

Examiners' Report
January 2013

GCE Government & Politics 6GP01 01

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Introduction

There was a widespread and clear consensus amongst Assistant Examiners that the January 6GPO1 was a fair and accessible paper with plenty of choice for candidates. It proved, on all questions, to provide a clear platform to discriminate between candidates and clearly to apportion levels of performance on each section of a response.

Timing appears not to have presented a major obstacle and it is clear that centres are preparing candidates to apportion their allocated time to reflect the marks distribution on the paper. Referring to the (b) and (c) sections of the questions, the mark scheme makes note of the threshold levels introduced for additional guidance in summer 2012 – these are worth referencing by centres as they do offer further detailed guidance for the scope and depth on these two sub-sections of each question.

It is also worth noting that, quite often, the higher performing candidates are those who can demonstrate knowledge of the latest and most contemporary political information. This often connects their response more decisively to the question and gives an informed angle – politics after all is primarily a contemporary topic. Although historical reflections are relevant, without doubt having the ‘finger on the pulse’ of current events is an attribute well worth developing.

Question 1

1(a)

Many candidates appeared not to be prepared for this question. A good many left it blank and a large number outlined the workings of the party list electoral system or described political parties in generic terms. Interestingly, many of the candidates who failed to understand the term 'party system' in this question, went on, in 1(b) to use it accurately ('First Past the Post (FPTP) creates a two-party system'). A few candidates showed a thorough understanding of the term and explored the nature of the British system, discussing the emergence of the Liberal Democrats and how that might create two-and-a-half or three party systems. There was some limited reference to other countries' systems e.g. one party systems in China or North Korea.

1(b)

Many candidates performed well on this question, demonstrating a good understanding of a variety of electoral systems and how they have allowed for different parties to be represented. As one would expect, the best knowledge was displayed on FPTP. A few answers failed to concentrate on 'party representation', outlining how the systems worked, but these were a minority. There were far fewer errors on this type of question than seen before with most correctly outlining the workings of the systems and where they were used. The crucial link as always with electoral systems is to include contemporary details to show knowledge and understanding.

1(c)

Almost all candidates demonstrated a good understanding of the term proportional representation (PR) and were able to outline a range of positive aspects, particularly that the outcome was fairer and, therefore, provided greater legitimacy, avoiding wasted votes and tactical voting. A few candidates took each PR system in turn and evaluated its strengths and weaknesses. The majority of candidates also adhered to the requirements of the question and carried out a thorough 'assessment' as requested, highlighting some of the weaknesses of PR, particularly the production of weak coalitions. There were some excellent answers that were well explained and detailed, supported by precise details on turnout and various parties' performances at national and regional elections. Some also differentiated between the PR systems e.g. a weakness of many types of PR might be that it weakens the constituency link, but a system such as Additional Member System (AMS) retains that.

- (a) 3 marks are given here: 1 mark credited for the definition and 2 for the example.
(b) AO1 7 marks, AO2 3 marks. Full marks as three systems are clearly illustrated with a corresponding link to the fortunes of political parties. (c) This is a clear level 2 response as is reflected in the threshold guidance (mark scheme).

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

- (a) The term 'party system' simply refers to a democracy made up of political parties. In a 'party system' several parties compete for office and put forward policies that they would then implement upon winning an election. For example, Britain has long been considered a two party system (The conservatives & Labour) mainly because they have been the two dominant parties for over half a century.

(b) Party representation may be affected depending on the electoral system for a number of reasons. ~~Party Party~~ For example, the current system in use for Westminster elections - 'first past the post' - has long been considered to penalise third or minority parties. This ~~too~~ could possibly affect party representation, because parties' who support is evenly spread have very little chance of winning in their constituency. This means that if you are a smaller party such as UKIP or the Green Party, ~~you are~~ you are severely hindered compared to the Labour or Conservative parties' who support is more concentrated, and as a result, ~~you~~ these parties can suffer from a lack of representation.

On the other hand, the Additional Members system (AMS) affects representation in a different way to first past the post. The system used in Scotland for their Parliament and for the Welsh Assembly, actually helps smaller parties. This is because the electorate have two votes. The majority of those go to the winning party, but some are redistributed to ~~make~~ make up the Additional members. The consequence of this, has been staggering since Scotland devolved and began using it. Parties such as the SNP have actually gained greater representation because the system is more proportionate.

((b) continued) Finally, the Regional List System used for the European Parliament to elect MEP's has also affected representation in a different way to the two other above-mentioned systems. Each party has several candidates who are put forward from Multi-member constituencies. The $\frac{1}{2}$ of votes gained is directly proportionate to the seats they received. Because of this representation increases due to the scale of the constituencies involved. The biggest and most

notable outcome has been political parties such as UKIP have gained representation within the European Parliament, but have not under the FPTP system.

(c) Even though First Past the post has long been in use within the UK, there have been several calls in the past for electoral reform. The most recent example of this was the AV referendum in 2011.

One of the biggest advantages of the use of Proportional Representation, would be that it could be seen as more democratic compared to ~~FPTP~~ First past the post, in that it benefits third and minority parties. Under the current system, they are severely penalised (Lib Dems gained 23% vote in 2010, only 9% seats), but under a PR type electoral votes will be turned into seats more proportionately and arguably more fairly. Moreover, the current First past the post system is bias towards the Labour & conservative parties whose support is more concentrated.

Additionally, a change to a Proportional system such as AMS or STV, could limit the amount of wasted votes that there is currently, where not every vote is of equal value and many are simply wasted especially in safe seats such as Labour's stronghold in Manchester Central where in 2010 only 44% of people actually voted. With electoral turnout having fallen from 76% in 1983 to 71% in 1997 to only 65% at the last election this could suggest the public has become disillusioned with the

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

((c) continued) current system. A change of system could therefore increase turnout, as many supporters ~~are~~ of smaller parties are forced to settle for tactical voting currently. In addition, with turnout currently only 65%, this lowers the legitimacy of the Government and could be seen as undemocratic.

Furthermore, Proportional governments tend to produce coalition governments - which it could be argued are more representative of the public's views than a one party government that is only elected on a third of the vote. This is one of the glaring advantages of proportional based electoral systems as ~~though~~ a coalition (in 2010 57% of people combined voted for Lib Dems/cons) is actually voted for by more of the public. Coalitions also prevent 'tyranny of the majority'. As two parties work together they are forced to negotiate the policies that benefit the country rather than having one party make all the decisions. Moreover, most of Europe currently uses a proportional based system and they are still seen to produce strong and stable governments.

In conclusion, I believe that there are several advantages ~~of~~ that point to a possible introduction of a proportional electoral system (such as Regional list) in the future.

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

((c) continued) Not only can they be seen as more democratic - they represent Minority sections of society. (something a liberal Democracy is supposed to do). This is not the case with First Past the Post which has more disadvantages, ~~the~~ ~~is~~ ~~is~~ and therefore PR has a major case for electoral reform in the future.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This script shows that candidate performance, not only between questions but also within, them does vary. This response is good overall and merits the highest level but the route to this is not necessarily an even pathway.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

One attribute of this response is not necessarily the length of the content but the precision provided. Correct facts on (a) and (b) questions do matter.

This is an excellent response and this hits level 3 for (b) & (c) with a full marks for the (a) section which is very clear and precise.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Party system is a description of political electoral system. Referring to how significantly or insignificantly political parties are represented. There are four party systems, single-party system, two-party systems, two and a half party system and a multi-party system. In the ^{Westminster election} UK it is recognised that nationally we are under a 2 party system, as the FPTP has two possible contenders competing, i.e. Labour Party and Conservative. However, after May 2010 election, it seems that we have a 2 and a half party system, where both Labour and the Conservative party have fairly equal chance but the Liberal Democrats are a third party, which also competes with Labour and ^{the} Conservative Party.

A multi-party system is found under electoral systems characterised by the PR, so it includes AMS, STV and the ^(Regional) Regional List system (European Union).

How and how far affected by 3 electoral systems - 2.5.1.

(b) Party representation can be affected by 3 electoral systems, ^{this} includes the Majoritarian system, the electoral system characterised by PR and Simple Plurality systems.

Simple plurality involves electoral systems, such as the FPTP used in Westminster elections which is known as a 2 party system, meaning that only two parties have a possible fair chance of forming government. This applies most to Labour and lesser extent to ^M Conservative party and Nationalist parties. This substantially means that smaller parties, such as UKIP, BNP, and the Green party have less of a chance of forming government. The FPTP works in a way that party support which is geographically concentrated have more of a chance, i.e. Labour than any other party. Leaving small parties discriminated and excluded. In May 2010, the Liberal Democrats achieved 8.7 seats in Parliament and had 23% of the votes, hence smaller parties are not proportionally represented under FPTP.

Proportional representation characterised in STV, AMS, Closed Party system means that party vote is ~~pro~~ in proportion to the number of seats, there are no 'winners bonus' as it is under the FPTP. The AMS used to elect under Scottish Parliament using a Hybrid voting system like the FPTP and the Regional list system creates

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

(b) continued) a fair proportion of votes to seats, which importantly means that smaller parties are fair represented. In Scottish Parliament election, 2011, the Green Party gained 3 seats, which is less likely to happen under the FPTP, as major parties with greater support in geographical areas have greater chance of winning. PR is considered democratic way of electing. The STV created a multi-party system in 2011 in Northern Ireland, where 5 significant parties of vote. Majoritarian system, involving both Supplementary vote and Alternative vote, means that the 'will of majority' is recognised. As parties must achieve an absolute majority (50%+), to form government. Under supplementary vote the electorate have 2 choices/preferences. If the first preference candidate does not achieve a majority of votes, then the lowest achieving candidate eliminated, and the top 2nd preference votes are added to first preference votes for the top 2 candidates. In London Mayor election (2008) when the SV is used, no candidate achieved a majority, hence the 2nd Brian Padrick was eliminated, Boris Johnson + Ken Livingstone had their first/2nd preference votes added. Eventually Mr. Johnson won, which under the Majoritarian system, it is will of majority, but party representation won received a majority to form government.

(c) Electoral systems are still on the political agenda after the AV referendum 2011. Proportional representation is certainly a hall-mark for Democracy, although others oppose the notion. This essay, will analyse + explore the advantages of PR electoral systems.

Electoral systems, such as the PR AMS, STV and the regional list system are characterised by proportional representation, where votes are approximately equivalent to the number of seats. There are no 'winners bonus' under the PR electoral systems, as we find under the FPTP where a minimal lead candidate achieves the 'winning post'. However PR, e.g. under the STV AMS which is a Hybrid voting system which overcomes the disproportionate votes experienced by smaller parties. But rather the votes are equivalent to seats, which presenting all parties under a first + last system and no candidate or party achieves a 'winning post' after achieves minimum votes, i.e. the FPTP system ^{in Westminster} (2005) election; the Labour government claimed government after receiving 35% of popular vote. But under the AMS the votes are equivalent to seats making party representation fair, which an advantage.

However, PR electoral systems, especially under the AMS, it is likely to create a multi party system

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

((c) continued) as we had seen under in 2011 in the Northern Ireland election, where 5 parties had significant party representation in assembly. Which jeopardised a ^{single} strong, decisive government from fulfilling its mandate, as smaller parties may gain seats and ~~not~~ ^{vote} to make to pass legislations.

Under PR electoral systems, we do not only an approximate proportion of votes to seats. But smaller parties are fairly represented. In the 2004 election for European Union, using the Regional list system, UKIP gained 13 seats, ~~and~~ ^{and} the Green Party gained 2 seats in the EU parliament. Smaller parties can be recognised in fair, proportionate way without being discriminated and excluded as we see under the FPTP, where ~~Green Party only~~ ^{on the Liberal Democrats} only gained 8.7% of seats after achieving 23% of the votes. Substantially under PR electoral system there is a recognition of smaller parties.

However, under the RP electoral system, smaller extreme are given the opportunity to be represented. This refers to the BNP with its fascist ideology. Hence, it is considered that RP electoral system ~~are~~ ^{are} a disadvantage for all as many like the

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

((c) continued) BNP to represent their fascist ideology.

Under PR electoral systems, such as the AMS and STV, the electorate do not only vote for party and candidate. But can vote for the two in order of preference '1' being first and so on, which is not allowed in any other system.

The STV especially enables the electorate to vote for preferred candidates within one party, hence there is no 'tactic voting' as we find under the FPTP, which is a significant advantage ⁺ also a democratic.

However, the preferential voting is considered to confuse the electorate as we see under the STV, where there is a large number of split ballot papers^{in NI}. It also means that it takes a lot longer for a party to form government, as there is a lot of calculation.

In conclusion, there are many advantages under the PR electoral systems, such as recognition of smaller parties, no 'winners bonus', express of preferences.

Although there are also some disadvantages under PR electoral systems.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

Little to add here other than to comment on what a good response looks like.

(a) This is given credit for two links, the formation of government and the tangential link to a three party system in the concluding section.(b) This begins really well, accurately depicting first past the post and then losing momentum which results, in the final paragraph, in a failure to link the system to any political party.(c) It is very hard here to credit much of the response; there are errors and the mark is held at Level 1.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1** **Question 2**

Question 3 **Question 4**

(a) A party system describes a method of political representation by which political parties try and gain the vote of the eligible electorate so as to form a government. It is a method of representative democracy, as the voters elect political representatives to office to represent the opinions and/or wishes of the electorate. In the UK, this system is dominated by three main political parties: Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats and is based on the principle of adversary politics in which successive governments seek to oppose the actions of the previous administration.

(b) There are three main electoral systems used within the United Kingdom. The first & these is referred to as FPTP (First past the post^{*}) and is used in the Westminster electoral system - by which MPs are elected seats in Parliament, and from which governments are formed following a general election. Based on a method of simple plurality / simple proportion, candidates need to secure a majority of votes over other candidates / parties to be successful. It is simple to use and generally creates clear majorities, which is good, however, it can also create 'safe seats' in which constituencies regularly return the same / similar results (eg, Suffolk is seen as a Conservative 'safe seat'). In addition, smaller parties with more dispersed votes (eg, Green Party, UKIP) struggle to attain seats in government.

The second system is STV (Single Transferable Vote) and this acts on the premise that voters have 2 or more votes:- if their first choice is unsuccessful then there is opportunity that their second choice will be. This makes the electoral process, and governments more legitimate as FPTP^{*} can give undue influence / over representation to

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

((b) continued) any one party. STV is used in the Republic of Ireland and also the Northern Irish Assembly. However, what FPTP succeeds in doing which STV fails to do as much, is that it is good at forming good links between constituencies and their elected representatives (MPs). The Liberal Democrats prefer STV as if it had been used in the 2010 General ~~A third electoral~~ election they would have secured a proportion three fold that which they gained under FPTP.

A third electoral system is AMS (Additional Member System). Again, favoured by smaller, more dispersed parties, it uses an initial proportional vote, and then uses a list system to use up the votes. It is considered more representative than FPTP and is favoured by the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.

(c) Simple PR (proportional representation*) describes the electoral system which is used in the Westminster System (eg General Elections). It works on the premise that electoral candidates / political parties need to secure a majority of votes to be successful.

However, the margin of victory can be as little as 50% + , which raises questions about representation for if a party is elected to government with only a marginal majority (eg 51%), then a large proportion of the electorate's votes (eg 49%) are simply disregarded. In addition, although simple proportional representation is easy to understand and implement, and can form strong links between MPs and their constituents, it can cause problems. For example, the 2010 General Election left no clear majority for anyone political party and as such the Conservatives and the Lib Dems had to form a coalition government, allowing a Hung Parliament. In this way, the doctrine of the mandate is brought into question as if a new political manifesto had to be conceived behind the coalition parties, which could be seen as illegitimate as none of the electorate had voted for a coalition / nor the revised manifesto.

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

((c) continued) To continue, FPTP (the most widely used method of PR in the United Kingdom), has certain pitfalls, in that it can cause a political hegemony and undue over representation of one party, especially if the margin of electoral victory is narrow. Also, as it depends upon whole constituency majorities it can be politically unfair to smaller parties, or parties whose electoral support is widely /thinly spread across the state. In this way, such parties favour methods of voting such as AMS (Additional Member System), as more than one candidate can be selected for any one constituency, and legitimate votes are not simply discounted.

Therefore, simple proportional representation can be seen as particularly effective, in that it usually produces clear majority governments (candidate victories), it is simple to implement and it simple for the electorate to comprehend. However, it is also politically unsound as it is not universally fair to all political parties, and thus unfair to the eligible electorate.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

If the previous example was a good one to follow here is a view from the opposite end of the spectrum of a response which would not reach a pass grade.

Question 2

2(a) Although a very small number of candidates made errors here, the vast majority showed a thorough understanding of right-wing politics. The most common ideas highlighted were privatisation, free markets and reduced welfare. On the whole these were well developed and explained, with examples provided, occasionally from the Cameron government, but more often from the Thatcher era. It was not uncommon to see right-wing ideas from parties other than the Conservatives – often highlighting more extreme right-wing ideas.

2(b) A few candidates misread this question and chose to highlight one division in each of the major parties, but most selected one party. The Conservatives were the most popular choice and there was a range of accurate divisions assessed, most commonly relating to gay marriage and the EU. Answers that chose to assess divisions within the Labour Party tended to be weaker, sometimes coming close to a narrative of the emergence of New Labour under Tony Blair and showing limited awareness of the Labour Party since then. There were a very few responses that explored divisions in the Liberal Democrat Party and those that did showed a good awareness of various divisions over coalition and over economics. There was reference to various party groups e.g. Cornerstone, Orange Bookers and some of these answers were very good, but a few just described these groups without really highlighting the divisions.

2(c) Again, this was seen as an accessible question which allowed many to demonstrate a sound understanding of current party positions. All candidates attempted a balanced answer and often used the terms 'consensus' and 'adversary' (or, incorrectly, 'adversarial'). Weaker answers were characterised by historical comments about party positions, often incorrectly asserting that Labour was in favour of nationalisation or other such Old Labour positions. It was the drift to the historical mode which denied marks to a minority of responses. Political parties, their ideas and policies have to be contemporary and show current developments.

(a) Two ideas are developed but this falls short of obtaining full marks.

(b) Merits Level 2 for AO1 but fails to match this with AO2 criteria.

(c) This is a Level 2 response. The plan indicates the mode of travel but this is not developed. It is also hampered by the fact it is too historically, as opposed to contemporarily, informed.

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

(a) Right wing ideas are mostly associated with conservatives. Ideas that are considered to be right in nature often tend to be nationally interested for instance policies against immigration. Or advocating for government authoritarianism. Conservative right wing advocate for strong authority often motivated by religious ideas, this stems from their concept of original sin and the idea of paternalism that society needs to be governed from above and that a healthy society is a society beneath an all powerful state.

(b)

The Labour party are originally the one party in Britain who have been internally divided the longest.

Following New Labour many commentators have often criticised Labour for abandoning its traditional Socialist heritage. Thus as a consequence of that there have been internal divisions within Labour

Moreover they are split on a number of issues. Firstly Old Labour or traditional Labour is still very much committed to Socialist ideas such as the notion of equality and that gradual equality can be achieved through parliamentary reforms, this is championed by the likes of Tony Benn. However this is dismissed by Tony Blair and New Labour on the grounds that inequality is inevitable instead New Labour advocates for equality of opportunity.

Furthermore Tony Benn and ~~the~~ the left of Labour have criticised New Labour for abandoning trade unions and thus the working class in favour of attracting the middle class and big business.

New Labour and Old Labour also differ in terms of the economy. Old Labour was committed to

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

((b) continued)

The privatisation of industries and government regulation ~~is a consequence of the~~ influenced by Keynes and the Beveridge report. On the other hand New Labour have taken a step back in terms of government intervention, moreover privatised industries such as gas or electricity under Thatcher remained that way once New Labour got into office

~~Finally there~~ on balance the Labour Party is internally divided on a number of issues as already mentioned

((c) continued)

The major parties in the UK differ in their ideas and policies this links in to ideology of in the case of ^{the} Conservative pragmatism. Firstly Labour policies are often ~~often~~ motivated by somewhat socialist ideas which is based on the notion of equality and policies in the interest of the majority that is the working class. Conservative policies and ideas on the other hand is based on pragmatism the idea that practical action should be taken when necessary.

The period after the second world war ~~and~~ ~~be described~~ ~~described~~ as ~~Consensus politics~~ up until Thatcher could be described as Consensus politics this was based on a number of agreements in terms of ~~policy~~ policies between Labour and Conservatives. Firstly Labour's implementation of the Beveridge report and the establishment of the national ~~health~~ health service was continued by the Conservative party under Macmillan in ~~the~~ the 50's. Similarly other ~~industries~~ ~~in~~ policies such as nationalisation of industries was also kept.

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

((c) continued)

There are however differences between Labour and Conservatives. For instance Thatcher's new right or neo-liberalism was completely different from old Labour. While the Labour government before Thatcher was committed to policies such as a mix market economy and policies that reflect the interest of the collective.

Thatcherism on the other hand was committed to the free market and regarded individualism as a fundamental feature. Moreover Thatcher's policies were the complete opposite of Labour's and hence consisted of privatisation of key ~~industries~~ industries, autonomy of the individual and generally minimising government intervention. In many ways this was largely influenced by classical liberalism.

While Labour was committed to trade unions Thatcher took measures to limit the influence of trade unions in terms of ~~policy~~ policies.

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

((c) continued)

on balance there are vast differences in policies as well as ideas between Labour and Conservatives however there is ~~at~~ also common grounds for instance ~~the~~ both parties remain fully behind the NHS



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

The weakest section (c) pays a heavy price for its lack of awareness of current issues relating to political parties. Reliance on historical events cannot secure a pass grade.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Quite often the dividing line, when discussing political parties, is up to date and correct information. Once this has been mastered this topic becomes much more accessible.

(a) An extensive and detailed response which earns full marks.

(b) The same level of work continues and once again this merits full marks.

(c) The top level performance is not sustained in this section - which reaches the top of level 2. There is not the depth of detail (AO1) or evaluation (AO2) presented.

Chosen Question Number: Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Right wing is a political ideology that is associated with conservatism and fascism it is represented in the UK by the conservative party.

A political idea that is right wing is the idea of individualism which means if a person wants to do or achieve anything then they have to do it by themselves with no government help. This is also shown through the belief that there is no society only individuals. Thatcher once said 'there is no society only people and their families'. This differs from the left wing ideology that wants government that tries to treat a more equal society through the redistribution of wealth.

Another idea that is considered to be right wing is the want of a small government and with little regulation on the people, this is achieved by the lowering of lower taxes on all classes especially the rich which results in build down wealth. This in turn helps promote businesses and wealth as the government does not take a high percentage of tax and does not burden people with the regulation

((a) continued) that would make them uncompetitive. An example of this would be the conservative party plan to reduce the highest tax threshold from 50% to 45%. This shows the need for want of small government.

(b) The conservative party is divided ~~in many~~ on many issues such as the role the UK should play in the European union, the willingness to reduce global warming and the course the economy ~~is going in~~ and public sector is heading towards.

The conservative party is divided on the European ~~concerns~~ and what role Britain should play in it as a large proportion of the party want to leave the European Union as it is seen as threat in turning the UK into simply a state with little power to dictate its own future as powers have been given to Brussels and the EU as a whole. The loss of absolute sovereignty in the country results in the party feeling as they are simply giving away the powers without a fight. Already there is higher law in the form of European laws that can override English laws. The fact that this is happening is because of Thatcher as she was personally on the intervention but supported that the UK stays a member. The rebate from Europe shows a victory for ~~the~~ this side of the party and the fact that Britain did not join the Euro currency.

The other side of the conservative party view on Europe is that Britain should be a member and further integration is not a negative.

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

((b) continued) This is supported by David Cameron the current premier. This is due to the understanding that leaving the EU would result in the UK losing a percentage of trade with the EU as the UK would not follow the same regulations as the other trading countries.

Another way in which the party is divided is over the environment. The current leader of the conservative party wanted to 'humanise' the party image by making it seem they cared about society and the future of the environment. This goes against the long standing view of business and the most important thing to government. A large percentage of the party want wind turbines to stop being built as it destroys the scenery and want gas fracking to stop again even though it has been known to cause earthquakes. The people in the party that support improving the environment understand the imminent threat that global warming creates while the other side sees this as an afterthought.

The government also is divided on the future of the public services and where cuts should happen. This is due to the conservative party wanting a small state but are unwilling to see a cut in all sectors such as healthcare and

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

((b) continued) foreign aid. This is due to the leadership of the party wanting to 'humanise' its image but not in not cutting the NHS and foreign aid goes against small government view. The other sectors that are being cut are being replaced with 'big society' projects which mean the private sector and charities can step in to help take over the running of previously government run actions. This embodies the idea of individualism while also reducing the size of state.

(c) The major political parties differ on issues such as the future of the economy and the future of Britain in Europe but there is consensus on the fact that deficit reduction is necessary and market economies.

The parties of Labour and Conservative differ on the future of the economy as Labour wants to keep spending high which would help to boost the economy (new subsidies of the state and it would be possible as interests are at a all time low, this is the opposite to conservative view that cuts to government and public services should happen from the onset of parliament and the structural deficit should be removed by the end of parliament - this shows they want to deal with the debt first but Labour argues that it could cause another recession if spending was reduced too quickly with the banks still not lending sufficiently.

Furthermore the main political parties differ on the future of Britain in Europe as the Conservative party want to have an in or out referendum while Labour does not. Labour sees the future of Britain in the European Union as a major part of the future of the country. The previous prime minister even offered to give away 20% of the rebate for little in return. The

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

((c) continued) conservative party are unlikely to compromise on the issue due to the large number of MP's that follow the ideology of Thatcher.

There is consensus on issues such as the deficit reduction as both parties know if the deficit is not reduced then the country could face the prospects of defaulting. This has never happened before and would likely result in a party losing support.

Another way in which there is consensus is the use of market economics instead of nationalisation. Some Labour wrote clause law that called for the nationalisation of industries to that of a free market economy. Labour has pursued to limit the scope of government and bring private investment into the running of public services such as the private market inside benefits that was created by Thatcher and expanded by Blair. This shows the willingness to have small government which is in line with the conservative view point. The conservatives want to put previously public run services in the hands of private ones.

Overall the parties want main parties in the England here wanted to catch all us to appeal to all voters of all backgrounds. This has resulted in both parties moving to the

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

((c) continued) *Center on social issues but on economical ones there is still differences that are of marginal importance.*



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This clearly moves up a gear in comparison to the previous response, sadly the momentum in the (c) section is not maintained.

(a) 2 points are clearly developed here to gain full marks.

(b) Here three divisions in the Conservative Party are brought forward. The split on voting rights for prisoners (an ECHR issue not an E.U one) is correct.

(c) A good response here with a clear Level 3 (c) section.

(a) The first political idea considered to be right wing is a ~~free~~ free market like ~~ex~~ what was advocated by the ~~tradit~~ traditional Conservative party. A free market is an emphasise on privatisation ~~and~~ that creates competition between the industries. It means there is private investments in industry as opposed to the government controlling the industry.

The second idea associated with right wing politics is the idea of monoculturalism. This suggests that they are weary of immigration as they believe it can

((a) continued) ~~dilute~~ dilute a culture. Political parties such as the BNP and UKIP all suggest ~~that~~ that we should adopt the same or similar culture and reject the idea of multiculturalism.

(b) The first issue where the Conservative party are divided is regarding the EU budget. The EU suggested that Britain should increase their contribution to the EU from £84.9bn to more over the years 2012 to 2016. However, David Cameron wanted to freeze the budget but when the House of Commons came to take a vote on the budget over 30 rebel Conservative MP's voted against Cameron. They demanded that the budget is too high and should be lowered but Cameron described this as impossible. Rebel MP's included Ken Clarke who suggested that Cameron should defend Britain to the EU and demand a lower contribution. Therefore, ~~the~~ the Conservative party are ~~is~~

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

((b) continued) internally divided over the
EU budget

The second issue the conservatives are divided internally on, is the issue of gay marriage. Cameron has shown support for the Bill that will give homosexuals the same rights as heterosexual ~~couple~~ couples and allow them to be ~~married~~ married in a church. However, many MP's, including members of the faction Cornerstone such as Liam Fox, oppose the Bill and claim that it is disregarding religion and tradition that a marriage is between a man and a woman. The internal division is from the MP's who are committed to traditional conservatism and believe in the traditional

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

((b) continued) concept of marriage.

The final area of conflict in the Conservative party is over prisoners' votes. When the EU Commission of Human Rights claimed that prisoners have a right to vote in elections, he responded in a speech by claiming that under any Conservative government, prisoners would not be receiving the vote. However, some Conservative MPs claim this is being ignorant of EU initiative and that it is unfair to disregard their laws.

(c) Plan:

Differ:

Lab:	• Education	• cuts
	• Tax	• Welfare
Lab:	• Gay marriage	• Environment

Lib Dem:

Since 2010, Britain ~~has~~ has had a coalition between the Conservatives and Lib Dems but with Labour in opposition and Lib Dems having to conform to conservative ideas, adversarial politics has become more prevalent.

There is evidence of ~~strong~~ strong consensus politics between the three major political parties where they agree on a broad range of issues as since 2010, they have an

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

((c) continued) agreed that ~~the~~ cuts have to be made to public spending in order to reduce the deficit. This, therefore, shows that there is a strong ~~is~~ consensus between the parties. However, there is evidence of adversarial politics and differing opinions on the cuts as the Conservatives believe that £15bn cuts should be made to all areas including frontline services such as ~~the~~ NHS and police service. However, both Labour and Lib Dem believe ~~£10bn~~ £6bn cuts need to be made but to lower ~~the~~ priority ~~£~~ spending such as maintenance. Therefore, there is no sign of differing opinions regarding cuts but strong adversarial

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

((c) continued) regarding where the cuts
need to be ~~made~~ made.

~~How~~ To further this, there
is evidence of stronger
~~and~~ consensus politics between
the parties regarding the
environment as they all
agree that £15m has
to be invested in
renewable energy and
~~creating~~ creating a "green
economy". One could argue
that there is ~~evidence~~
evidence of mild difference
of opinion as in the
2010 manifesto, Clegg
pledged to reduce CO₂
emission by 100% by 2050
whereas Brown and
~~and~~ Cameron wanted
a ~~100%~~ reduction of 80%.
Therefore, this ~~is~~ shows that
there is a small extent of
difference and adversarial

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

((c) continued) between the parties, but mostly consensus.

The area causing perhaps the most adversarial politics and ~~diff~~ difference is Michael Gove's education reforms that mean more creative subjects ~~st~~ such as ~~d~~ drama are marginalised in favour for English and Latin. Labour leader Ed Miliband claims that this is governing for the elite and that he ~~is~~ is not considerate of children of their teachers. Gove's reforms also conflict with Clegg's education proposals made in his 2010 manifesto to reduce ~~test~~ testing for key stage 2 children. Therefore, this is evidence for major adversarial politics and shows the parties are differing over policies to a large extent.

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

((c) continued) Another area of ^{major} conflict between the parties is the Conservatives plan to reduce tax for high income earners to 45% from 50% and reject the Lib Dem idea of mansion tax. ~~Both~~ Labour and Lib Dem agree that the Conservatives are therefore protecting the rich and those who ~~could do~~ with the tax on their high wages are not receiving it. Therefore, there is a lack of ~~adversarial~~ ^{adversarial} between Labour and Lib Dems but between them and the Conservatives, there is evidence of ~~the~~ adversarial politics to a large extent. In conclusion, there ~~is~~ most difference lays between Labour and Conservative and they have opposing views on management of the economy, and social issues regarding gay marriage whereby some conservative MP oppose the idea. Overall, there is evidence of ~~major~~ adversarial politics to a large extent between the major parties (25)

(Total for Question - 40 marks)



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This response shows a clear level 3 being attained for the final (c) section.

Question 3

3(a) Many answers referred to the way in which groups educate and inform the public and cited examples from the environmental lobby and the anti-smoking lobby. The second most popular reference was to the way in which groups encourage direct action and protest, with the anti tuition fees demonstrations a common example. Weaker answers limited themselves to a vague reference to a function of pressure groups rather than explicitly addressing the demands of the question. In some ways this was the weakest of the responses in Q3. Most candidates did score marks, there were very few zeros but equally very few scored the maximum of 5. In a sense, responses lacked focus on the issue of promoting political participation. The most common error was to look at two benefits of pressure groups without relating these specifically to participation and this restricted the marks that could be awarded.

3(b) There were plenty of well-explained and exemplified answers here. Candidates were able to explain how wealthy insider groups have an unfair and thus undemocratic advantage, with the bankers bearing the brunt of the candidates' wrath. Also common were references to the illegal or disruptive activities of outsider groups, with one or two graphic accounts of the tactics of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), as well as exasperation at the tube drivers. Thirdly, the undemocratic nature of some pressure groups themselves was cited, although examples here were fewer; mention was made of the union barons of the '70s. Many candidates managed to explain the link between their choice of group and undemocratic activity.

3(c) A minority of candidates misunderstood the question and wrote about how pressure groups gain public support – about their methods, in other words. Others were limited in scope and restricted themselves to a discussion about public support and little else. But many got to grips with the question well. As well as public support – the Ghurkhas being a favourite example - they explained a range of other factors which could lead to success. Some excellent answers linked these factors with public support. Wealth, for instance, was cited as a key factor, but wealth could be a reflection of mass membership and thus public support. The most crucial factor was believed by many to be insider status – again the bankers and the farmers were the villains here. The BMA was a common example, although it was pointed out that the BMA was ignored during the controversy over recent NHS reforms.

(a) The first paragraph is well informed, the second less so.

(b) This raises 3 points and makes those very clearly, hence it satisfies the threshold criteria.

(c) Here this is a low Level 2 response. There are mistakes made in the commentary which does not fully develop the discussion.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Pressure groups will promote political participation through the use of media. If a group has a stand on a political issue they will create promotion for their cause. Outsider pressure groups such as 'plane stupid' will use demonstrations, protests, such as chaining themselves to the runway at Heathrow airport. This will create media coverage of an issue and so TV and newspapers will cover it allowing people to get involved in politics.

By joining a pressure group such as the National Farmers Union an insider pressure group, people will become engaged in politics. The groups high membership will give that group more say in government policy as they can claim they have support of a large number of the people.

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

(b) Some pressure groups especially Outsider pressure groups will need media coverage to gain support. This may lead them to engage in extreme or illegal activities to promote themselves. An example of this is 'plane stupid' a group opposed to airport expansion. They staged protests and blocked Heathrow airport. This undermines democracy as political parties are confined by the law and creates unbalanced awareness or sympathy for one cause. Making people's decisions based on an sympathy not of on fact or logic.

Also pressure groups undermine the UK's representative democracy, where a group of people are represented by one individual. As people favor one particular issue over a wider range of them it can lead to low voter turnout at elections. This causes a less legitimate government under as they will not have true support of the people, undermining our system - democratic system.

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

((b) continued)

Also pressure groups themselves can take back internal democracy further undermining democracy as it is forgotten. This will lead to illegal activity and a bad name for the group. Such as the National Union of Students saw the WWI vets becoming a source of hatred towards students. This also contributed to no real achievements other than caused by the group.

(c) Pressure groups effectiveness can be influenced by its level of public support but is not the only factor. This essay will now see to what extent is the level of public influence a measure of success.

A pressure group with a large number of supporters can be influential. The government will have to accept that these ideas have the support of the people and so influence the parties success at elections if they choose to ~~not~~ listen to them. This is also ~~a strong~~ makes 'Insider' pressure groups more successful, such as the National Farmers Union. These groups work with government and so can be effective as they will have many supporters. An 'Outsider' pressure group can stage large demonstrations if they have much public support to get more media coverage and so influence government policy more. Groups such as the National Union of Students who staged protests to tuition fees in London 2011.

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

((c) continued)

A pressure group with a small level of public support, such as 'plane stupid' ~~moves~~ moves, argues that these ideas are not good. Therefore will not be successful in influencing government policy. Even though they get a large level of media coverage.

However a pressure group can have better influence in government if they work closely with them. 'Insider' pressure groups can have more success as they deal with government officials and people who can make changes. This will allow them creativity and respect within government allowing them more success. These insider pressure groups are ones such as the CBI (Confederation of British Industry). These work within government to change policies. This group does not have a large level of public support but still make changes.

The CBI also has a better financial support to make them more effective. The more financial resources a pressure group has the more they can get media coverage on TV and newspapers. This will allow more success.

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

((c) continued) as they will affect people to subjects that would otherwise not be. Groups such as the RSPB who influence government.

Overall the level of public support is the most important factor. It proves the idea is in the interests of the people and the people want it so government has to listen to stay popular. Media coverage does not help influence government the NUS London riots protests turning to riots did not stop the tripling of tuition fees.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

A weaker performance on the (c) section of a question always makes a major difference to the overall mark.

Candidates have to ensure that their best input is in this section of the question to maximise their score



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

It is best, when selecting which question to answer, to ensure that you feel secure in giving your best performance in the (c) section. It is the 'load-bearer' of the marks and often performance here has most impact on the final grade attained.

(a) There is a lack of depth and scope here and this earns 3 marks.

(b) This cannot achieve a high score as the point in the first paragraph is incorrect - it begins with a possible undemocratic claim but the mark has to be withheld as the concluding remarks are incorrect. Likewise the final paragraph does not improve the mark.

(c) This is a Level 2 response - again it contains errors which should not 'knock' marks off but neither can they increase the total.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Pressure Groups (PGs) provide a more pluralist democracy than allowing more access points for the public into the political world. Unions are an example as they protect the rights of service workers whilst informing them of government affairs.

As mentioned PGs educate the public allowing them to form an opinion and vote more comfortably. Fathers 4 Justice for example, have done school lectures and talks upon the issues they support.

These allow the public to participate more freely in politics.

(b) PGs can have ~~both a positive and~~ ^{an} negative effect on politics, however as highlighted in the decrease in election turnout in 2001 to 59%, which could be attributed to PGs in the way of putting people off voting through violent demonstrations and other borderline illegal actions. This may not always be due to PGs as we know that it was likely to be a safe labour seat but I think that PGs actions can have an effect on the public.

Secondly PGs have a ^{rapidly} growing membership basis, whilst parties have a dwindling base. This shows how people feel they are not being represented by their government and wish to hold them accountable through PGs. This can be seen as detrimental to general election turnout as the public have a lack of faith in the parties due to the greater representation from PGs.

Finally, nowadays it is hard to differ between political parties and PGs. For example the Green Party were originally a PG before becoming a party, therefore it can be difficult for the public to set them apart. This can undermine democracy as people feel unsure about voting and therefore don't, reducing the legitimacy of the party that comes to power.

((b) continued) Thus PGs can have an undermining effect on democracy as they are now used mainly by the people and can influence their decisions.

(c) Pressure Group support has risen considerably in the last few years and now they outweigh the majority of the political parties. However a large support does not always reflect success.

CBI are a good example as they have a disproportionate influence in politics. With only 250,000 members they have a large say in policies that affect the business world. For example the reduction of corporation tax to 23% was largely pushed by CBI. This & this is due to their insider status and how many MP's support them (and can even be on the groups board) as it is beneficial to them.

This is a significant point as it shows how size doesn't always matter in politics.

Greenpeace are an outsider PG whose actions can occasionally be illegal, even though they seem to have a lot of support many members are passive and are 'cheque-book' members. Therefore cannot be directly attributed to the success the group has in their fight against GM crops. However it could also be argued that they do have a large membership base that will increase their influence over government policies especially

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

((c) continued) since the Green Party hold seats in government this allows them to have a greater influence than other groups. This is also significant as it shows to some extent how ~~size~~ actions can also attribute to success not just size.

Furthermore due to Partisan Dealignment it has become easier for PGs to influence government as the people can feel less represented and find disillusionment between the parties. PGs fundamentally provide a more pluralist democracy which allows individuals to state their beliefs freely as well as providing more access points into democracy.

And so it can be down to the growing ease for PGs to influence parties such as Labour (who are currently unsure of their identity) for their benefit, trade unions are the example associated with Labour and they will have greater influence when Labour is in power.

On the other hand membership stats such as RSPB's 1.2 million followers do show signs of success as it highlights how the public feel that more action will be taken by this group. Recent evidence of this is RSPCA's suing off

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

((c) continued) a local firm hunt of which shows how a large support network to provide the funds leads to the success that they had. This shows to a great extent how public support reflects success.

A final example is that of protest marches such as Occupy, who succeeded in their aims of having fairer exchange between the sectors of society, which received large amounts of support.

This is significant as it is a clear example of support relating to success.

In conclusion it is to some extent that support reflects a PHS success, but I think that the significance of examples such as CBE and corporate tax decrease the extent of the relation between support and success.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This illustrates certain pitfalls to avoid. There are many material mistakes in the script - these, as noted, will not deny marks nor incur any deductions but it is hard to advance the overall score.

(a) This falls just short of full marks.

(b) This earns Level 3 for AO1 and mid range AO2. More detail and examples would secure top marks.

(c) This is a high level 3 response. There is continuous evaluation throughout the answer.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Pressure groups promote political participation because the citizens within society who ~~are~~ have a lack of interest with government but are about a certain issue, they can join a pressure group, if the pressure group is an outsider, pressure group then they can be involved in marches or demonstrations such as the university fees demonstration, also the citizens can participate using petitions so they can show their support over an issue, the new type of petition e-petitions further promoted people to participate in politics as they have more ~~the~~ ways to show their support for an issue.

(b) Although pressure groups do promote the people whose ideas and views aren't listened to and as they are generally good for society, they do undermine democracy due to them not being accountable, they can break the law and they can promote issues which may only benefit them and not society.

Firstly pressure groups do not seek political power however seek to influence those in government, ~~the~~ although these pressure groups can influence government but ~~the~~ the pressure groups ~~are~~ do not have to take into account their actions, therefore this creates the problem with how pressure groups can influence legislature but ~~the~~ no one elected them, for example the National ~~the~~ Farmers Union are an inside group who can regularly assault government but no one voted or elected them.

involves
Democracy ~~the~~ laws placed to where everyone is supposed to follow these laws, however pressure groups, mainly outside pressure groups who do not have direct access to government they ~~can~~ would use direct action which can be illegal such as the Animal Liberation front releasing wild animals illegally, pressure groups can be seen to promote

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

((b) continued) breaking the law ~~that~~ to get the message across which undermines democracy.

Lastly, pressure groups can be seen as elitists, who hold too much power, this means they can pass through legislature which only benefits them and not society as a whole, this creates the problem where as we have a pluralist democracy, power should not be concentrated but some pressure groups wield more power than they should, thus this undermines democracy.

Although pressure groups ~~do~~ are good for society they can undermine democracy.

(c) Plan - Define PG

- Points For - More support Gov will listen

- Financial success - support

- Regarded more highly with more support

- Pressure Groups with less support not successful

Against - Support measured by legislative they get through

- More successful with Government

Conclusion - Does

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

((c) continued) A pressure group is an organization be it either internal or external whose role is to further ~~the~~ promote the interests of a section of society or promote a cause. The extent to which a pressure group is successful does mainly rely on how much support they have however, this is not always the case.

The reason why the success of a pressure group is a reflection of their level of public support is because the more support they have the more likely government would listen. Under the type of democracy we have a pluralist, pressure groups are tolerated and supported. Hence if there are many people who support a cause, for example the National Farmers Union, the government will be less likely to ignore ~~the~~ what the people want. This means if a pressure group wants to succeed, then by having a large public support will help them greatly. Although there have been cases where actually government have ignored the public support, an example being the marches on the Iron War Protest, instead of the Coleridge Paddy Listering & the public they were ignored. This shows that in fact success doesn't always ~~the~~

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

((c) continued) come from having public support. On the other hand, it is rare for the government to disregard the views of the public. Public support is still an important success factor, otherwise the government would not be voted back in if they ignored the public opinion.

One of the main successes of pressure groups are the ~~the~~ availability of finance available, ~~the~~ this is in particular promotional pressure groups such as the campaign for nuclear disarmament. If they have large support, then their members of their pressure groups can finance their cause to promote it, if the pressure group had little success then they wouldn't have any money to make leaflets ~~or~~ or posters campaigning their cause. This shows pressure groups need support to be able to finance their cause. On the other hand pressure groups are prone to being taken over by businesses and businessmen who do have the money to finance their cause and not rely on ~~the~~ the public support to finance to them. These business and businessmen are the ones who finance the campaigns during the general election for the parties, therefore they ask in return of

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

((c) continued) The finance, their causes and ideas are just funded by the party if they get elected. This shows how pressure groups success can come from a different route.

On the other hand pressure groups success does come from other factors, such as how ideologically the same they are with the government in power. This means that if a pressure group shares the same views as government then actually they are more likely to get legislation they want through as they have an inside status, such as the National Farmers Union. Depending on the status of the pressure group would determine their success and not ~~how~~ necessarily how much support they have. The amount of legislation would ~~to~~ reflect instead how successful they are because you can have large amounts of support such as the Fairness Justice, however if ~~you~~ government do not listen to your cause or take it into consideration when creating new legislation, then the pressure group isn't really successful. Therefore, the status of the pressure group is a key factor to the success of the pressure group.

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

((c) continued) The success of a pressure group does reflect on the ~~so~~ support from the public as the more support the more chance government would listen to you, however success isn't always measured by how much support you have it can be a reflection on how much legislative has been put through supporting your cause.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a good and well structured response which earns high marks in each AO.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

One positive feature of this response is that the candidate does two key things which have an impact:

1. There is a constant and clear reference to the question in the (c) section.
2. There is a brief plan, this is time well spent in structuring the response.

Question 4

Q4(a)

Again, the concept of Parliamentary Democracy is a core part of the specification which is very well covered in all student texts and revision guides. At its heart lies a focus on Parliament. Most responses did score some marks but there were a good number of zeros and few scores of 5 and 4. Many responses failed to focus on Parliament and looked at features of democracy in general, without reference to Parliament. Most common of these were 'free and fair' elections and even referendums. The best answers did what was required and looked at such features as parliamentary sovereignty, government drawn from parliament, scrutiny of the government by parliament and a bicameral legislature.

Q4(b)

This was the Part B that caused most difficulties to candidates. It is a new question but it should be one that students should feel comfortable with and it certainly should be within their experiences. The WHY part of the question, AO2, was done very well; many candidates cited increased participation, increased direct democracy, education of electorate etc and there were many scores of 3. AO1, the HOW part, was patchy. Some answers mentioned a variety of features of digital democracy including online petitions with good examples such as Hillsborough, texting, tweets, internet, blogs, Facebook, apps, mobile phones etc and could score very high marks. Most tended to include 1 or 2 of these at most and a good number of otherwise good answers scored more highly on AO2 or equally on both AO1 and AO2. To an extent this is unexpected given that the younger generation are more accustomed to advanced technological means of communication and there was an expectation that their familiarity with such e-technology would serve them well, in the event, for the majority it failed to do so.

Q4(c)

Again, this is the type of question that appeared accessible for it rewarded the full range of candidates who have prepared for it whilst also providing appropriate challenge to the most able who focus on the question. Most candidates knew their material well and there were very many high L2 responses based on a balanced discussion of direct democracy with particular reference to referendums. Although a good number of candidates mentioned Athenian Democracy in their introductions, very few continued to develop the idea of direct democracy in a modern context beyond referendums. Candidates who failed to do this tended to remain in L2 for AO1 at 5 marks but could go higher for AO2 and AO3. There were a significant minority who moved into high L3 with references to e-petitions, focus groups, recalls and initiatives, often quoting the USA. It is this latter development which is to be encouraged, direct democracy needs to be depicted as more than the extended and invasive use of referendums

- (a) Only one feature is developed but this is done well and earns three marks.
- (b) This does not develop well with a balance of why and how factors - the latter not being progressed to provide enough detail.
- (c) After a poor (b) section the response does improve and hits level 3 for all of the AOs.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a)

One feature of the UK's parliamentary democracy is that MPs are representatives of constituents, voters in their constituency have voted them in to represent them in Parliament. These MPs vote on ~~that~~ legislation in the House of Commons according to what they feel is best for their constituents.

Another feature is that of

(b) Digital democracy may increase the numbers of ~~et~~ turnout at elections and referendums. This is because election days do not have enough time for everyone to vote. Single working ~~men~~ mothers for example may not have time to vote in person because of work and looking after children. Furthermore, in more remote places the elderly may find it too difficult to reach polling stations to vote, with digital voting they can vote from home.

Digital democracy may also inform people of political issues. On referendums for example they may have clearly labeled consequences of what people are choosing to say yes or no ~~to~~ to. This increases the legitimacy of the vote due to people knowing exactly what their vote means.

Furthermore, digital democracy can speed up the counting of results. This allows for easier and quicker decisions to be reached. In a time of war for example government may need to decide on letting the people vote on what to do in a situation, with the votes held electronically, it's allowing a quicker decision to be made, while still staying democratic.

(c) There are a number of arguments in favour of using direct democracy, that is the purest form, most legitimate form of decision making are examples of factors why. However, the arguments against using direct democracy in the UK are stronger, low turnout, tyranny of the majority, inexperience of general public and the fact that the UK is already a representative democracy are factors against direct democracy.

The strong argument against direct democracy is that there will be a fear of low turnout, this is backed up by a steady ~~down~~ decline of turnout at general elections, in 1997 there was a 70% approx turnout, whereas in 2005 there was approximately 65% voter turnout. By increasing direct democracy, you would have to increase voting scenarios where the population turn up, more elections. This could lead to voter fatigue and the turnout would be considerably lower, giving the elected government a weaker mandate and legitimacy for power.

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

((c) continued)

Further more, referendums have increased in number since 1997, however only once or twice has a referendum turnout been above 80%, the Scottish referendum to devolve central power to Scottish Parliament.

However, ~~using~~ increasing direct democracy is beneficial as its the purest form of democracy. With representative democracy it is easy for representatives to make the wrong choice. With direct democracy you eliminate the middle man, the people themselves decide what they want, via referendums, initiatives, petitions and general elections. Therefore the government knows that they cannot make any mistakes as they follow what the people want.

The previous argument however comes with problems against using direct democracy. Represented officials are trusted because of their relevant expertise in politics. Even with the population being arguably the most politically up to date

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

((c) continued)

Due to social media you can still argue that the general public may not understand complex issues as much as representative officials. Furthermore there is a fear that issues such as euthanasia, abortion and same sex marriage may turn into an 'emotive' vote where the public votes on how they emotionally feel about an issue rather than trying to decide unbiasedly.

~~Additionally~~ Additionally, there are fears of tyranny of the majority. This is where the British voting system comes into play. The First past the post system does not protect the minorities in the population, as long as a majority vote, minorities will forever be silenced. This is why the UK has survived as a representative democracy, as a representative democracy does not have tyranny of the majority to an extent, it will fitfully be free from it once a more representative voting system

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

((c) continued)

is put into place.

On the ~~other~~^{one} hand, Direct democracy should be kept the same, as it's the purest form of democracy, letting the people themselves vote on what they vote. However the benefits of a representative democracy far outweigh the true benefits of direct democracy, it protects minorities while also keeping the public actively partaking in political participation.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The (b) section here is weak; it fails to fully describe digital democracy. It covers aspects of the 'why' element but fails to provide a base of knowledge and understanding (AO1)



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Digital democracy is a key term listed on the specification and as with all key terms needs to be understood and defined.

(a) Although this is brief it is very concise and merits full marks.

(b) The brevity continues in section (b) but there is a range of digital applications noted.

(c) This merits entry to Level 3 for all the AOs.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1**

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

(a) Parliamentary democracy is unique to the UK, with a feature being that Government comes from Parliament. The MPs are elected into their seat in parliament, and the winning party then forms the Government. Additionally, a parliamentary democracy means that the government and Prime Minister are made accountable for their actions, an example of this is that in the UK, the Prime Minister is questioned each Wednesday in 'Prime Ministers Questions' on his work.

(b) The use of digital democracy could consist of making elections and referendums able to be voted in online or via text message, or a greater use of e-petitions. Allowing the public to vote in elections/referendums online would potentially make it more accessible to many, increasing turnout. A higher turnout would mean that the results were more representative of public opinion and would increase legitimacy of Government. This would enhance the use of direct democracy which would allow public opinion to be easier and more greatly heard, particularly through the usage of e-petitions. The lowest turnout in elections and referendums tends to be among 18-25 year olds, and as this age bracket are well accustomed to using digital means, their views would be more likely to be heard as they are more likely to participate in politics if it is more easily and readily accessible.

((c) continued)

Due to social media you can still argue that the general public may not understand complex issues as much as representative officials. Furthermore there is a fear that issues such as euthanasia, abortion and same sex marriage may turn into an 'emotive' vote where the public votes on how they emotionally feel about an issue rather than trying to decide unbiasedly.

~~Additionally~~ Additionally, there are fears of tyranny of the majority. This is where the British voting system comes into play. The First past the post system does not protect the minorities in the population, as long as a majority vote, minorities will forever be silenced. This is why the UK has survived as a representative democracy, as a representative democracy does not have tyranny of the majority to an extent, it will fitfully be free from it once a more representative voting system

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

((c) continued) ~~Some~~ Some believe that direct democracy shouldn't be more widely used as much of the public have little knowledge on political issues. The elitist view of democracy would argue in favour of retaining the use of Representative democracy, as it states that certain people are meant to be in positions of power and that others do not hold the authority to contribute to decision making. On the other hand, it could be argued that the public are better educated in politics nowadays and that they are in a position to participate in direct democracy. Also, a greater use of direct democracy would give an opportunity to educate the electorate on politics and equip them with more knowledge to participate in direct democracy.

The use of direct democracy would encourage a greater public consensus for contentious issues and more consensus style politics in general. Also, people have less confidence in MP's currently, due to the economic troubles and expenses scandal, therefore by giving the public more of a say would be likely to make them more content with the government and its actions.

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

((c) continued) ~~Refer~~ Direct democracy is expensive and time consuming, making it impractical to use, and it also undermines the authority of the government. ~~It~~ Additionally, there is currently no system for triggering a referendum which ~~is~~ is the primary form of direct democracy likely to be used.

In conclusion, it seems that direct democracy could be more greatly used in the UK, through the use of digital democracy and that the public are more knowledgeable to do so. However it does need to be considered how greatly the public would participate, and a system needs to be formulated on how and when, specifically it should be used.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This is a good example of how a concise and correct response can score well. The question is in central focus and all the material relevant and rewardable.

In part (a) the response does make two points, though these could be clearer and more explicit.

In (b) we have a common theme of being at the top of Level 3 for AO2 but in Level 2 for AO1, the 'why' being clearer than the 'how'.

This is an example of a weaker (c) section response. It is within the Level 2 band on (c) for all AOs.

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

(a) The UK's parliamentary democracy uses representative democracy to allow the geographical constituencies to have a voice via a representative. This is useful as a representative is seen to have superior knowledge to the electorate and is therefore able to aid them in any political questions or information they may require. Another feature of the UK's parliamentary democracy is that of the elected government whom have a legitimate authority to run the country. They are also sovereign and are accountable to Westminster who is ultimately accountable to the ~~United Kingdom~~ the electorate.

(b) The use of digital democracy could make the UK ~~dem~~ more democratic in many ways, for instance it could increase political participation, reduce apathy, ^{and} educate the electorate, and

The use of digital democracy could increase political participation as it will become more readily available. Due to the internet many people have signed petitions, read the news, and ~~participate in many other political~~ join in with many political events such as joining pressure groups and political parties. This enhances democracy as it is seen that many more people are giving their voice and are spreading their opinion by signing the petition, joining the pressure group and joining the political party.

Secondly the use of digital democracy could reduce apathy in the UK's citizens, as more and more people feel obliged to sign the petition or join in political marches, as advertisement for these is increased thanks to how readily & available the internet has become. People also feel as though their

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

((b) continued) Voices are being heard more, due to the increase of petitions being asked or ~~the~~ more readily available information on political events happening. This enhances the UK's democratic system as more and more people are obliged to take part in politics.

Finally, the use of digital democracy could educate the electorate, as people begin to discuss politics more, and information on politics in the news, or websites involving politics become more readily available at just a few clicks. This enhances democracy as more and more people understand and are aware of what is going on in the UK, how politics works and then they can participate in politics giving educated decisions on referendums, petitions, initiatives or in local or general elections.

(c) In the UK we use a democratic system called representative democracy. Representative democracy is where the local people ~~may~~ elect somebody to represent them in parliament. These people usually have a superior knowledge and understanding in politics. However, in the UK it is argued that there should be a more wide spread use of democracy, and that in particular a more varied use of direct democracy.

In the UK it is argued that Referendums (a form of direct democracy) should be used more frequently, whilst this is a good way of improving 'democracy' and ~~giving~~ ~~more~~ political participation it is argued that referenda could cause problems widely across the UK due to people making emotional decisions, rather than more rational decisions. For example in 2011 a referendum was released asking the general public if they would like to change the UK ~~electoral~~ ^{electoral} system into ~~AV~~ or alternate vote. Many people who voted voted against this change, even though it is a ~~more~~ fairer, more democratic system to use. This is suggested to be because

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

((c) continued) use of direct democracy throughout
the UK as many people, if given too much
freedom would take advantage of it and
gain illegitimate power over the minority
groups in society.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

With more detail and accurate references this has the potential to move up to very high mark levels.

Paper Summary

Based on performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Ensure that all 'key terms' listed in the specification are familiar – they are all relevant and will be tested;
- When covering elections it is crucial that candidates are furnished with the most recent outcomes of various elections which have taken place within the UK – this covers not only Westminster elections but those in the devolved assemblies as well as elections for MEP's;
- Since May 2010 we have to reflect that fact that the political landscape has changed. We have coalition government which means that there are, in contemporary terms, three major political parties to consider;
- Pressure groups are a popular topic with candidates and in the main it is a 'favoured' choice for them. As noted in past examiner reports, the best responses are those which demonstrate understanding of current developments made by pressure groups, acknowledging both their victories and defeats – in essence their success and failures;
- Democracy inevitably draws on a wider hinterland of political knowledge and developed understanding. Better responses are often reflective of current political events, such as turnout in elections and referendums. Allied to this topic area is a requirement to be speculative and make meaningful connections as to how and why democracy requires improvement and development. In short we can only guide or point out improvements if the problems are clearly understood.
- Clarity and precision are key when responding to questions as can be seen from the example scripts presented in this report.

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