

# ResultsPlus

Examiners' Report

June 2011

GCE Government and Politics 6GP01 01

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## **Introduction**

The most common comment from assistant examiners this series was of the fairness and accessibility of the paper. It was found to be a platform to both excel upon and also one to discriminate answers in a fair and positive manner. In terms of popularity, we witnessed the eclipsing by some margin of the popularity of the pressure groups question as a first and automatic choice and the dominance of the question on democracy. The question on democracy and elections was often the combined choice on the paper. The question on pressure groups fell in popularity, and again, to an extent in performance the detail on that is supplied below. With the noted exception of question 3(c) which will be discussed, no question presented any misinterpretation or presented difficulties for candidates.



(b) one way in which the UK democracy could be improved is by changing Westminster electoral system into PR. Because of this people may feel that their vote counts more than the first-past-the-post system, because it equals to one person one vote.

Reforming the House of Lords could also improve democracy in the UK because as the second chamber is ~~un~~ unelected people may think it is unfair that unelected bodies or people ~~to~~ to help make legislation so making the House of Lords ~~to~~ elected increases democracy.

~~Another way to improve democracy is~~  
changing the voting age down to sixteen

(c) It ~~g~~ could be argued that there is a participation crisis in the UK because ~~the~~ ~~the~~ the voter turnout has gone down ~~but~~ a however because <sup>there are</sup> many reforms ~~and~~ ~~therefore~~ this is not true to an extent.

One way which we can see that there is a participation crisis in the UK is because the voter turnout has decreased dramatically.

During the 1950's the voter turnout was about 90% but in 2005 the voter turnout dropped to 58% even though it slightly went up to 65% in 2009. ~~There are~~ ~~many~~ Many reasons could affect the voter turnout e.g. people may think that parties have now got similar views so there is no point in voting.

Another way in which <sup>we</sup> can see that there is a participation crisis is because the amount of people joining pressure groups has decreased. We can see this for example trade unions do not have as much members as they did years ago this may be because ~~they~~ people feel that

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((c) continued)

there is no point in pressure groups because they can't do anything, for example make poverty history has not made poverty history and the stop the war in iraq did not stop the war in iraq.

However we could also say that there is not a participation crisis. ~~participation~~ Although the turnout in the uk is low it is similar to other <sup>western</sup> countries such as the us.

~~the~~ ~~any~~ Although in the uk we do not have many referendums, one could say that referendums do not necessarily ~~increase~~ increase participation and too much referendums undermines the government.

Changing the first past the post system would not exactly ~~increase~~ ~~the~~ ~~the~~ increase the participation rate as some would say that ~~the~~ this is a democratic form of voting and people may not care ~~whether~~ ~~the~~ what type of voting system we have.

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((c) continued)

To conclude, the UK does have a participation but only to a n extent because because reforms are being made so people are now more likely to vote.



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**Examiner Comments**

Q1a) This response achieves 3 marks as it raises three valid points which can be credited. (3 marks). Q1b) This response raises three valid means by which democracy in the UK could be improved. The first, changing the voting system is inaccurate but it is poorly developed and although it gets credit for AO1 there is no mark for AO2. "The Lords" is correct and it earns an AO2 credit as does lower the voting age - again a second credit for AO2. (5 and 2 marks). Q1c) The second paragraph contains some inaccuracies but has some correct themes. The third paragraph on pressure groups is ambiguous - yes trade union membership has decreased but overall membership has increased, for example. Importantly, the counter - argument is very poor, how is the link to the US relevant? The theme of participating crisis in denial is not convincingly conveyed. (3, 3, 3 marks).



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**Examiner Tip**

Examples are crucial and important in raising marks and improving performance. However, they must be accurate, up to date and relevant to earn the rewards.



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- (a) A Referendum is a direct vote given to the electorate in the form of a question which requires a yes or no answer in particular proposals. The use of referendum allows a clear answer and final answer to controversial questions. For example the 2011 6M May Referendum was put forth towards electorate to ask whether the electoral system of first past the post should be ~~the~~ reformed to Alternative vote. The results gave a clear answer as more than 60% of the population voted no therefore suggesting they are not in favour of changing the electoral system. The use of Referendum also increases legitimacy as people are legitimizing constitutional decisions and also representing individuals who are not represented by political parties.

(b) Firstly, other than having a wider use of referendum introduced in the UK, compulsory voting can be introduced to enhance democracy.

Compulsory voting would mean citizens have a duty to carry out and therefore cannot discharge the responsibility. The advantages of compulsory voting would ensure an increase in legitimacy as parties can have an overall majority of support, also there would be an increase of participation, whereby electorates have the right to choose their preferred representative making elections more effective. However compulsory voting would mean limited freedom and decrease legitimacy if voters are being forced, although on the other hand it can be argued compulsory voting would mean less apathy towards politics and have more citizens engaged in politics and a more accountable government.

Another way of improving democracy in the UK would be to introduce E-democracy whereby technology is used to communicate links between representatives and constituency or government and the people.

This would also mean election voting is more easier to access than ballot papers and less votes would be wasted if for instance ballot papers are finished or ~~gone~~ polling stations lines are too

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued) ~~more~~ long which may cause voter fatigue.

The use of E-democracy will ensure a more accountability and easier ways <sup>to count votes and</sup> to keep up with policies and government action.

furthermore lowering voting age can improve UK democracy as there would be an increase in turnout, allowing a stable government with majority of support. Also lowering the voting age means people and young citizens are more aware of politics and can be more acknowledged over the development of democracy or the deficit of UK democracy.

However it can be argued lowering the voting age can lead to those with less knowledge to vote not so sensibly or encourage "donkey voting" whereby electors vote for the sake of getting it done and having no real interest. This also applies with compulsory voting.

It can be concluded along with the use of referendums, compulsory voting increases legitimacy, lowering voting age allows increase in turnout for a stable and legitimate government meanwhile E-democracy allows easier voting options and less apathy of voters therefore improving the UK democratic ~~system~~ system.

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

(c) "To what extent does the democracy in the UK suffer from political participation?"

The UK democracy suffers from political participation to a fair extent.

Firstly the political participation of citizens has declined over recent years. This is shown in the 2010 general election whereby the UK faced a hung parliament as no party gained a majority which then led to a coalition government of Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. This shows there is a decline in electorates suggesting apathy within the citizens which results in low turnout in general elections and results in a coalition government which can be seen as unstable and weak.

There is also the question of legitimacy of <sup>Parties</sup> ~~parties~~ that are in office who do not enjoy an overall majority of support however still govern in power. However this can be due to the electoral system of first past the post whereby votes are exaggerated and are not of an equal value which may lead to voters not wanting to vote.

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((c) continued) However that does cancel out to say that civic voices are not engaging in politics. There has been an increase of participation through pressure groups and pressure group membership as individuals or groups feel they are better represented rather than voting in elections for parties. The increase of pressure groups shows that people are still aware of politics however would want to concentrate on one cause or issue to influence government by protesting or lobbying instead of having a party in government which have control of a wide range of matters and on occasions do not carry out the pledge of their manifestos which can discourage citizens.

Also the reputation of parliament has decreased due to a MPs expenses scandals and decisions made by the prime minister which affect society such as the 2003 Iraq war which split society.

Furthermore it can be argued parliament accountability has led to a decline in participation due to parliament effectiveness and power of the executive, however despite the decline the increase of pressure groups has shown that the existence of democracy is still alive however indeed citizens feel better represented by

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((c) continued) underground movements rather than officials  
in government.



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### Examiner Comments

Q1a) This a) question gains full marks - even though there is some inaccurate material (60% of the population voting No). there is ample evidence that five marks can be extracted from the response. (5 marks). Q1b) Three suggested routes of improvement delivered with accuracy and clarity, the AO2 if anything is more comprehensive than the AO1. (6 and 3 marks). Q1c) After a really good (a) and (b) section this response now declines; the introduction is not focused - participation levels cannot be really limited to the forming of a coalition. We are given no data on turnout or participation levels in elections. It clearly falls by all AOs into a 'limited' category. (4, 4, 4 marks).



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### Examiner Tip

It is not uncommon for candidates to obtain high marks on the (a) and (b) section to then fail to maintain the standard at the (c) section. Proof of ability is shown in the earlier sections and practice is needed to maintain that momentum.

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(a) There are many key features of a referendum.  
A referendum is a vote on a single issue within parliament where the electorate votes for what they believe it is therefore direct democracy and the vote is put into the hands of the electorate. A referendum is also not a legal requirement, unlike an election and can be held when there is a decision that needs to be made and the party who is in power want to know what the people think. therefore it is giving freedom of speech and conscience to the people. A referendum is also a way to increase democracy in the UK as it allows people to have a say in what they believe and what they want to happen. Each person has a one vote chance within a referendum. A referendum is ~~to~~

You should start the answer to part (b) on page 5

((a) continued) question to the electorate so makes a change in what they want to do and ask the electorate's opinions on what they think the party should or shouldn't do.



(b) Democracy means 'rule by the people'. Therefore, as a democratic country, it is vital that we have a say in UK politics. However, some people may argue that the UK is not always democratic and that some influence is made by the personal opinions of either the pm or mps.

Therefore, democracy can be strengthened in many ways, for example, lowering the voting age would allow more people to vote and therefore make the UK more democratic.

Another way in which the UK could be made more democratic is by allowing people to have a say in the party's manifesto before they come to power, and therefore allowing people to voice their opinion more.

Moreover, another way the UK could be made more democratic is to introduce more of a universal suffrage way of voting. For example allowing people who are imprisoned to vote, therefore making the UK more democratic.

Another way in which the UK could be made more democratic is by

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued) introducing e-democracy, or the AV vote, which may then persuade more and more people to vote and therefore increasing turnout and overall making the UK more democratic.

Democracy can therefore be enhanced in the UK and can allow more and more people to be involved in politics and the country can be ruled by the people without the influence of personal opinions from politicians.

(c) Throughout the UK, there has been recognised that there has been a participation crisis. This means that there is not enough people who turn out to vote every 4 years at an election. However, there are many reasons for the participation crisis.

Firstly, it could be suggested that there has been a participation crisis due to the media, for example if the media causes a bad image about a party, someone is unlikely to go and vote. Therefore, it could be argued to a large extent that there has been a participation crisis.

However, it could be suggested that the media could influence participation because they would want to vote the unwanted party out. Therefore, it could be suggested that they to a small extent is a participation crisis.

Again, there is a participation crisis in the UK to a large extent due to the public. This is because they have voted a party meaning

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((c) continued) they simply cannot be bothered to vote. Therefore, another reason why the UK suffers from a participation crisis.

Moreover, it could be argued that to a large extent the UK has a participation crisis due to education and unclear manifestos between the parties. If two parties have similar manifestos then the public may be confused on who to vote for. Therefore it can be argued that to a large extent the UK suffers from a participation crisis.

However, it could be suggested that the UK does not have a participation crisis because people do still attempt to vote, and there is always a fair decision made. Therefore, it could also be suggested that the UK does not suffer from a participation crisis.

On the other hand a participation crisis in the UK could be blamed on the FPTP voting system. Some people

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((c) continued) may argue that this way of voting is unfair and therefore may not want to vote if they feel that their vote is worthless and that it is an unfair system. Therefore, to a large extent a reason why the UK may suffer from a participation crisis.

However, some people may argue that there is not a participation crisis as many people participate through pressure groups and protests. Therefore, may not be a complete participation crisis.

In conclusion, it is clear that there is a decline in turnout to vote and that possibly if the voting age was lowered there would be less of a participation crisis. However, people do participate in politics and it is clear that some people may not want to vote. Therefore, a balanced argument. However, to a large extent the UK

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((c) continued) does suffer from a partici-  
pation crisis and a decline in  
turnout.



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### Examiner Comments

Q1a) Although there is a considerable amount written here, not all of this can be credited. The response makes a number of statements or generalisations which do not define features of referendums. The final third of the response adds nothing to the mark score. (3 marks). Q1b) This response does raise three methods by which democracy could be improved - indeed it expands to more than three. Lowering voting the voting age is accepted as AO1 - no AO2 credit, contributing to party manifesto is credit worthy for AO1 and AO2. The Universal Suffrage point is also credit worthy. The additional points amalgamating e-democracy and electoral reform would have earned no more marks than the one granted for lowering the voting age. (3 and 2 marks). Q1c) This is a mid range response. The response does not take a ' for vs against' approach, but leads by making point and counterpoint. The inclusion of the media is credit worthy. The response is restricted as there is very little accurate data on turnout levels to consider participation levels against. (4, 4, 4 marks).



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### Examiner Tip

This response is let down in the main by supportive and informative data and this defect is most pronounced in the (c) section.

## **Question 2 (x)**

2a) This response proved to be an extremely accessible question and probably the one that consistently scored the highest marks for the (a) questions. Even the less able candidates were consistently scoring 3 or 4 marks and very few could not provide or furnish examples to illustrate. Almost all candidates performed well here. A minority did make errors and in the main this was in the supporting examples as opposed to the definitions.

2b) Candidates also found this to be an accessible question. Most could provide answers to the 'how' question quoting a whole range of ways in which groups do influence public opinion, though with greater or lesser degrees of depth. Some candidates made reference to newer groups such as Ukuncut, but it is surprising and a little disappointing to see so many references to older examples such as Snowdrop and even Fathers for Justice dominating in examples. If candidates had difficulty it was with the 'Why' aspect of the question. The issue was that many candidates found it easier to relate to why pressure groups seek to influence governments than influencing public opinion.

2c) In some ways this proved to be the most encouraging and pleasing set of responses on the paper in that progress had been made from previous series. The message has got home to centres concerning the concepts of elitism and pluralism. In previous years the failure to understand the two concepts has proved to be a major problem to candidates on both the A and C sections. Many candidates were prepared for and clearly understood, to greater or lesser degrees, the two concepts and many answered quite well. Fewer equated them exclusively to tolerance and multi-culturalism.

In some senses the decline in the pressure group question may be linked to the (c) part as a lack of knowledge on these two concepts would act as a strong deterrent. Overall, a pleasing level of response and a sound level of knowledge on the factors that lead to pressure groups being elitist or pluralist. Lines of under performance centred around a failure to cite pluralism and elitism and link these to power distribution. A small minority exclusively treated this as an insider v outsider question which damaged their overall score.

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Question 2

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Question 4

(a) ~~Pro~~ sectional or interest pressure groups are pressure groups which are motivated by material concerns and by the interests of their members only, for example farmers' justice<sup>m</sup> which is only benefits its members. By contrast a promotional or cause group is one that which is concerned for the betterment of others: aiming to benefit wider society, such as Amnesty International give justice to where freedom is denied. A cause promotional group seeks to promote values and ideals and principle throughout society, for example the NSPCC, working to help children, whereas a sectional group exists to defend the interests of its members, such as the BMA which acts in the interests of British doctors, whereas cause groups are motivated by moral, rather than material concerns, as with sectional groups.



(b) It is important for all pressure groups, of both insider and outsider status, to influence public opinion so as to promote their policies and exert influence over the decision makers. Whilst public opinion is less essential for insider groups, ~~as~~ such as the CBI, as they have <sup>usually</sup> ~~the~~ regular, institutionalised and privileged access to government, it is still important, especially for high profile insiders such as the CBI or NPU. This is because if groups can claim they represent public opinion, they are more likely to exert influence over government, especially if they are seen to be externally beneficial to government - government would have a vested interest to support them, because by not doing so, public opinion would criticise government too. Insider pressure groups influence public opinion through lobbying Parliament or ministers and civil servants, for example the National Accident Prevention Association lobbied Tim Yeo into not turning the clocks back. Indeed, by gaining public opinion support, which insider groups use the media for, they can better influence public opinion and thus government.

It is especially in the outsider's groups to influence public opinion, especially as they have limited and irregular access to the decision makers - ways in which they influence public opinion would be through the media, for example immediately publish detached, informative leaflets, and Greenpeace use TV advertising. ~~These~~ <sup>Other</sup> ideological outsider groups such as CND aim to influence through marches and demonstrations such as the 2003 ~~stop the war~~ <sup>stop the war</sup>

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued) coalition and indeed the NUS and NUT's march against EWA abolition. By influencing public opinion outsider groups hope their governments will listen and change their policies. Indeed, ideological outsider groups such as ALF use violence to influence public opinion; indeed they dug up a guinea-pig farm killing owner's grave.

(c) Pluralism is the theory in which power is dispersed evenly throughout society, rather than concentrated in the hands of an elite or ruling class. Elitism, by contrast, is where power is concentrated in the hands of a small group of politicians or business leaders and is sometimes known as a "power elite". Pluralists hold that ~~people~~ a number of organised groups exist and that they compete for government attention: in a pluralist democracy, government must be neutral. Although pressure group politics would seem pluralist in the UK as it encourages people to join groups and have an influence over the decision making, there is ~~arguably~~ <sup>arguably</sup> pressure group politics is elitist because <sup>some</sup> groups have greater power and influence than others, which should not be the case in a pluralist democracy, and government is not neutral.

One could argue that pressure group politics is pluralist in that opposing pressure groups compete in an open forum for government attention which would seem pluralist. Indeed, government readily accepts the existence of pressure groups and involves them in the decision making process, for example the BMA are readily consulted on health issues. This would appear pluralist, as government accepts various different groups and allows them to compete at the same level. However, although opposing pressure groups are said to compete for government attention, this is not pluralist but in fact elitist because government is not neutral; ~~it~~ it favours groups with goals more compatible with theirs such as Howard League for Penal Reform (low profile insider) over radical outsider groups such

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) as CND. This suggests pressure group politics is elitist as government is not neutral and does not even acknowledge the existence of groups evenly. Thus, groups such as CBI, are more elitist and favoured than groups such as fathers 4/5/10. It is in a government's vested interest to favour groups which are electorally beneficial or have huge public support such as RSPB with over one million members, making it more elitist rather than pluralist.

One could argue that pressure group activity in itself is pluralist in that <sup>they</sup> raised political awareness, providing education for citizens and thus producing a more educated citizenry and increasing political participation. For example, the NUS was active in the march against the government's policy of raised tuition fees, increasing awareness and participation amongst the <sup>public</sup> ~~electorate~~ however, some argue on the degree of how beneficial pressure group activity is - whether it educates correctly, particularly the work of ideological crusades groups such as ALF. Furthermore, whilst pressure group membership has increased, too many groups are becoming "chequebook" groups such as the National Trust, thus suggesting pressure groups politics is elitist, as the actual campaigning is left to an elite group of professionals, with actual members being increasingly passive.

Pressure groups seem pluralist in that they widen power and give ordinary people access to decision making, such as BA BMA on health issues. However, the economic power within pressure

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((c) continued) groups means that they can exert influence for their strategic position within society, especially those who can afford advertising, such as Oxfam, they may buy their power, which would make them elitist rather than pluralist. Similarly, they arguably empower the already powerful, as governments are given increased power, deciding and controlling which pressure groups should be most influential within society. The ~~elites~~ particularly suffer at the expense of the CBI's role in the economy. This suggests it is elitist because power thus remains with the ~~elite~~ executive and leading politicians.

Overall, therefore, one can conclude that whilst pressure group politics should be described as pluralist, due to the very existence of organized groups who must moderate the dispersal of power. However, it is better described as elitist since certain groups such as NEU are more influential than others such as farmers/unions, which is mainly due to the fact that government is not neutral, undermining pluralism, and government's control over pressure groups means that power remains in the hands of the elite politicians and is thus elitist.



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Examiner Comments

Q2a) This answer is well written; the examples are excellent, and although there is some repetition the answer, deserves full marks. (5 marks). Q2b) Almost full marks again for (b) the AO2 is comprehensive and the discussion is wide. (6 and 3 marks). Q2c) This response gets to level 3 for all AOs. It is clear that this candidate is aware of the concepts of plurality and elitism and can furthermore readily apply them to UK pressure groups. (7, 7, 7 marks).



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Examiner Tip

This candidate has used and understood the concepts of pluralism and elitism for the (c) section of the question. It is a fine example of a constant level 3 response.

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- (a) Sectional pressure groups are groups that have interests for a large section of people such as the National Teachers Union or the National Farmers Union. These are pressure groups with the idea of benefitting a large group of people.  
Promotional groups are groups with self-interest, groups that only want their own benefit reached, groups such as 'Prevention of Construction in Dunsfold' where they have their own interest.

(b) Pressure groups influence public opinion in many ways. Firstly, the pressure groups would use celebrity endorsement. E.g. Make Poverty History had Bono from U2 as a main face as well as other celebrities in their campaigns. Celebrity culture attracts the public attention and so this influences the public's views. Secondly, the advertisement for the Pressure Group. E.g. 'Faster for Justice' pulled many stunts such as climbing Buckingham Palace and other places to get noticed and to advertise their Pressure Group to get noticed and to help the public support them. Also, backing from the public ~~also~~ and the finance ~~that~~ influence the public's opinion. Getting people to spread the word about pressure groups and getting people to join the groups and increasing the size increases the influence the pressure groups have, as naturally, ~~strong~~ humans are like sheep and will follow the crowd behind everyone else to join in and influence more people. Large financial backing will ~~also~~ cause these groups to get noticed even more.

These pressure groups seek to influence the public as the larger the public backing of a group, the more the government will take note of this party and the party can gain an insider status where the government will consult pressure groups on policy formation. The pressure groups can influence the government and get their ideas across and have their ideas put across in policy formation. Groups like 'Green Peace' and 'Amnesty International' are these sorts of groups that have the backing, the finance, the size and the celebrity endorsement which gives them this sort of status.

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

(c) In the UK, it depends on the extent to which people see this. Pluralist is where the power is shared out. There are free and fair views and opinions and it is an 'open democracy' where all views and opinions would count. Elitist is where there is a handful of important people, a main government that is in ~~total~~ control and the power is centralised and not spread out.

In the UK, there are lots and lots of pressure groups. There are the major Pressure Groups such as the 'Confederation of Business Interests' or there are smaller groups such as 'prevention of construction in Dunsfold'. Due to the large proportion of Pressure Groups, they can be split into two groups. Insider and Outsider groups. Outsider groups are not listened to by ~~the~~ the UK government. Groups such as the ALF (Animal Liberation Front) have no power, and so could be seen as elitist. However, there are Major Pressure Groups that are <sup>insider</sup> consulted by government (usually ~~conservative~~ <sup>conservative</sup> governments) on policy formation. This gives a pressure group such as the CBI a large amount of power as the government can consult them.

Due to the only two sections of Pressure Groups, it can be seen as elitist. The ~~more~~ most influential pressure groups are only consulted every so often and not needed all the time and so the power they have is limited to certain times only and so the main power is still centralised to governments and so the pressure groups have little power and so is seen as elitist.

However, the pressure groups, such as the CBI, or the

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13



((c) continued) Trade Unions (depending on a Labour or Conservative government), are very influential in the policy formation part of politics and pressure groups are seen to be ~~becoming~~ getting larger and more influential, thus holding more power, and so this can be seen as pluralist.

Based on the evidence provided above, pressure group politics is elitist in the UK. Not all pressure groups have a fair say and not all pressure groups are consulted or even looked at for consulting and so ~~are~~ is unfair and have no power. Showing that the main power is in fact in government. Resulting in an elitist pressure group politics in the UK.



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**Examiner Comments**

Q2a) Here the definition is virtually non-existent. The example of a sectional group is however correct. The detail on the promotional group is inadequate and the example is not sustainable.

(1 mark). Q2b) The use of examples is clear but the main AO1 foundation is not expansive - relevant AO2 is made but again not full or complete. (4 and 2 marks). Q2c) The lack of depth and detail provides a major restriction on this c) section. It does appreciate that pluralism and elitism refer to the flow of power but sadly does not capitalise on this information. (3,3,3 marks).



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**Examiner Tip**

Here the candidate fails to provide enough material to capitalise on clear knowledge and understanding. More than ever if more detailed and developed examples were used this would serve to advance the mark allocated.

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Question 4

(a) promotional pressure groups are often called 'cause' pressure groups; they don't just focus entirely on one object, but on a broader range of issues. e.g. Greenpeace they care for environmental factors and focus on a wide range of policies and issues which force their concerns. Whereas sectional pressure groups aim to attract only a section of society e.g. like the NUS, National Union for Students, targets students and aims to tackle and approach issues which concern students, the same would apply to the (NUT) for teachers.

(b) Pressure groups seek to influence the public opinion because as the UK is a democracy, every citizen has 'freedom of speech', therefore pressure groups seek to enhance this conventional way and if they feel strongly about an issue or are against the views of their government, they will use their power to speak out against the government. They inform the electorate and public (who it concerns) about the policies of the government, this creates a 'buffer' between the people and the state. They use ~~honest~~ lobbying tactics, and also use the media, which has over the years become increasingly involved in political aspects of the country. Also at an age where political party membership is falling and is only 600,000 from 2 million, people feel they can identify more with pressure groups, as they report their views and the mass public about certain issues. e.g. 2 million people protested against the war in Iraq, 2003.



((c) continued) ~~for~~ It could be agreed that the UK is <sup>element</sup> ~~not~~ pluralist, but have some ~~elements~~ of elitism ~~with~~ when concern pressure groups.

It could be agreed that pressure group politics is pluralistic. Pluralism is when a country allows many different religions, ideological and view points to flourish equally. This is the case with the UK, as many different people from all faiths and walks of life are allowed to show, agree and disagree within Britain.

All pressure groups have the right to protest, even if their views aren't in line with the government of the day.

Because of the basic principle of 'Freedom of speech', they have the right to openly speak out against the government. Therefore they can question the government's actions and hold them accountable. They contribute to holding the government accountable by representing the public opinion or views. Also, they give the public a voice and can also take action by protesting to gain much media attention, which will inevitably make the government re-think their choices. E.g. because of the recent student protests against tuition fees, the government coalition were very sceptical about whether to implement them or not.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) They also give information to the public that is relevant in relation to the issue. This gives a sense of transparency and is also educational in order to maintain a pluralist society.

However, we could argue that there are also many elements which hint that the UK could be described as elitist, in relation to press groups.

As some press groups are not accountable to anyone, in the in some form of a hierarchy, the managers or owners may dominate the press group. This therefore de-ranks and undermines the efforts of those members who would like to be better represented.

Moreover, some more wealthy and smaller press groups may have undue influence over other groups due to factors such as finance, status, (income), power, media favouritism, celebrities and agreements with the government of the day. These factors undermine the pluralist agenda and indicate that perhaps there are elements of elitism within the UK press groups.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) Messrs. David Cameron, reveals make a statement about 'multiculturalism' and how it is false, this could perhaps be in relation to pluralism versus the extent to which Britain can be seen as so. Also another factor which could reinforce elitism would be that power cannot pass outside of policies, hence restricts the right to compare to elite of the country.

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that although we could argue that British press groups has some clear pluralist elements, there are also elitist elements which undermine the pluralism.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

Q2a) This answer gains 4 marks, there are both definitions of each, and correct examples. To be able to achieve maximum marks the definitions must be more expansive and developed. (4 marks). Q2b) Brevity and detail limit this response. The AO1 merits 3 marks but there is spare evidence of AO2. Q2c) A mid range response - the answer is restricted as the concepts of pluralism and elitism - in particular the flow of power in democratic society is not developed. Credit - although limited is advanced for using pluralism in a multi cultural context, this is a conceptual coverage of the question and this approach limited many candidates.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

As noted the development of pluralism and elitism for the (c) section requires a link to power and its concentration and dispersal.

### **Question 3 (x)**

3a ) Most candidates had a grasp of the general nature of consensus politics and were able to provide an example, usually related to the post-war consensus (albeit not usually identified as 'Butskellism') or the post-Thatcher consensus. Some also noted the contrast with adversary politics. However, fewer candidates were able to develop the idea that consensus may not cover all areas or that differences on focused on 'how' rather than 'why'. A minority of candidates confused consensus with coalition and compromise.

3b) Generally answered fairly well, suggesting a pleasing engagement with contemporary issues. Note how the mark scheme offered flexibility in how this section was marked. Stronger answers relied less on general commentary and more on specific arguments – the AV referendum and tuition fees being the most common. The strongest answers went beyond the coalition and also identified the areas of consensus and lack of consensus between Labour and the Conservatives.

3c) Many candidates failed to address the key word in this question 'internally', significantly limiting their marks even where they had produced solid or good part a and b answers. A small number did address internally but with an overly historical focus on the 1980s and 1990s. There were however some very strong answers covering all three parties (indeed greater notice of the Liberal Democrats than previous years was a strong and perhaps inevitable feature of this year's exam) and showing sophisticated awareness of divides within them. The strongest answers came right up to date and looked at post Blair/Brown tensions in Labour (eg between the Millibands) and recent tensions with the coalition – on Clarke's justice proposals and the Lib Dems concession on fees.



Indicate your first question choice on this page.  
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and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

**Question 2**

**Question 3**

**Question 4**

- (a) Consensus politics is where two parties such as  
have the same policies and ideas. For example after  
World War 2 there was a decade of consensus where  
Conservatives and Labour both agreed on the same  
policies for the rebuild of Britain. The parties don't  
work together to allow for ~~an easy~~

(b) After the may elections in 2010 there was a coalition government of conservatives and Lib dems. This came to a surprise as Lib dems were left wing and conservatives right wing. However, however during the election campaigns it is seen that all the parties went for the middle ground with their policies to attract the attention of the public. However, there were key differences at for example the Lib dems wanted a new voting system while conservatives did not want to change it.

After the coalition agreement was signed, this fundamentally brought the two different policies of the parties and merged them into one. This can be seen as a consensus of politics. However, it is evident in some cases such as the referendum that they are split. As there were some such as opposition from Lib dems and also some Lib dems wanted to turn to Labour. David Cameron even got involved against the referendum which he couldn't do as he agreed he wouldn't.

The coalition government has agreed on its

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued) policies and so ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~matter~~ ~~of~~ ~~fact~~  
have ~~an~~ consensus policies in place however there  
are some areas such as the voting system  
in which shows that they are not. ~~as~~ ~~is~~  
~~is~~ in fact more like two parties bound together  
so overall consensus has been more evident.

(c) ~~to~~ The three main parties in the UK fundamentally share some policies however they do have their own focus and their own policies. ~~and~~ It can be said that these parties have gone for the middle of the political spectrum with their ideas and policies but still keep their main policies. For example New Labour which centralised the old Labour and even David Cameron's more greener Conservatives.

The Liberal Democrats want a new voting system so it is more proportional. This is one of their policies they pushed for the 2010 general elections. Conservatives ~~to~~ did not want this however they did share some of the other policies such as cutting of the UK's deficit. ~~the~~ Conservatives wanted to cut more but still the same idea. The idea that each of the three main parties attracts the most amount of voters by choosing an ideology ground such as Labour who appeal to slightly left winged and also attract some of those who do not have a political preference. ~~to this~~

This is adopted by all the parties and to internally they are following and creating the

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) Some policies. Another reason they are linked is by the need to represent what the people want. The Lib-Dems and Labour are left wing and so bound to represent the working class. So both these parties will have a base of similar ideas. Conservatives are right wing and represent the upper class. These ideas may be different to Labour or Lib-Dems but the party's need to attract as much voters as possible so they take on board all the ideas and formulate manifestos and policies around that.

On balance the 3 main parties are so closely connected the center to gain more votes but however keep some fundamental values to keep their traditional voters with them. And because of this they share the same base of ideas and policies.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Q3a) This response earns two marks only, one for the role of parties having the same policies - this is very tenuous but is acceptable and the second mark for providing an example. Q3b) This does address the fact that the Conservative and Liberal Democrats had opposing views, but sharing government led to compromise. Furthermore, it has reviewed how the coalition has operated for disputes surrounding policies and ideas. It has a narrow scope and more could be developed. Q3c) Sadly the candidate has ignored the word INTERNALLY to their disadvantage. Answers which follow this route are most likely to be marooned in level 1.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This provides proof it ever it were needed that all words in the question need to be read and digested. A few moments thinking and planning is time shrewdly invested.

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If you change your mind, put a line through the box   
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: Question 1  Question 2   
Question 3  Question 4

(a) The term *consensus politics* is used to describe a period in the political climate in which two or more political parties agree over major areas of policy. These periods are generally associated with less conflict and more uniform policy between major politicians. For example, many have taught about the 'post-Thatcher consensus' whereby major political parties mainly agree over policy relating to the need for a lack of government regulation in the economy and the need to reduce inflation at all costs.

*Consensus politics* also describes a lack of <sup>conflict</sup> ~~debates~~ between political parties in terms of ideology. Parties are prepared to work together over policy rather than fight over it; this may be due to factors such as national emergency, or the change in the

You should start the answer to part (b) on page 5

((a) continued) leadership of a party. For example, all major parties have put Labour and Conservatives, put ~~putting~~ <sup>freedom and loyalty</sup> words in the Good Friday Agreement of 2001, agreeing consensually that parties should work together in order to bring peace, ~~not democracy~~, and a freedom from terrorism in Northern Ireland.

(b) Since May 2010 a coalition government has broadly meant politics in the UK has become more consensual since the coalition's formation. This is because the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats have been forced to compromise over policy in order to govern together. For example, the Lib Dems agreed to sacrifice on policy such as abolishing tuition fees and the Conservatives agreed to a referendum on the Alternative Vote. As a consequence the conflict between these two parties has dropped as they are now prepared to work together. On the other hand, one could argue the UK's politics has become less consensual since the UK's formation due to the clear divisions in policy that have been created <sup>between</sup> the Labour and Conservative and the coalition, and been for example over policy to do with the speed to which public spending should be cut.

It can also be argued that British national politics has become more consensual after May 2010 because the sense of national urgency in the need to sort out economic

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8



((b) continued) problems. It can be argued that all parties have agreed in principle to large public spending cuts. ~~and it is clear~~ For example, ~~both~~ all three main parties have agreed there will need to be defence cuts despite the war in Afghanistan. Despite this it is clear that the Labour party ~~oppose~~ and many liberal Democrats oppose <sup>greater private involvement in</sup> ~~cuts~~ in areas such as disability healthcare. For example, Lib Dem peer Shirley Williams openly criticised Andrew Lansley's healthcare reform bill at her party's spring conference in 2011.

(c) The major political parties in the UK can broadly be taken as the Labour party, the Conservative party, and the Liberal Democrats. By being 'united internally' over policies and ideas one can assume that this refers to the number of factions and divisions each party has. Broadly there is a strong argument to say that there is significant disunity within <sup>these</sup> political parties over ideas on policy.

In the Labour party, a number of major policy areas are seen as key dividing lines. For example, there is a large ideological gap between those advocating New Labour policies centered around third way ideology and those who support the more socialist and social Democratic principles of 'old Labour'. Similarly, major policy areas such as the Iraq war have demonstrated that there are significant divisions within the Labour party. For example, the current Labour party under Ed Miliband is divided over economic policy: whilst some like Ed Balls are almost advocating old Labour policies such as increasing spending to reduce the deficit, others such as Peter Mandelson, a founder

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) New Labour, have been more enthusiastic to agree for the need to reduce public spending, for example by ~~endorsement~~ On the other hand, it is clear that compared to historical standards the Labour party, is broadly united. For example, in the 1980s bitter divides existed between the party's leader, Michael Foot, and its deputy, Dennis Healey, over key policy areas such as whether to withdraw from the European Economic Community.

Similarly, there is comparable disunity within the Conservative party over key policy areas. While some advocate One-Nation Conservative principles others have maintained a stronger commitment to the New Right principles of Thatcher. Similarly, there is disunity over the European Union, with some Conservatives supporting and others criticising the UK's membership. For example, ~~the~~ David Cameron has shown commitment to one nation principles in his advocacy of ameliorating the effect of spending cuts on ~~the~~ the British people; on the other hand, Conservatives like George Osborne have remained committed to

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) New Right principles in arguing that the best way to improve Britain's financial and social situation is to cut the deficit by cutting spending. Similarly Conservatives such as Ken Clarke MP are committed to UK EU membership, whereas those on the right of the party such as Daniel Hannan MEP have repeatedly emphasised their deep opposition to it. Despite this it is clear there is strong union within the Conservative party over issues such as law and order, with even comparatively liberal Conservatives like Ken Clarke arguing for more severe prison sentences for 'hardened' criminals.

In the Liberal Democrats divisions are also apparent between the so-called 'Beveridge group' and the 'Orange Book group'. Whilst <sup>liberals</sup> like Alitair Carmichael MP argue for the Lib Dem to follow the social Democratic and pro-Keynesian economic model of J.M. Keynes and William Beveridge (both liberals), Orange Book Lib Dems like Priti Patel and Vince Cable have prioritised the need for economic liberalisation and market based economic policy. Moreover there are divisions

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) other issues like tuition fees; for example 21 Lib Dem MPs voted against raising the top level of tuition fees to £9000 in December 2010. However, there is clear unity over policies and ideas and policies in the Lib Dems over major policy areas like the need to protect civil liberties and the support for UK ~~into~~ ~~engage~~ integration into the EU.

In conclusion, though each party has areas it is united over and within which there is relatively little conflict compared to historic standards, it is clear that in all three main parties there is significant disunity over key policies and ideas, which on the whole can be considered to be major <sup>internal</sup> divisions. Hence I conclude they are not particularly internally united over policies and ideas.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

Q3 a) A really excellent response that achieves full marks.  
Q3 b) A good contemporary response, which almost achieved full marks. (6 and 3 marks) Q3 c) This is without doubt an excellent answer which easily reaches level 3. (8, 9, 8 marks).



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

Politics is a fast moving subject, where events are in a state of constant flux. However, it is blessed with a wealth of contemporary and readily available information. Here the candidate has put his research skills into gear and reaped the benefits of doing so.

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Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**  **Question 2**   
**Question 3**  **Question 4**

(a) Consensus politics is when there is agreement or compromise among various parties on different ideas, ~~issues~~ and policies. An example of this would be the Labour government in 1997 making an agreement over the welfare state - NHS and benefits. Another example of this would be between the Conservative and Liberal Democrat party in our <sup>current</sup> government. Both parties compromised on the reform of the electoral system and changes to the welfare state. As the Liberal Democrats favoured the Alternative Vote system, the Conservative party agreed to allow them to push through a referendum, which will determine if there is a reform to the electoral system. And with the welfare state, the Conservative party wanted a more strict restriction to how benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance; EMA, were given out. Therefore, the Lib Dem agreed for the Conservatives to push through with the cuts, which took place in March 2011.

(b) As we ~~are~~ currently have a coalition ~~government~~  
government - <sup>with</sup> the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats,  
much of the decisions made ~~is~~ are around making  
agreements on ideas, values and policies. However,  
it can be argued that politics today, despite the fact,  
we have a coalition ~~is~~ <sup>not</sup> based around agreement.

One of the reasons for the UK being ~~more~~ <sup>based</sup> on  
~~consensus~~ politics since May 2010 ~~is~~ <sup>significantly</sup> ~~due to~~ <sup>significantly</sup> the fact

It is notable that the Conservative party is a  
more popular party than the Liberal Democrats and most  
~~importantly~~ the party with the largest majority. Therefore,  
this gives them more power over the decisions made, despite  
the fact they must consult the Lib Dems. This is  
called elite dictatorship.

However, it can be argued that politics is based on  
consensus because a coalition government is all about  
consultation and compromise. Therefore, if a policy is  
proposed by a party - e.g. the Lib Dems on the reform of  
the electoral system - there must be a forum of debate  
to discuss the pros and cons of this proposed policy.

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8



((c) continued) ~~The major political parties in the UK are: Labour; the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats.~~

The major political parties in the UK are: the Conservatives and Labour. Both parties are on either end of the party spectrum electoral spectrum. Therefore, the Conservatives is more or less on the right. whilst, the Labour party is on the left. Both <sup>parties</sup> have a different set of ideas and policies. However, some policies and ideas interlink.

The One Nation party, which was in use before Thatcherism / Neo-Conservatism, was a party with traditional values. Therefore, they believed in institutions such as: Church, the monarchy, Parliaments and marriage, to hold everyone together as one nation. They also had more of a pessimistic view of human nature. Therefore, it was open to corruption. Another ideology by the One Nation was <sup>the hierarchy.</sup> ~~an idea of~~ They believed that the ruling class were those who governed.

Then, as time went on, and Margaret Thatcher came into government in the <sup>1970's</sup> 1980's, a new ideology of the Conservative party was introduced. Unlike the One Nation, they held a more <sup>optimistic</sup> ~~optim~~ view on human nature. Therefore, this meant that humans were rational and responsible for their actions. Another ideology was to end the dependency culture. This meant that fewer people were given benefits such as the JTB's.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) Seeker's Alliance. And another ideology is that they believed in <sup>privatisation</sup> ~~privatisation~~. This meant that private trade industries would open.

But now more recently, the Conservative party has changed once again to a style of Cameronism. This is the main ideology of Cameronism is for less government. They believe the state should be able to ~~en~~ make decisions on things such as: schools; youth work. Another ideology is that they are Euro-Skeptic. This means Cameronism believes the EU and the UK ~~soke~~ should be separate.

In contrast, the Old Labour <sup>government</sup> ~~governor~~ were more for the working class. They believed in egalitarianism - this is absolute equality. Therefore, they introduced the trade union to enable the working class to enter the workforce. The Old Labour party was also co-operative and collectivist. Therefore, they opposed capitalism.

However, in 1997 when Tony Blair came into government a New Labour was introduced. This was seen as 'The Big Tent'. This meant that they were more or less attractive to a wider group. They also believed in equality of opportunity. For example, EMA was introduced to create social mobility of the different class.

In conclusion, the similarities between the Conservative

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) party as a whole and the Labour party is their sense of Keynesian economics - a free market economy. Another similarity is however, there are more differences between the two parties as they are on either end of the party spectrum.



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Comments

Q3a) Although this answer is quite expansive it earns just two marks. There has to be some distinction between consensus politics - where there is ideological agreement and compromise politics where parties out of practical expediency made a deal but still maintain their ideas and beliefs. The vast middle section deals with the latter not the former and is therefore restricted. One mark is given for the introduction and a second mark is given for the implicit reference to cutting public spending - as this is a policy consensus amongst all parties. Sadly if some of this content had moved to the b) section of the question it would have been credit worthy. (2 marks). Q3b) This response does not really address the issues raised in the question. There is a lack of accurate knowledge and understanding. (2 and 1 marks). Q3c) After performing quite poorly on a) and b) there is some improvement in c) as the response recognises the demands of the question and is at mid level 2 terms of reward. (4, 4, 4 marks).



## ResultsPlus

### Examiner Tip

This is unusual in that the candidate improves performance on the (c) section, but it is vital here to secure a grade. Performance on the (c) section is vital to advance in the grade boundaries.

## **Question 4 (x)**

4a) Manifestos were generally clearly understood, with some pointed reference to failures to abide by them. A minority of candidates also demonstrated understanding on the Doctor's Mandate, and of the concept of the difficulty of mandates in relation to coalitions. Relatively few addressed the Salisbury convention not a necessity but a broadening on knowledge to be credited.

4b) This was an excellent question for candidates to reveal the depth and extent of their knowledge. There were many excellent, detailed answers which successfully explained the workings of three systems whilst the strongest ones also examined the pros and cons of each. There was some confusion between the systems but not as much as is usually the case, particularly between SV and AV. STV as is the norm foxed quite a few candidates AV was included more than usual due, no doubt, to the recent referendum.

4c) Many candidates easily achieved level 3 as they accurately address both sides of the debate. Lots of 'rehearsed' answers but many of these still had quality. A pleasing number could evaluate the claim of strong, stable government with FPTP by drawing on the recent coalition. Some even extended their discussion as to whether the system is likely to produce an overall majority in the future. Others evaluated by discussing how important really is the constituency link – how many people contact their MP or even know his/her name? Good current commentary too in that many said that the recent referendum means change is less likely anyway irrespective of the merits. A small number had good discussions about coalitions doing unaccountable backroom deals; a few – but not many – used overseas examples such as Italy or Germany to support a 'for' or 'against' view.

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Chosen Question Number: Question 1  Question 2   
Question 3  Question 4

(a) A mandate is something that the government gets granted once it has won an election\* and has control of the house of Commons. A manifesto is a document which contains the policies a particular party would implement if it were to get into governmental power.

\* The one in the UK is called the Doctrine of the Mandate and is the most influential theory of representation.

(b) ~~Pressure groups use various~~

The three systems that I have chosen which are currently used in the UK are FPTP

First past the post is a majoritarian system. To start with the public obtain a ballot paper in which they mark an X against the name of the ~~person~~<sup>MP</sup> which they vote for. These are then counted up and the MP with the plurality (most votes) wins the seat for that constituency. FPTP is used in general elections.

~~Single~~<sup>Party List</sup> transferable vote is a more proportional system in which ~~it~~ it comprises a both FPTP and a closed list system. This means you vote for a candidate using FPTP and then a party using the closed list system. A proportion of votes are used are by the from who which candidate people voted for. Then this is topped up using the D'Hondt method to ensure that the most proportional outcome is obtained.

~~The party list system is one in which people vote for a party as opposed to~~

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued)

~~Individual~~  
The Single transferable vote involves a Candidate winning at least 50% of the total number of votes. This is done as you rank candidates in order of preference eg 1, 2, 3, 4. ~~Once one Candidate wins 50% of the votes, peoples votes are distributed to other Candidates based on their 2nd and 3rd choices, this leads to a more proportional system.~~

\* Once a Candidate wins 50% he or she drops out and their votes are re-distributed on the basis of peoples 2nd and 3rd choices, this means it is proportional system. ~~however~~

(c) Yes

bias to  
large parties

Disproportionally  
Systematic basis  
two tier system

NO

loose link with MP.

NO majority - Coalition  
Unstable.

There are indeed both arguments for and against the reform of the Westminster electoral system.

A reason for electoral reform is the system that is in place is highly disproportional. This means the number of seats won has no significant correlation with the number of votes a party gained in the same election. This is because it is a majoritarian system. This was the case in 2005 when the Liberal Democrats won 22% of the vote, however this only accounted to 9.6% of the seats in the house of commons, however this was the best result from the lib dems since 1946.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13



((c) continued) ~~Another~~ ~~reason~~ ~~the~~ ~~reason~~ ~~a~~ ~~major~~

Another reason for why the electoral system should be reformed is that it is biased to large parties, which as a result makes it extremely difficult for smaller parties to be heard, this could however be seen as a positive as it may stop extremist parties such as the BNP ever getting into power.

In addition to this a major disadvantage of changing the Westminster electoral system is that it produces a majority government, in doing so the party has the ability to implement the policies it stated in its manifesto. It is able to do this through the doctrine of the mandate. If this was to be changed to a more proportional system say STV then a coalition government is unlikely to occur as a result.

In doing so this leads onto another disadvantage of changing the electoral system in which the parties elected by the system are strong and stable governments with a majority of the house

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) of Commons. This means the Party in power are likely to serve their 5 year sentence as the government in power. Coalition governments which would be obtained through the use of a proportional system are likely to be weak and unstable.

Furthermore the Westminster electoral system allows the people of their constituency a link between the MP and their constituents. The public know for example who to take their grievances to, however if another electoral system was used it may abolish the link between the MP and its constituents, so representation may not be carried out to its potential.

Finally the Westminster electoral system is easy to use, so no confusion is created when it comes to voting, however with the use of a system such as the party list or STV it may discourage more people away from voting further leading to a participation crisis in the UK.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) To Conclude in my opinion I think that the System should not be reformed and in the case of the Recent referendum on the issue 67% of people said no!!!



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

- Q4a) This makes three points which results in three marks  
Q4b) There is some confusion here with the party list system and some major inaccuracies with S.T.V - this restricts the mark.  
Q4c) A mid level two response with slightly better AO1 and AO3



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

The (c) section of this question would really benefit from some accurate data to base comment upon. For instance there is comment on the 2005 general election but scarce detail on the electoral events of 2010

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Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

**Question 2**

**Question 3**

**Question 4**

- (a) An electoral mandate is the governments right to govern. The mandat is their to try and keep the government to their manifesto agreements as that is why they have been voted into power. A manifesto is the party policies that a political party sets at ~~a~~ the time of a general election. It involves proposals on the Economy, education, health care and other important issues. The mandate is there to keep the government to their election manifesto promises.

(b) First past the post is the system used to elect the House of Commons in Westminster. It is a simple-plurality system. The country is split into constituencies, each constituency represents a seat in the House of Commons. Every constituency is a single member constituency. Each of the constituents vote for their preferred candidate. The candidate with the most ~~seat~~ votes wins and becomes a representative of the constituency in the House of Commons as an MP. The party that wins the majority of the seats in Parliament forms government.

Supplementary vote is a ~~proportional representation~~ <sup>majoritarian</sup> system that is used to elect the London mayor. Again the country is split in constituencies. Although each of the voters have two choices. '1' which is their first choice and '2' their second choice. If a candidate wins over 50% of the vote then he/she wins the seat. However, if no candidate achieves this then all candidates bar the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> comes are eliminated and their votes are redistributed using the second choices, once either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> candidates gain over 50% of the votes then he/she will win the seat and become a representative in the House of Commons for that constituency.

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

((b) continued) Another system used in the UK is the regional list system which is used to elect the UK's members of the European Parliament (MEPs). The country is divided into 12 large multi-member constituencies. Then each constituent votes for the party they want, then each party creates a list of the candidates and the percentage of votes gained for the party is directly transferred to the amount of candidates in the list to be chosen. Say there is 10 seats available, Labour get 40% of the vote so they will get 4 seats, these seats will then be filled from the list. The UK uses a 'closed' list system that means that the electorate has no choice over the ministers chosen for the seat. A fairer way may be to have an 'open' list system where the voters not only choose the party but also put a tick next to the candidate of their preference. This enables smaller parties such as UKIP and the Greens gain representation. In the 2004 election UKIP gained 12 MEP's.

You should start the answer to part (c) on page 8

(c) The electoral system used to elect Westminster is a controversial topic.

It can be argued that the simple plurality system is a lot more complicated than it is believed due to the end result. A lot of people feel do not understand how the government can have a majority of seats yet not have the majority of the votes. This confuses many people and therefore could prevent them from voting as they do not understand the system.

Due to this factor and the fact a single-party government can be formed without the majority of the vote, a lot of people feel that alternative voting systems such as the regional list system should be used as that gives a proportional number of seats for the amount of votes a party receives. If they receive 10% of the vote they should be entitled to 50 seats ~~in parliament~~ out of 500 in parliament.

Moreover, using a proportional representation system it could be argued that the governments would be more representative of the public opinion and would be stronger with coalition governments. They argue that the policies and ~~ideas~~ made by coalition governments

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13

((c) continued) will be stronger as agreements will be made to ensure fairness from 2 different opinions and therefore be a better policy. For example the coalition governments in Germany are the norm and have been for many years, therefore showing that coalition governments work.

On the flip side of the coin, many argue the first past the post has made the UK be recognised for its strong governments.

It is a very simple method of selection for the candidates in a constituency. The one with the most votes win. ~~the~~ These voters do not have to vote for more than one person or there are no quotas to follow. They simply put a cross next to the candidate they choose.

The UK is known for its strong single-party government and excluding the recent 2010 elections has consistently produced single-party governments, with only 13½ years spent in coalition under this system. People argue that a coalition government is a lot weaker and cannot pass legislation as they are made in secret there is a lot of uncertainty with the public upon the grounds by which they agree and therefore are not fully backed.

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 13



((c) continued) by the electorate. Thus, not being held in the highest of confidence, even by those who voted for each party.

As well as this it can be argued that coalition governments would be less accountable due to their very nature of both parties having to make a decision. With electoral reform coalition governments would be frequent~~ly~~ and the country could become unstable like Italy, who are known to have an unstable political foreground.

Therefore, Westminster should not have electoral reform, with electoral reform will come less stable, accountable governments. The link between a constituency and its MP is a crucial one and that would be diminished if the electoral reform were to be in proportional representation. Lastly, a referendum recently has been held ~~and~~ to change the electoral system, the voters won an astounding 'no' vote. Ultimately it is down to the people and they do not feel it should be reformed.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Q4a) This gains four marks as four distinct and clear points are raised. Q4b) Explicit and clear on FPTP and the Closed Party List - some minor ambiguity on S.V. when it applies this to Westminster - it acknowledges both sides in the debate and provides clear AO2. Q4c) Good and detailed view of whether FPTP should be retained for Westminster - it acknowledges both sides in the debate and provides clear AO2



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

This enters level 3 for all Assessment Objectives on section (c). It is well written and maintains a clear focus on the question throughout the response. Often marks are lost where candidates 'drift' from what is asked, this keeps strictly to the set quest.

## ***Paper Summary***

In terms of lessons we have garnered from this series to some extent they are constructed around the embedding of good practice.

Essentially take care and advise candidates to fully read the question: each word does count! As noted performance on the (a) and (b) sections has improved, centres and candidates are showing a vast improvement in time management and content. It is clear that the provision of AO1 material (knowledge and understanding) presents no major hurdles.

However, developing technique and detail for (c) questions remains the major challenge. There is a need in this area to instil detail and depth, in part brevity denies marks but all too often it is a lack of analysis and evaluation which suppresses marks more than anything. It has to be accepted that this core skill is not easy to teach and deliver. To an extent it is a skill that is fostered and nurtured in what can be a short academic time span. One way to support the extension of good practice here is to examine in detail the exemplars cited and to use diagnostic marking in preparatory work before the exam identifying to candidates the scope and nature of the AO2 criteria.

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