

Examiners' Report  
June 2012

GCE Government & Politics 6GP01 01

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## **Introduction**

A common theme from Assistant Examiners was the accessibility and distinct choice on the summer paper. At the same time, it was perceived that this choice presented a platform to discriminate fairly and equitably between candidates: the end result was that differentiation was achieved on all sections of the paper.

The paper provided reward in plenty for good candidates who knew their material well and applied this knowledge to the set questions.

In terms of popularity, a mix of Questions one, two and four were the common combinations. Question three on political parties was less popular, as has been the norm, however, despite this, the numbers choosing political parties has increased and performance levels remain one of the highest on the paper. This provides proof that when candidates are engaged with the topic they can perform well.

Also pleasing to note was the rise in performance on pressure groups - in comparison with recent series', many more centres and candidates are better prepared on the concept of the distribution of power (pluralism and elitism) than was the previous norm.

## **Question 1**

### **Q1 (a)**

There was a mixed response here, in general. *Democratic Legitimacy* is a standard concept covered in all the text books and revision guides. Most candidates knew what it meant but they failed to develop the concept adequately. It was more common to see a better-developed and explained example, than a precise definition. To be more successful, the candidate had to provide the required combination of legitimacy with democracy: it proved elusive for many.

Most candidates could illustrate with reference to referendums or, more commonly, to elections. Better candidates backed up rightfulness with reference to manifesto and mandate, and illustrated legitimacy with reference to specific election results. A few commented on the concept of legitimacy in relation to the coalition and even Gordon Brown's position as PM.

### **Q1 (b)**

A wide range of answers was seen in terms of both quality and content. A surprisingly large number of weak answers lacked knowledge of the circumstances of referendums, although the AV referendum provided a life-line for them. The best answers demonstrated thorough knowledge of the referendums themselves and the reasons for them, showing the ability to categorise the reasons well. Most candidates achieved Level 2, showing the ability to explain two referendums successfully.

Common errors:

- many candidates were convinced that there had been a referendum on the Euro
- others used examples from overseas, the abortion referendum in Ireland, for example.

### **Q1 (c)**

A very accessible question for well-prepared candidates, and many were. They gave the arguments for and against the wider use of referendums and reached a reasonable conclusion. Very few did not know at least one argument from each side, but some ignored the requirement for balance and thus failed to access the higher marks. The best answers rehearsed the arguments, but also showed the ability to use the relevant concepts and vocabulary well, referring to legitimacy, Burkean representation, the tyranny of the majority and so on.

They also cited examples of actual referendums and provided accurate knowledge of turnout figures to support their arguments. Here, the use of speculation could be employed and deliver marks.

This is a very concise answer and effectively deals with both components of the question.

(a) Democratic legitimacy is when a government has a mandate to form a government to govern a country. This mandate means that that government has popular consent of the people to implement ~~the ideas~~ its ideas and policies as outlined in the party's manifesto. One way this can be achieved is through a general election. If in an election and a party gets the majority of the votes, they can form a government and thereby implement its policies. This happened in the 1997 general election when Tony Blair with the idea of 'New Labour' won majority of the votes and majority of the seats in the House of Commons. This allowed him to pass laws ~~in the~~. However, in 2007 when Gordon Brown took over the party and became Prime Minister, he was ~~criticised~~ criticised because he had not won a general election with his party, therefore he was not the legitimate Prime Minister.

(b) Referendums are a form of direct democracy which dates back to the time of the ancient Greeks.

In the UK, referendums have been used for different purposes like peace, to make the UK more democratic and also to keep the government united.

In Northern Ireland there has been conflict between the protestants and Catholics. This resulted in killings of both denomination of Christianity. Tony Blair in order to get peace in Northern Ireland decided to hold a referendum. This referendum was held in 1997 which asked should Northern Ireland have a devolved assembly. Based on the Good Friday Agreement, ~~the country~~ the country agreed. The turnout was over 70% with majority of the vote in favour of the motion. This referendum for a devolved assembly and the proportional representation voting system meant that in every seat there would be a protestant and Catholic. Both ~~denomination~~ denomination agreed on the good Friday agreement and brought peace to ~~the~~ Northern Ireland.

Another way referendums have been used in the UK was for a democratic purpose. All political power lies in parliament, Parliament is sovereign but this brought about ~~each~~ opposition as Westminster parliament would not be able to respond to an emergency that is happening in Scotland. Because of this Tony Blair decided to hold a referendum for Scotland and Wales to grant them devolution. The turnout for the referendum in Scotland was over 70% with a great ~~majority~~ majority of those voting yes. The referendum question also included ~~did Scotland want the devolved government to have tax varying power and it~~ voted yes. The benefit of the tax varying power is used in the care for the elderly. This way the best people to manage Scotland and Wales is the Scottish and Welsh.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a clearly constructed response. The example provides a clear insight and illustrates that the concept is well-understood.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

As noted, there is a paramount need to be prepared for all of the key terms noted on the specification.

(a) Democratic legitimacy is when the governing party enjoy the support of their policies by the people, and, they are made to be legitimate via people voting for ~~them in an election,~~ the party with the most favoured policies and ideologies. Once gained a ~~single party~~ parliamentary majority, the governing party gains legitimacy as well, meaning they then have the authority to implement what ~~ever policies they wish~~ they choose to do so.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This (a) section has no detailed or comprehensive understanding of democratic legitimacy. Furthermore, the example is piece-meal and not as constructive as the previous (a).



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Although this question asks for an example, it is always wise to prepare for questions on key terms with a supportive example. This demonstrates knowledge and understanding.

(b) Referendums in the UK have grown in popularity in recent years, and are held in a number of circumstances.

One circumstance in which referendums are held is if ~~the~~ the government ~~wants~~ want to enact certain policies or pieces of legislation that they didn't include in their manifesto and therefore don't have a popular mandate for these actions. Thus, by gaining a sense of public opinion on a certain issue, the government can either take or refrain from taking action accordingly. The result of the referendum gives the government a legitimate mandate for these policies. For example, the 2008 Lisbon Treaty wasn't in Labour's manifesto and the government should have held a referendum before signing it.

Another circumstance in which referendums are held is where major constitutional decisions have to be made. Changing the constitution, for example devolving sovereignty to regional assemblies or a Scottish Parliament, has an effect on everybody in the areas concerned. Thus, major constitutional changes need the assent of the people <sup>in a referendum.</sup> to give the government a mandate to shake up the constitutional system, as not everyone may agree with fundamental changes.

A final circumstance is where the government or

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



((b) continued) Parliament are deadlocked on moral issues which are difficult to address. For example, capital punishment is a very controversial policy in terms of morality which could well divide ~~the~~ Parliament. In this case, the government may feel it right to consult the public on the broad opinion concerning these moral issues in a referendum, so as to gauge public support and make a decision.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Here, this candidate has not adhered to the demands of the question. What is written is not necessarily incorrect, it simply fails to provide the answer demanded by the question. The drift into the morality debate was not required.

(c) Plan

- choice direct democracy
- legitimacy
- Participation / e-petition
- education

1 - people think own interest not society

1 - ill informed

2 - irresponsible govt.

3 - undermines parliament (sovereignty)

2 - cost

2 - delivery

The UK has traditionally been against the use of referendums, they have had a stigma of being 'unbritish' however in recent years they have become more frequent and some people would argue that their use should be increased.

One argument in favour of wider use is that it would enhance the british democratic system, being a form of direct democracy they allow citizens to make up their own mind on which path to take, arguably they could help resolve the UK's democratic deficit, with ~~participation already~~ turnout at record lows we can identify that voter apathy is at an all time high, if voters start to see that they can have more of an impact they are more likely to participate resolving the democratic deficit.

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

((c) continued)

Another argument in favour of greater use is that it ~~it~~ would stop the government making decisions against the will of the people, recently we have seen many non-legitimate decisions made by government such as the invasion of Iraq and Austerity measures, referendums on big issues would resolve this as all decisions would require a majority of the public to back it.

A final argument in favour is that referendums would help educate the population, as stated there is a sense of voter apathy about and the only real solution is to provide the population with opportunities to engage in politics, therefore stimulate interest.

However some people are against <sup>the</sup> wider use of referendums, some of the arguments against greater use are that referendums cost too much and are impractical, sometimes quick decisions need to be made ~~and not~~ so there isn't enough time to formulate a time, date for the referendum to take place and results be counted, additionally in a time of Austerity it wouldn't be wise if the government is spend on non-essential things.

Another argument against wider use is that the general

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

((c) continued) populations are ill informed, politicians are much better educated and possess the correct knowledge to make decisions that affect the country, the general populace is far more individualistic and are likely to only consider that is in their own interest rather than the interest of society, whereas politicians are more likely to be unbiases and look at the bigger picture.

A final argument against wider use is that referendums undermine some of the main principles of British democracy, referendums undermine parliamentary sovereignty and representative democracy, parliament should be the highest authority in the land and through voting the people are handing over their views and giving legitimacy to politicians to make decisions, referendums undermine this whole concept.

To conclude it is often hard to decide between a strict and coercive answer, while there are many great benefits to the greater use of referendums there is always a counter argument and additional argument pointing out the flaws, however if we look at the British democratic system which the majority of people do consider to be democratic, there is no real reason to fix something that isn't broken, finally wise in a time of

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

((c) continued)

anxiety it would just be inappropriate to implement an expensive democratic reform when there are much cheaper alternatives (such as e-democracy) therefore no, referendums should not be more widely used.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This (c) section provides balance and makes relevant points on both sides of the debate. It is also accompanied by a relevant conclusion, which draws the argument together.

## **Question 2**

Pressure questions are a popular choice for many candidates. Given the demands of the specification, the crucial component of power distribution is no longer the vacuum for candidates it once was; having said that, many candidates lost marks by not fully focusing their answer on the set question. Indeed, this latter observation was the single most common comment from many Assistant Examiners and is noted in more detail in comments for each section of the question.

### **2 (a)**

This was the best-answered 5 mark question on the paper. Few candidates were able to give a detailed explanation of the link between pluralism and pressure groups. Many candidates identified pluralism exclusively as a tolerant society or accepting of a wide range of views (in some cases describing a liberal democracy). Those that did identify pluralism correctly often failed to move beyond the basic link of a wide range of groups providing representation for all. However, a few candidates did provide a range of links, relating to the dispersal of power and representation of minorities.

### **2 (b)**

This question provoked a wide range of responses. Weaker candidates chose to describe typologies, particularly outsider/insider, with a description of their methods but limited, if any, focus on 'why' groups used these different methods. This route secured marks but often acted to limit marks if the range of examples were restricted. Some candidates had a good focus on the question but a lack of evidence/examples limited their score. The best candidates explored a number of reasons for different methods including finance, insider/outsider and size, with precise and developed examples of groups that use these methods.

### **2 (c)**

As was to be expected, many candidates approached this as a question simply on 'democracy' not 'pluralist democracy' as required. This limited the potential of many candidates and placed their responses in Level 2. Many found it difficult to identify pluralist democracy as a distinct type of democracy. However, most were aware that the question was seeking something to do with elitism Vs pluralism and a lot of answers reflected this debate.

Unfortunately, many answers were limited because they could not provide enough arguments on each side to achieve a high level. One general fault was that the positive side of saying that PGs were good for democracy was usually clear (students talked about representation etc...), but their arguments for PGs weakening democracy seemed to be an after-thought, rather than explained with any conviction.

This part (a) does appreciate the remit of the question and raises meaningful links - it could be expressed more fluently and concisely but the direction is clear.

(a) What is the link between pluralism and pressure groups?  
In a pluralist society is it believed that everyone has equal opportunities and the way it is linked with pressure groups is that in pluralist view it doesn't matter if the pressure group has a higher income people <sup>and rich</sup> (more powerful overall) or if the pressure group is small and poor, everyone has <sup>should have</sup> ~~that~~ the chance to get the same attention from the government. Also competition between pressure groups is a hallmark to a healthy democracy as competition also leads to better quality debating and pushes pressure groups to get great research of their issue/cause and then provide the government with it. This means that the government then also has a great deal of information and statistics provided to them therefore they can act better ~~in order~~ with the ~~needed~~ knowledge needed to solve the issues accrued.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response fails to gain full marks and could have done so easily, had the level of communication been that little better: a theme throughout the question not only on part (a).

This response is an example of a low level 2. Note the lack of detail and analysis.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

All part (a) questions have need to be succinct and focused. This is a technique which is best mastered by practice.

(a) Pluralism refers to the idea that ~~all~~ a broad spectrum of opinions, religious views and cultural backgrounds are all tolerated and accepted. This is the case with pressure groups as they represent many different sections of society. Also, in a pluralist society, the rights of minorities are protected. This is ~~partly~~ partly what pressure groups do, for example the National Union for Teachers protects the rights of those who work in the profession of teaching. Finally, pluralism is associated with the idea of a civil society, that part of society that creates a 'buffer' between the government and the citizens. This is another function of pressure groups.



(b) There are many different ways that pressure groups use to achieve success, and these are usually based on their status. An insider pressure group will have a 'special' relationship with government, and thus seek to negotiate with government, put members on committees and seek to be directly involved in the ~~and~~ drafting of legislation. An example of such a pressure group would be the National Farmers Union.

An outsider pressure group will seek to use direct action in an attempt to influence the government's decision making process. This is because outsider groups do not enjoy such a 'special' relationship with government, and so direct action is the best way to seek success.

~~An~~ By direct action, pressure groups will seek to organise mass rallies (for example the Countryside Alliance put 300,000 supporters on the streets of London), use stunts to gain publicity via the media (Father 4 Justice assailed Parliament dressed as superheroes in order to do this) and also get celebrity involvement (Hacked Off got Hugh Grant to be a spokesperson

((b) continued) for them). These are all ways in which pressure groups of outsider status seek to achieve their aims.

(c) It can be seen that pressure groups strengthen a pluralist democracy, as they represent minorities, act as crucial channels of communication from the people to the government and act as a 'buffer' between the government and the citizenry. However, pressure groups are not accountable, may create a climate ~~that is~~ for legislation that has not been democratically determined and can be seen to be elitist.

The first way in which pressure groups can be seen to strengthen a pluralist democracy is through the representation of minorities. For example, there are pressure groups for NHS patient groups. People in such groups would struggle to gain any sort of representation or recognition without pressure groups, and through representing such minority groups, the interests of the people are protected from the tyranny of the majority. This can only be seen as a positive aspect, as it fulfills the pluralist ideal. Therefore, pressure groups can be seen to strengthen a pluralist democracy.

The second way that pressure groups can be

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

((c) continued) Seen to strengthen a pluralist democracy  
is because they act as crucial channels of  
communication from the people to the government.  
Pressure groups can inform the government of  
the thoughts, demands and needs of the  
citizenry and in using the right to freedom of  
speech pressure groups are upholding a pluralist  
democracy. For example, new social movements  
such as 'Make Poverty History' are a  
good way of letting the government know  
about the people's 'issue of the day' as  
they spring up and come into prominence  
very quickly. They can also attract celebrity  
involvement, for example Make Poverty History had  
the singer Bono on-side for their  
campaigning. Therefore, pressure groups can be seen  
to strengthen a pluralist democracy as they  
exploit the freedom of speech and inform the  
government of the people's needs.

A final way that pressure groups can be  
seen to strengthen a pluralist democracy  
is the fact that they play a crucial  
part in the 'civil society', as they create  
a 'buffer' between powerful government and

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

((c) continued) the people. This in itself is a part of a pluralist society and thus pressure groups can be seen to strengthen a pluralist ~~society~~ democracy in this way.

However, pressure groups can be seen to weaken a pluralist democracy as they are not accountable to those that they represent. As pressure groups are not accountable, they may not be internally democratic and may not fully represent the views of those ~~who~~ who are members or supporters of that particular pressure group. As accountability is a key feature of ~~of~~ a pluralist democracy, pressure groups can be seen to threaten a pluralist democracy.

A second way that pressure groups can be seen to threaten a pluralist democracy is because they can be seen to be elitist. For example, the British Medical Association ~~has~~ enjoys strong funding and can thus afford to spend a lot of money on campaigns that other pressure groups may not be able to do. As pluralism is associated with

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

((c) continued) people competing on a 'level playing field' it can clearly be seen that pressure groups are more elitist than pluralist. Furthermore, some pressure groups may contain those who have a key role in society, for example the police. Thus, if the police threaten a strike, the government will have to take their arguments extremely seriously as a police strike would be devastating for society. It can therefore be seen that <sup>some</sup> pressure groups ~~are~~ <sup>wield</sup> more power than others, which is not democratic. Therefore, pressure groups can be seen to threaten a pluralist democracy.

Finally, it can be agreed that pressure groups create a climate for policy making that is not democratic. For example, in putting 300,000 people on the streets of London, the Countryside Alliance instantly put rural affairs on the political map and created a situation whereby the government offered a compromise measure on the Fox Hunting Ban of 2003. As the pressure group in effect undermined our

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

((c) continued) elected representatives in Parliament, they can be seen to be undemocratic in this way and thus threaten a pluralist democracy.

Overall, it seems that pressure groups do in fact threaten a pluralist democracy. This is because pressure groups are not accountable, some are more powerful than others and also because they create a climate for policy making which is not democratic. Therefore it can be seen that pressure groups threaten a pluralist democracy.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is a clear example of a candidate who scores well with a near-constant performance across all three sections of the question.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

The (b) section fails to reach Level 3 as it relies too much on the insider/outsider split.

(b) Pressure groups may use different methods to achieve their ends because some may be more effective than others. ~~For~~ For example, Greenpeace is ~~not~~ an insider group so therefore aren't as limited by the law by the BMA. This means they can organise ~~a~~ publicity stunts ~~to~~ that may be illegal to create more of a powerful and radical message, forcing the government ~~and~~ and people to pay attention to their needs. ~~These~~ These are methods more likely to be used by outsider groups.

Insider groups may be more likely to lobby MPs and try and give evidence on select committees. This is because they have access to the government so will therefore try and influence them directly. ASTI is a pressure group that has been successful at working with the government to introduce anti-smoking bans in public places (2006).

Sectional groups are far more likely to call a strike or some form of industrial action. This is because ~~to~~ rather than influence and persuading the government and people, they want to cause disruption so people realise their importance. ~~At~~ At the end of November ~~2011~~ 2011, public ~~sector~~ sector workers caused a strike causing disruption ~~at~~ all around London.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This candidate does achieve Level 3 for section (b). There are examples and more detail (albeit brief) on sectional groups.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

**Question 2**

**Question 3**

**Question 4**

vs  
power  
wealth  
-  
cor  
no dominant  
always  
emerging  
vs core inside

(a)

The link between pluralism and pressure groups can be defined as the wide dispersal of power. Pressure groups offer a wide range of views from ~~pro~~ for example pro life groups such as 'Care not killing' to pro choice groups like 'Dying in dignity'. By having a wide range of views pressure groups provide ~~a wide range of~~ equal access to "seek political case". Moreover, by representing minorities pressure groups enhance the dispersal of power and prevent concentrated power as is evident in elitism. By encouraging political participation through various forms of actions pressure groups provide a link to pluralism.



(b)

One reason why different pressure groups may use different methods to achieve their aims is because of their status. For example insider groups such as the British Medical Association will consult and negotiate with ~~government~~ ~~depa~~ the department of health as they have access to government as ~~would~~ did the National Farmers Union in 2001 ~~concerning~~ & with DEFRA concerning the foot and mouth crisis. Their expertise is required by government thus they have an input in policy formulation and implementation, in this way their aims can be achieved.

Second, some groups may seek to mobilise public opinion. This is generally carried out by outsider groups as they have ~~it~~ little or no links to government. For example, the Country Side Alliance managed to <sup>account</sup> ~~stair~~ <sup>for</sup> 30,000 people during their campaign against hunting bans in 2003. The Labour government were so taken aback at the sheer numbers that the "watered down" the full hunting ban bill. Public opinion can also be ~~sh~~ demonstrated through sit ins, strikes as witnessed in Britain ~~in~~ May 2012.

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

(b)

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

((b) continued)

with prison association claiming 80% of its members involved in a ~~the~~ Strike with Unite's Len McCluskey calling it a "fantastic success".

Third, pressure groups may use more extreme forms of direct action, ~~for example~~ which can even be illegal. Again this is generally with outsider and groups and mostly promotional groups. ~~for~~ Greenpeace often burn GM crops and go aboard whaling ships. ~~These more of~~ This more extreme method is a way of forcing the government to listen and in a sense holding it to ransom.

\* celebrities

Pressure groups also use celebrities to get their point across. This is best illustrated with Coldplay's Chris Martin for 'Make Trade Fair' and Nelson Mandela for 'Make Poverty History'. By using ~~the~~ high profile celebrities pressure groups may find it easier to get government attention and thus create links with certain backbench MP's.

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

(c) Pressure groups are a valued integral part of pluralist democracy. However, the extent to which it strengthens pluralist democracy can be challenged.

Pressure groups encourage the dispersal of power, which is a key part of pluralist democracies. No one group or collection of small groups hold enough power to create an "unevenly balanced" political society. Thus it upholds pluralist democracy and in effect strengthens it.

However, ~~pressure~~ the distribution of power within pressure groups varied vastly. For example, the Lords Day Observance Society could not match resources that its rival group had concerning keeping shops open on Sundays. This suggests that pressure groups power is determined by wealth and those without it simply do not stand a chance. This undermines pluralist democracy and thus does not strengthen it.

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

((c) continued) There are not any dominating pressure groups as there is always a challenge. For example, Anti Smoking group 'ASH' is competing against pro Smoking group 'Forest' thus there is always competition and everyone has the opportunity to seek political case with fair and equal access.

A core feature of pluralist democracy  
However, it can be said that if there is a pressure group in favour that the government are in favour of they are more likely to have success for example the Conservatives and the Bar society or banking lobby. Moreover, if these groups become part of the "core insiders" then they can hold the government to ransom and threaten to withdraw their expertise. Their power in the legislative process means that ultimately power is concentrated thus conforming to elitism and undermining pluralist democracy.

Lastly, pressure groups offer the chance to be heard at a range of levels. For example, there is have been many cases covered by local media concerning pressure groups lobbying about library closures

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

((c) continued) ~~to~~ local <sup>governments</sup> areas. In the same way groups like Plane Stupid, and Fathers & Justice and CBI will be noticed by national government. This strengthens pluralist democracy as everyone has the chance to put their views across.

However, pressure groups views do not always represent its members as some suffer from a lack of internal democracy. This is evident in trade unions and at one time caused a large problem for government. This is further emphasised by the fact that pressure groups lack accountability and legitimacy due to their unelected element. Thus the idea of pluralist democracy is undermined.

~~Ultimately~~  
Ultimately, there are strong arguments for both sides of the argument. However pressure groups are regarded important and have grown in number, membership and influence in recent years. Therefore it is fair to say that pressure groups strengthen pluralist democracy.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This script is a good example of a Level 3 response. Once again consistent across all sections of the question and provides good examples.

### **Question 3**

As noted earlier questions on political parties do not attract as broad a range, or as large a number, of candidates, as the other questions on the paper. However, increasingly, it is becoming an option for many. Importantly, a large majority who complete this topic are well-prepared, appreciate the demands and can obtain high marks. Time and effort invested well can deliver rewards.

#### **Q3 (a)**

This question proved to be an excellent discriminator. There was a good number of candidates who defined adversary politics well and who could illustrate this with reference to the early 1980's and the administrations of Thatcher/Foot in some detail, as well as comparing and contrasting with consensus politics.

However, a good many did not seem to appreciate the fundamental nature of the disagreements and the range of policies and/or ideas that is the hallmark of adversary politics: in essence that this is ideological in nature.

Many candidates furnished examples of divisions within the current coalition or divisions between Cameron and Miliband relating to the economy or other single issues. Several still relied exclusively on how the House of Commons is arranged physically, and in the process missed the core issues.

#### **Q3 (b)**

The level of response to the divisions within the Conservative Party over ideas and policies was quite good overall. Many candidates tended to concentrate on either ideas or policies and less commonly, both. Stronger candidates merged the two. The most common divisions on policies concerned Europe, Health, Law and Order, Environmental concerns and such social issues as the big society and Gay marriage.

Others quite legitimately looked at differences over ideas such as Thatcherism and One Nation Conservatism often giving examples of MPs who illustrate the different wings of the Party or who could be identified with specific policies. It was pleasing to see a broad discussion of the current direction of the Conservative Party under Cameron and the tensions that exist now over the Coalition agreement also.

#### **Q3 (c)**

Few responses on (c) achieved Level 1; it was good to see many candidates being able to enter Level 3 with ease. Many candidates knew the differences between 'Old' and 'New' Labour quite well and most also discussed both parts of the question: there were few one-sided answers. Generally candidates tended to be better prepared on themes rather than specific policies. Assistant Examiners, on the whole, were generally impressed with the manner in which candidates responded to this question. Discrimination was effectively obtained by how well candidates approached the issue of 'socialist principles' and applied that to the current Labour Party. There was a minority that progressed beyond Gordon Brown but a number did contrast Blair and Brown. Very few could develop significantly the current Labour position under Miliband in relation to pre-1997, other than to suggest that his links with the Unions could herald a return.

Part (a) on adversary politics has at its core clear and distinct ideological divisions. These divisions posit fundamental divergent policies and choices that are placed on offer between competing political parties who have a chance of gaining power.

This candidate handles this question really well and obtains Level 3 for both (b) & (c).

(a) Adversary politics is the idea that political parties would have highly differing ~~ideas~~ <sup>on</sup> ideologies ~~and~~ policies which should be made in order to govern the country in the best possible way. An example of this would be the Conservative Government of ~~the~~ 1979 to 1990 under the premiership of Margaret Thatcher which had very different views on economics to the opposition party: Labour.



(b) There are many divisions that exist within the Conservative party over ideas and policies due to the 2 wings of the party, Left and Right.

One division that occurs within the Conservative party is based around the support of gay marriage which has recently become a focus point for David Cameron. Many towards the Centre and Left of the party support this idea as a way of modernising British society and their Party however there is opposition for the more radical right wing members of the party who are against such non-traditional ideas towards the idea of marriage.

Another division which occurs within the Conservative Party would be the large scale issue of Britain's membership of the European Union. Euroscepticism exists in most political parties but is stressed more in Right wing parties such as the Conservatives who stress individual national identity as a key point of British society and the idea of handing over sovereignty to others is not good for Britain. In the 1990s under Conservative Prime Minister John Major, this caused many problems as John Redwood led a large amount of the Party against the PM based on Euro-sceptic feeling.

A third division which exists in the Conservative Party would be based on it's ideologies on a whole in a post-consensus of Margaret Thatcher's leadership which is seen as being radically right wing on the political spectrum. Many traditional, right wing, Thatcherites believe that the orientation of the party in these years was fundamentally good for Britain however the new 'One-Nation' Conservatives are more

(b) continued) based on David Cameron's ideologies pre-2010 election.

One-nationism is a more central ideology and less radical than Thatcherism, accepting the need for a strong welfare state among other things. Which ideology is the better is often debated within the party.  
↓  
rather than ideas based solely on strong law and order etc.

(c) The traditional principles of the Labour Party are based around the idea of Socialism which stresses high government intervention in the economy in order to protect the larger society, especially the working classes. The New Labour Party, re-branded by ~~Mr~~ Tony Blair before his landslide victory election in 1997 tried to move away from many of these traditional principles however it is evident that many still exist in modern Labour manifestos.

One traditional principle of the Labour Party which is still evident today ~~and~~ would be based around the idea of supporting a strong NHS in Britain. The Labour Party introduced the NHS after fighting for years against the Conservatives for it in the ~~1950s~~ 1950s and it is ~~so~~ clear they still hold it in high regard in modern days ~~and~~ as the current Labour Leader Ed Milliband has criticised the Government for freezing it's budget over the next few years rather than increasing the budget of such an important part of British Society.

Another traditional principle of the Labour Party which is still evident in modern politics would be that they still appear to represent the working classes in Britain. The Labour Party itself was set up by the Trade Unions in the 1900s which are large scale pressure groups to protect the rights of the workers and this ideology has remained within the Labour Party. Labour Governments have always put much emphasis and investment ~~it~~ into a strong welfare state which generally benefits the working classes more than others, an example of this would be the introduction of the minimum wage by Tony Blair's Government in order to make sure people were being payed enough.

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

((c) continued) ~~The traditional principles of the Labour Party are based around the~~

A third traditional principle of the Labour Party would be the pro-European feeling within the party which tends to play down nationalism on the scale that the Conservative Party promote and opt to move for a feeling of 'togetherness' and co-operation between nations. It was the Labour Party who originally held the first E.U. membership referendum in ~~1975~~ 1973 and encouraged the public to vote in favour so as to join. In modern day politics this has been upheld by leaders such as Tony Blair who famously worked hard to co-operate with the European Union in order to further Britain's European interests of business and finance.

There are however, arguments to be made in contrast with traditional Labour and New Labour, for example traditional Labour ~~policy~~ ideology was based around high state intervention with the economy. When Tony Blair was elected in 1997, he accepted that the originally Conservative idea of 'free market' was better for Britain with less state intervention in the economy and agreeing with the idea of privatisation of previously nationalised businesses.

Another difference in the New Labour Party is the idea of having lower taxation which traditionally was not a preferred method of governing. It is true that the Labour Party do favour higher taxes in order to pay for more public spending however the extent to which this is true has fallen. Tony Blair's New Labour accepted the need to tax the population more but not on the higher scale.

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

((c) continued) <sup>This was</sup> adopted by traditional Labour governments. In order to promote individualism and allow people to have more money to spend and therefore improve the economy.

A third difference within New Labour would be its distancing of itself from the Trade Unions which Tony Blair believed had too much power over the party. Traditionally the Labour Party was made from many members and leaders of Trade Unions and so this was very hard to do for Tony Blair as a lot of his funding, and Party, would have been opposed to the change. The new stance led to the huge electoral success however and so can be seen as a change in the Labour Party.

In ~~concl~~ conclusion, it ~~was~~ can be said that the Labour Party has remained loyal to many of its traditional principles however, to what extent is unclear. For many it is obvious that since the introduction of New Labour ideas in the 1990s, Labour on a whole took a huge leap towards the Right wing of the Political Spectrum.



## ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This response alluded to the question (a) but lacks the depth to gain full marks. This is a key term on the specification and requires both conceptual knowledge plus a wrong example to illustrate and prove understanding

The response is easily in Level 3 for part (b) and similarly for part (c).

(b) Although ~~Case~~ David Cameron's tough action on London rioters perhaps reverses this, with one man being jailed for two years for having a ~~tip~~ drink of stolen wine. Yet this then causes disagreements with liberal conservatives such as Ken Clarke who argue these sentences are unjust for the crimes that are committed.

Worse of Lords reform has also led to a serious divide in the Conservative party, with many traditional Conservatives being strongly opposed to an elected second chamber claiming it to be a 'lib-dem idea'. Despite David Cameron suggesting that it's something that may be considered. Unrest over ideas 'liberal' ideas such as this led to a group of Conservative politicians writing an alternative Queen speech on what they're political agenda is, which is in essence a statement of disapproval over Cameron's Government's policies. Therefore it is clear that such division is making it difficult for some Conservative politicians to tow the party line highlighting the clear divisions in the party.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiners Comments**

Here although there are some slight political inaccuracies, in the main the AO1 reflects the contemporary position of the Conservative Party and deserves reward to be placed in level 3.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

The use of current disputes shows an up-to-date candidate and shows an awareness of how the Party is changing.

(a) Adversary politics is where two parties ~~don't~~ do not agree in any way over a policy area, and take opposing views on it. This <sup>was very clear</sup> ~~is a most famous~~ in the 1980s, where Margaret Thatcher was against Michael Foot. She had ~~Thatcherite~~ <sup>Thatcherite</sup> Conservative views and he was a socialist, and, for example, she was keen on very low taxation whilst he ~~was~~ laid out an 80% tax plan for the highest earners in his 1983 manifesto.

- (b) ~~Thatcherite.~~  
~~The Conservative way.~~  
~~Or ~~Thatcher~~ - More liberal group.~~  
~~Cameron's lot.~~

~~They~~ These are divisions and factions which exist within the modern Conservative Party. Firstly, there are the Thatcherites, who fully support the neo-liberal economic views and the neo-conservative social views of Margaret Thatcher. They support policies and ideas such as low taxation and ~~are supportive~~ of ~~traditional views on~~ ~~business~~ pro-business, and generally Euro-sceptic (though they do encourage some European policies if they see them of benefit to the UK). They are also nationalists.

~~There are the 'Conservative strategy group'~~ There is a more liberal grouping, ~~with a more liberal~~ ~~as the~~ ~~scope~~, who are more pro-Europe, and encourage things like the welfare state far more than any other Tory faction.

Finally, there is Cameron's grouping who are seen to be the 'heirs' to 'one-nationism', with people such as ~~the~~ David Cameron and George Osborne, and many other prominent

((b) continued) front benchers. They ~~are~~ support a paternal society, ~~where~~ where the rich look after the poor, and ~~are~~ ~~to~~ policies such as low taxation, though they do see the need to raise taxes in times like recession. They also tend to be nationalists, who are fairly Eurosceptic overall.

(c)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Yes: - equality = equal of opportunity                           | No: - adopted Thatcherite economy        |
| - heavy welfare state: NHS, benefits.                            | + capitalism - interest in business      |
| - Keynesian demand management under Blair Brown - more socialist | - Trade Union distance under New Labour. |
| <del>5 star rate - workers interest as result.</del>             | - Less 'take from rich, give to poor'    |
| - poverty in interest  | - more 'hand up not hand out'            |
|  | - more individual than OL                |

There are many reasons ~~as to how~~ to argue that the Labour Party has abandoned its ~~socialist~~ <sup>traditional</sup> roots, particularly since 1997 and the adoption of New Labour. Traditionally, the Labour Party was a socialist Party, formed with the goals of creating equality within society and ~~looking after the people~~ with goals to redistribute wealth, for example. It can be argued that the modern Labour Party have moved away from this idea, but it can also be argued that they cling on to some of their traditional roots still.

~~As~~ There are many reasons to say that the Labour Party have moved away from their traditional roots. Firstly, New Labour under Blair accepted capitalism as the best economic system for the UK, and agreed with a Thatcherite, neo-liberal economy, which the Labour

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



((c) continued) party continue to accept today. This <sup>is</sup> shows an acceptance of a far more individualistic system than the ~~Labour~~ traditional Labour party would have allowed, and accepts the idea of a Conservative government.

Secondly, Labour under Tony Blair ~~made~~ made effort to distance himself from the Trade Unions and ~~was~~ ~~sure to keep them as close together as possible~~ ~~policy~~ are in many ways disassociated the party from them. Traditionally, Labour had strong ties with the Unions and ~~supported them on many~~ ~~for~~ the rights of the workers.

Labour, though still encouraging equality, have become less eager to re-distribute wealth the they would have traditionally. They took on the slogan of 'hand up not hand out' showing that they didn't want to be seen to be ~~for~~ simply giving out money to the poorest, and ~~of~~ aided the poorest in indirect ways, for example tax breaks. This was particularly prominent under Brown.

Finally, they are more individual than traditional Labour, ~~and~~ ~~are~~ ~~not~~ and encourage businesses and entrepreneurship through ~~tax breaks~~ corporate tax breaks, supporting business owners as well as their workers.

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

((c) continued) However it can also be argued that they haven't abandoned their traditional roots.

They are still concerned with equality, particularly ~~more~~ through 'equality of opportunity' and this was shown by the way they reformed education during their time in power, for example by encouraging ~~for~~ further education through ~~schemes~~ <sup>policies</sup> like the Educational Maintenance Allowance and encouraging people to go to university.

They are also very in favour of the welfare state - ~~they are very much~~ they see the NHS as a necessity, and were heavily criticized whilst in government by the Conservatives for handing out ~~too~~ benefits too freely and wasting money. They also were very keen to help out those who were disadvantaged, ~~for example~~ both in the UK and elsewhere, for example Blair heavily supported the 2005 'Make Poverty History' Campaign, and held the G8 summits, to encourage the richest countries to help the poorest.

Finally, from Brown to the current party, their solution to the budget deficit and recession has been that of ~~the~~ a more traditional Labour Party member. They have encouraged ~~the~~ higher direct taxes, lower indirect taxes such as

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

((c) continued) lowering VAT and an encouragement for the public to spending to bring the UK out of recession. This is a far more Keynesian 'Demand Management' strategy than ~~not~~ one that would be expected of a neo-liberal economist, and far ~~to conclude~~ more traditional Labour.

To conclude, Labour has come a long way from its traditional roots, and adapted itself as a party, but it does hold some of its traditional viewpoints still.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This is an example of a candidate who sets off poorly, on part (a), gains confidence and gets full marks for AO2 on (b) then secures a clear Level 3 for part (c).

(a) Adversary politics is commonly found in a two-party system whereby the two most dominant parties commonly oppose each other over ideas and policies. An example in the UK whereby the two major parties, being Labour and the Conservatives, consistently oppose each other over ideas and policies. Due to the structure of the House of Commons, you can argue that it incorporates an adversarial style of politics due to its layout of the main party opposing the opposition party. As opposed to consensus politics, adversarial politics only allows for one winner, this being the party who argued their case in the best way and was backed by a greater majority of backbench MP's. An example would be of the Health and Social Care Bill which was opposed by Labour, yet the Conservatives passed it with more votes against Labour, highlighting the adversarial style of politics in the UK. Adversarial politics was most used during the Thatcher Government in the 80's and early 90's against Michael Foot and Labour.

(b) In the Conservative party today there are many differences over ideas and policies, particularly concerning economic policy. Cameron traditionally is more right-wing in terms of the economy and believes in a free market economy with privatised ownership for businesses. An example could be the fact that the coalition Government is planning to privatise around 10% of the NHS which is traditionally a nationalised institution. Although this economic ideology is shared by many Thatcherite conservatives in the party, it represents a change in opinion and ideology with one nation conservatives who believe in a mixed economy incorporating some privatisation with some nationalisation of industry. An example would be the Conservative Governments of the 60's and 70's. Although the Conservatives do have a difference in opinion over the economy, nearly all agree on the need for cuts in the current economic climate along with economic austerity.

Another difference within the Conservative party would be over the role of Government in looking after the poorest in society, particular concerning the welfare state. Cameron has been far more left-wing in his views to the poorest society, and along with many one nation conservatives has looked to incorporate a paternalistic state. An example would be the fact that although the Conservatives are making cuts, they are making allowances for the poorest in society, in terms of targeted benefits, especially concerning the elderly and disabled. Thatcherite Conservatives on the other hand greatly differ in

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

((b) continued) opinion and believe more in an individualistic state. Thatcher made great cuts to benefits whilst in Government and put the needs of the country over that of the people, highlighted by the huge amount of unemployment under the Thatcher regime and represents another difference in opinion in the Conservative party over welfare. It is worth noting however that although there are differences in opinion over welfare, all Conservatives agree on the need to make cuts to welfare in order to balance the budget deficit.

Finally another area in which the Conservatives have a difference of opinion over within the party is social policy. One nation Conservatives and Thatcherite Conservatives both agree on traditional values being at the heart of the Conservative party along with anti liberal family values, whereas Cameron has brought a far more liberal aspect to the Conservative party. Cameron previously backed a gay marriage bill in the Commons and has openly backed divorce whereas Thatcher spoke out openly against the two issues, particularly against gay marriage and any sort of civil partnership. This represents another clash in opinion within the Conservative party however it is also worth noting that Cameron may be forced to back certain liberal policies due to the nature of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition.

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

(c) In principal the Labour party is still committed to its traditional policies. The Old Labour party believed in being the party ~~to~~ to help the poorest in Society and has very much continued that tradition in its welfare reform. The Labour party under Blair implemented many policies targeting those poorest in Society, such as the disabled and the unemployed, highlighted by the huge amount of money spent on benefits, arising to nearly over £350 million under the Blair Government. Blair also looked nationalised institutions such as the NHS and pumped millions of funds into the National Health Service to help those unable to afford private healthcare and so has been committed to providing universal healthcare for all, as Atlee Government did when first implementing the NHS. Thus highlighting its commitment to its traditional policies:

Another way in which the Labour party is still committed to its traditional policies is through devolving and decentralizing power away from Government to the people, thereby incorporating its Socialist ~~roots~~ roots. The Blair Government passed many reforms in an effort to decentralize power, such as Devolution to Scotland, N Ireland and Wales, ~~and~~ in 1997 and the formation of a London Assembly with directly elected mayor. This highlights Labours continued commitment to put the power back into the hands of the people and away from central Government. Ed Miliband has also spoke of his commitment for more

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

((c) continued) Directly elected major thus highlighting Labour's continued commitment to its traditional socialist roots.

One way in which the Labour party differs from its traditional roots however, is through its economic policy. When Blair came to power in 1997, he immediately ~~nationalised~~ <sup>privatised</sup> major industries such as Gas and ~~and~~ telecommunications, which is in great contrast to Labour's socialist roots stressing the need for nationalisation of industries. Labour's free market approach to the economy has been continued by Brown and has been supported by Miliband which represents a difference between New Labour and its traditional old Labour politicians who believe in state intervention in the economy, with a very much mixed economy with nationalisation of key industries.

Finally another way in which the Labour party differs from its traditional roots is through its targeted appeal for votes. New Labour under Blair had the slogan 'Middle England' as its elected slogan in the 1997 General Election highlighting its new appeal to middle-class votes. Old Labour was traditional built on policies concerning the working class and so this new appeal to middle class votes is seen as a move away from its traditional roots which is highlighted by its many new policies looking to win over the middle class such as its free market approach to the economy enabling people to become wealthy as opposed to old Labour's view of everyone being equal in terms of wealth.

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



((c) continued) In conclusion, although Labour has moved away from its traditional policies, particularly concerning the economy, it has stuck to its most basic roots, in terms of helping the working class and supporting the welfare system and so is still committed to its ~~traditional~~ principles.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

In contrast to the previous scripts this is a tier of performance below the other example and obtains a level 2 reward for both (b) & (c).

## **Question 4**

In overview parts (a) and (b) presented no major difficulty to candidates and they achieved high marks. Section (c) provided more of a challenge but was an effective platform to discriminate between candidates. Elections are always a popular choice and as ever the higher performing candidates gave clear and illustrative detail on recent elections, upon which to structure their views and analyse electoral outcomes and their causes and consequences.

### **Q4 (a)**

Candidates who grasped the requirements of the question almost invariably scored full marks. Others, who instead addressed electoral systems, were still able to access marks if they mentioned the elections in which they were used. A small but surprising number of candidates thought that 'local elections' referred to the constituency elements of General Elections. There were errors in knowledge but few who could not gain some credit.

### **Q4 (b)**

This question was generally well-answered, with the majority of candidates able to explain accurately the required 3 strengths of *First Past The Post* (FPTP) – most usually simplicity, strong government, stability. It was clearly a familiar topic and was probably what attracted them to the question. The best candidates were able to expand details and exemplify where appropriate, this latter point being the determinant if Level 2 or 3 was reached.

### **Q4 (c)**

Candidates found this question much more challenging and weaker candidates produced very basic responses that did not really address the requirements of the question. An extremely small number of candidates made very perceptive comments about both similarities and differences between different aspects of the same electoral systems, and were able to reflect on the workings of FPTP in the light of a coalition government. Very few candidates were aware of party representation since devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, which were very useful in providing evidence for both arguments in this question. There was some confusion about what constituted majoritarian, proportional and simple plurality in terms of the characteristics of electoral systems.

For (a) 3 elections are covered with clarity and precision. On (b) 3 advantages are noted and the degree of explanation is at the top level. (c) is an excellent answer, little more could be expected of a candidate given the time available.

- (a) One election is general elections where all the seats in the House of Commons is available up for election. Constituencies vote for a candidate to represent them in Parliament - who then sit in the Commons. Held every 4/5 years. Uses First Past the Post.
- Another election is the devolved assembly elections which are elections to Scottish Parliament, Welsh and Northern Irish assembly. These are the devolved assemblies, equivalent of general elections, ~~and~~ where the elected representatives sit in the assembly.
- A third election is European Parliament elections where the electorate vote for someone to represent them in the European Parliament. Uses closed list.

(b) One strength of First Past the Post (FPTP) is that it nearly always produces a single winner. What is meant by this is that a single party usually forms government - having won an overall majority of seats in the House of Commons. This allows them to produce a stable and strong government for they are united by a common ideology of 'telling the party line' because of the whips. An example of its effectiveness was seen in 2008 where Gordon Brown's Labour government saved Britain from financial meltdown - hours before the US was about to collapse.

Another advantage is that the link between constituency and representative is strong. As only one person represents a constituency, the people know who they can go to if they want their grievances to be addressed.

With a proportional representation (PR) system, there are many representatives - making it difficult and creating confusion over who which representative should be approached.

Lastly, FPTP allows the representative form of mandate democracy to take place. As the public select a party candidate based on their party's manifesto, the resulting single party government will have a clear mandate to govern with, upon winning power. They aren't in a coalition and so do not need to compromise some of their manifesto promises. This is seen when the 1997 Labour government won a mandate to introduce devolution in Scotland and Wales.

(c) Electoral systems  $\Rightarrow$  outcomes different

FPTP - single party govt x 2010 coalition

SU - single party leader i.e. Boris Johnson x no coalition

AMS - multi-party govt i.e. G.A. x single in Scotland

Closed list - multiparty i.e. Euro Parl. range of parties - diverse

The UK uses various electoral systems in the UK. The main one is First Past the Post<sup>FPTP</sup>, which is a majoritarian system that has implications on its outcomes. Another is the Supplementary<sup>SU</sup> Vote which produces a similar outcome to FPTP, but is a majority system. And the UK makes use of the proportional systems such as Additional Member<sup>AMS</sup> system and the Closed List. Their various features, has many effects on the outcome they produce.

Due to FPTP being a majoritarian system, it tends to over-represent larger parties to such an extent that electoral support is disproportionate to the seats they gain. There is a systematic bias in existence that normally results in a single party forming government. This was the case in virtually every single general election since records began.

However, one needs only look at the 2010 general election to see that this ~~was~~ isn't always the case. Neither the Labour or Conservative parties won an

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

((c) continued)

outright majority so the Conservatives had to negotiate with the Lib Dems to form a coalition - a government with more than one party.

Moreover, the Bradford by-election at the Bristol have shown that minority parties can still win a seat, with the Respect Party at the Green Party gaining one. ~~Yet that these are only extreme cases, with the majority of the time~~ As such, FPTP doesn't always produce a single winner - at neither does it prevent smaller parties from winning a seat completely.

SV, used in electing London Mayor at Elections is a majority system - it requires candidates to reach over 50% of votes to win the opportunity of becoming London mayor. As it is not concerned with proportionality, there tends to also be an emphasis of having a single winner. This was reflected when Boris Johnson won the contest in 2012 with 51.5% of first preference votes.

Whether it always produces a single winner though is unclear because the Mayor's team - the Greater London Assembly, are elected using AMS. Also, it is not used on a larger scale, so evidence of it always

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

((c) continued)

producing a single winner - is unavailable. <sup>≠ Independent</sup>  
<sup>↳ the living list</sup>  
<sup>↳ minority</sup>  
<sup>candidate over</sup>  
<sup>contest</sup>

Leading on from the above, the AMS system is a proportional system which seeks to ensure that the number of votes a party receives, is reflected in the number of seats they gain. Due to it placing an extra emphasis on proportionality, there tends to be a multiparty system that operates, with many smaller parties having a good chance of winning a seat.

This <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ seen in the Greater London Assembly (GLA) where the Greens and UKIP held positions there.

There is also the notion that it also produces coalition governments. This is a direct consequence of the multi-party system it operates, thus governments consisting of more than one party are the norm.

The Welsh Assembly is a good example with Plaid Cymru and Labour sharing power.

However, in Scotland, the SNP hold majority control, thus are a single party government. They are able to do this because the regional closed list ~~party~~ system used for electing a proportion of MSPs have given them more MSPs than all the other parties, - including those elected through the FPTP element.

Thus AMS gives rise to multiparty system, <sup>gov. alliance</sup>

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

Smaller parties a better chance of winning a seat - but it doesn't always provide coalition governments.

Lastly, the Closed list system, used in European Parliament elections, is a proportional system - similar to AMS in its predominant outcomes. Smaller parties have a better chance of ~~winning~~ gaining a seat - as seen in both the BNP and UKIP holding many MEPs in the European Parliament. Yet again, the fact that it is proportional, hence creates a multi-party system, is the reason for this.

The governments formed, if it were used on a national scale for Westminster elections are likely to be coalitions. Closed list is the purest form of proportional representation - so if a party was to get 30% of the votes, they'll receive 30% of the seats.

i

In conclusion, the FPTP, AMS ~~et~~ are not so distinct in the sense that their respective majoritarian and proportional categories alludes to. Both systems can produce single party or coalition governments.

All the systems mentioned though, allow minority parties to win a seat, with the likelihood of a party varying between systems.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This response has clarity and on part (b) & (c) shows a high level of analysis and evaluation.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Wherever possible the use of contemporary examples shows a connectivity with politics and adds a crucial dimension.



For (a) 3 elections accurately depicted hence full marks. In (b) only 2 strengths are noted and developed, thus the marks are restricted. (c) This is clearly a level 2 response, failing to satisfy the threshold criteria for level 3.

(a) The primary election in the UK is the general election, which ~~leads~~ <sup>leads</sup> the determination which Members of Parliament (MPs) sit in the House of Commons (HOC). <sup>Wing first past the post.</sup> This election takes place every ~~four~~ <sup>4</sup> years and also elects the Prime Minister. The most recent general election was in 2010. A second election that takes place in the UK is the London Mayoral Election, which are also elected every four years, most recently in May 2021. This uses Supplementary Vote and decides which member sits on the London Assembly and who is Mayor. The third election in the UK is the local elections, which most recently took place on May 3, 2021. This election determines which members of political parties sit on all of the local councils, with ~~exceptions~~ <sup>exceptions</sup> to places that have a Mayor, such as London or Bristol.

(b) The first-past-the-post electoral system is a strong system firstly because it nearly always elects a ~~strong~~<sup>stable</sup> government. As the system elects a majority in the HoC, the winning party therefore has larger sovereignty in Parliament. The last majority of elections in the past (2005, for example) produced a strong majority government. However, this could be argued by the fact that a hung Parliament has twice occurred in the UK, most recently in 2010.

The first-past-the-post (FPTP) system is also simple and easy to count. The simplicity of the system, such as the fact the voter merely has to cross a box, means that FPTP is a strong and effective system. Each ballot equals to one vote, also making it easy to count and have a result. The length of time taken for the Mayor of London to be elected (as it uses SV) took almost as long as a general election, even though there were many less votes to count.

FPTP also

(c) Different electoral systems in the UK offer different results for a number of reasons. FPTP does not offer a proportional outcome but does, in the large majority of cases, elect a stable government. The outcome of a FPTP election always favors the two major parties (Labour and Conservatives) and often neglects smaller parties due to its lack of proportionality. An example is the 2010 general election when the UK Independence Party (UKIP) took nearly 1 million votes but gained no seats, compared to the Scottish National Party who received less but gained seats. FPTP's ~~outcome~~<sup>outcome</sup> will always be determined by consensus politics and offers no proportionality.

The Alternative Vote (AV), would turn out a more proportional outcome than FPTP, but would still not be wholly proportional. The ranking system on the ballot could ~~potentially~~<sup>theoretically</sup> mean there is a better vote to seat ratio for smaller parties, but the fact that most voters would prefer Labour or Conservatives means that second preference votes cast for them and smaller parties remain unelected. While AV offers a fairer turnout, the consensus politics continues to play a large part in its outcome.

The Supplementary Vote (SV) is very similar to AV, but in fact offers even less proportionality due to the fact that the top two candidates remain while the rest drop out after the first stage of voting. This hence fuels consensus politics and fair systems.

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

((c) continued) the major parties such as Labour and Conservatives. The top two will almost certainly stay as the top two parties, as highlighted in the 2012 London Mayoral Elections. However, second preference votes, as with AV, mean that smaller parties do have a better chance of succeeding than with FPTP.

The ~~Supplementary~~ Single Transferable Vote (STV) was a system to determine 10 outcomes and programs in party proportional outcome. The quota (number of seats divided by number of votes + 1) gives smaller parties a greater chance of getting elected, even more so than AV, ST or FPTP. STV is used in some Assembly elections offer a better balance of seats to vote ratio but however, it is a long process to count and it is not a simple process.

The Regional Party List (RPL) is the most proportional system and offers a completely balanced vote to seat ratio, eliminating constituency politics. The system splits the country up through the regions and gets rid of constituency. Using regions means that votes are more spread out and parties have lower central costs across the UK. However, again the system is complicated and would also take a long time to count. It also has the potential to elect parties, such as the ~~FPTP~~ <sup>BNP</sup> who were more likely to be elected.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This provides a good comparison with the previous example; this is certainly down a level in terms of performance and the mark received.

(a) Three elections held regularly in the UK are general elections for electing MPs by FPTP\*, the election of the Mayor by SV<sup>a form of PR</sup> and the election of the NIA by STV (a hybrid of PR and FPTP).

\* every five years however the PM is able to call one whenever he or she feels necessary.

(b) The first strength of the first past the post system is that due to single member constituencies (in the UK we have 650), the MP is accountable for all that happens within the constituency. For example the Conservative candidate Matthew Offord is accountable for Hendon. Another strength of the system is that extremists and communists do not get elected as the number of votes do not reflect the number of ~~seats~~ seats. So for example although the BNP may have many supporters they have close to 1 seat. Finally FPTP is simple and quick. The general elections are held ~~at maximum~~ once every five years at maximum on a day in May. The simplicity of FPTP means that her royal ~~roy~~ majesty the Queen can call upon the party leader to come to parliament the ~~so~~ next day to come and form the government.

(c) The UK use ~~four~~ <sup>five</sup> different electoral systems, FPTP, AMS, ~~PR~~ SV, STV and the closed regional party list. Since the second world war 18 elections have been held and only two have resulted in a hung parliament, (one being the 2010 coalition between Conservatives and the Liberals), three have resulted in a small majority (February 1950, October 1964 and October 1974). However this still leaves 14 which have produced what people call "Strong Government".

~~PR is used in the~~ Forms of PR are used in the UK but not as widely as they are in Israel, Ireland and Italy. Many people argue (particularly the liberals) that the different outcomes PR provides - and it is a very different outcome - would be much more ~~or~~ fair and representational. For example the liberals average 20% of the vote however they don't even receive 10% of seats, however Labour only receive around 35% of votes but achieve 45% of seats. However unlike FPTP the outcome of PR almost always results in a minority government. A form of PR used in the UK is the closed regional party list which we use to elect the CLAs, voters give their vote to candidates in order of

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

((c) continued) preference. The outcome of this is that it is easy to recognise who is the public's most preferred candidate. However despite sharing this characteristic of majority with FPTP, it is not as quick as this counterpart at gathering results due to the fact that it is in order of preference and there is a lot to add up making this election a time consuming process.

The different systems in the UK most likely produce different outcomes, however it is difficult to know due to the fact that the different systems are used in electing different ~~things~~ positions in parliament.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This final example is still just within level 2. At points it is again a step down again from the second example.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Examiners mark on the quality of the content not essentially the amount which is written. However on part (c) the brevity of the response does make it difficult to reach high marks.

## Paper Summary

As noted, a common theme was that this was a clear and accessible paper. It was a paper for well-prepared candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, and one upon which Assistant Examiners could differentiate between scripts and allocate marks fairly.

These key points are note-worthy for future reference.

- Mastery of key terms remains a vital ingredient to secure maximum marks.
- In addition to the above there is a need to provide clear examples to illustrate a depth of knowledge and understanding relating to these key terms.
- On pressure groups there is a growing need to be assured of how power is said either to be concentrated or dispersed.
- There remains the essential need to appreciate fully the concept of pluralist democracy as unique and distinct.
- For candidates who attempt the question on political parties there is the possibility to score very highly. The essential foundation for that success – in reaching the top tier of marks - is an up-to-date appreciation of how the policies and ideas of parties are in a constant state of flux. Given the wide media coverage, gaining this knowledge should be straight-forward.
- Performance on election-related questions is raised considerably when this is accompanied by a contemporary awareness of outcomes. These outcomes need to cover a range of recent elections throughout the UK not just general elections. When this is done it provides a clear base to establish analysis and evaluation.



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