiculturalism appears to be well understood. Strong responses recognised that, from the perspective of pluralist multiculturalism, liberalism can only accept cultural diversity if it operates within a liberal framework, especially as toleration is restricted to those who are also prepared to practise toleration. The major weakness was in those responses that approached the question from the perspective of liberal multiculturalism, in which case they struggled to identify ways in which multiculturalists may criticise liberalism.

Question 2

There were some very strong and thorough answers to this question. The main weakness, however, was that some candidates focused merely on 'how' feminists emphasise the difference between sex and gender, and said very little or nothing at all on the 'why' aspect of the question. In these cases, little was said about the significance of the distinction in feminist analysis. There was also no need to go into the thinking of feminists who reject the distinction.

Question 3

Although most responses distinguished effectively between nations and states, definitions of the state was sometimes vague and lacked analytical rigour, while too many responses suggested that nations were defined, in part, by racial factors. Some candidates also failed to explain why the two terms are often confused, sometimes merely stating that this happens because of the existence of so-called 'nation-states'.

Question 4

Although there were a small number of very effective answers to this question, usually outlining the distinctive nature of eco-anarchism, many responses were highly generalised. Only the best responses recognised that the key to the link is a common belief in spontaneous harmony and natural order, enabling eco-anarchists to believe that the abolition of the state will not only restructure relations between and amongst people but also that between humankind and nature. Quite a few candidates, nevertheless, failed to recognise that eco-anarchism differs from deep ecology, or that eco-anarchists such as Bookchin have been harshly critical of deep ecology.

Question 5

Strong responses to this question recognised that the key conservative reservations about multiculturalism derive from its organic conception of society, although in weaker cases this was merely stated rather than explained. Some candidates placed a heavy emphasis on conservative arguments in favour of tradition, but were less effective in explaining how this linked to reservations about multiculturalism.

Question 6

This was a popular question effectively answered by most candidates who attempted it. A common approach was to examine similarities and differences between liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism, a task that was undertaken with more or less analytical rigour and theoretical insight. Strong responses, in addition, often also examined differences between equality feminism and difference feminism. However, in some cases, inadequate attention was given to the argument that there are unifying themes that run throughout feminist ideology.

Question 7

There were a small number of very effective answers to this question that recognised that ecologism is a broad ideological tradition that embraces quite different views about the extent to which social change and ecological change are linked. In most cases, this was done through an analysis of differences between shallow ecology and deep ecology, although strong responses, helpfully, showed the breadth of thinking within shallow ecology, noting in particular how eco-socialism, eco-anarchism and eco-feminism have each placed particular emphasis on the need for radical social

change. Weak responses sometimes merely provided a generalised account of ecologism.

Question 8

Most responses to this question were sound or stronger. A large proportion of candidates recognised that nationalism has both backward-looking and forward-looking characteristics, depending on which nationalist tradition was being considered. The principal discriminator was the extent to which candidates showed a sophisticated understanding of the competing traditions and focused on the key issue in the question, instead providing a generalised account of nationalist ideas. In too many cases, however, nationalism was treated as a feeling or emotion, rather than as a doctrine or ideology.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

Further copies of this publication are available from
International Regional Offices at www.edexcel.com/international

For more information on Edexcel qualifications, please visit www.edexcel.com
Alternatively, you can contact Customer Services at www.edexcel.com/ask or on + 44 1204 770 696

Edexcel Limited. Registered in England and Wales no.4496750
Registered Office: One90 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH