

Examiners' Report
January 2013

GCE Government & Politics 6GP02 01

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Introduction

The paper followed the format of previous papers in this specification and presented no special difficulties to candidates.

Outcomes showed that the paper discriminated successfully among candidates of various abilities. There continue to be improvements in the ability of candidates to construct rounded, balanced answers and to set out their work in a coherent way. Confusion still exists over the relationship between the Human Rights Act and Europe, but there is now considerably more understanding shown of the status and importance of the judiciary. In (a) part stimulus questions candidates are able to identify relevant issues well, but are still often failing to add some explanations. Question 4 tests a central part of the specification, though this was the first time a specific question had been set on the Human Rights Act; this question was the least popular question on the paper.

Question 1

(a) Most candidates could identify both the positive and the negative aspects of fixed term parliaments for prime ministerial power. However, a majority failed to *explain* these at all, making for example, a short comment that events in his favour might include the state of the economy or the opinion poll position of his party. On the positive side a comment such as the ability to pass popular legislation or perhaps reduce taxes just before the election would have been appropriate. Comments like these added to each point would have secured all five marks.

(b) Most candidates identified the introduction of a codified constitution as a way of limiting prime ministerial power. However, too many merely stated that this would show the limits to that power more clearly or would establish a 'separation of powers' without explaining how this might work, for example preventing the 'drift towards greater prime ministerial power' or clarifying prerogative powers so as to prevent the incumbent interpreting his powers too widely.

From their own knowledge candidates tended to discuss electoral reform, House of Lords reform and devolution as possible limits. These have already happened, of course, but were acceptable none the less. However not enough candidates were able to distinguish between reforms which have or would limit the power of government *as a whole*, as opposed to the prime minister *individually*. In this regard better answers included the removal of prerogative powers, such as waging war and the ability to choose cabinet members in an arbitrary fashion by, perhaps, holding parliamentary elections to cabinet. Incidentally, many candidates believed, wrongly, that Gordon Brown had actually implemented some reforms to the royal prerogative. In reality, he suggested them but they were not implemented. Referendums and the transfer of powers to the EU were also popular ideas, though, once again, usually, inadequately related to the personal power of the prime minister. Having said that, credit was given to those who were discussing limits to the power of the whole government since the prime minister is a member of the government.

(c) On the whole this question was well answered with good knowledge and understanding shown of current or recent political experience. The position of four or five of the last prime ministers were often used as were references to academic authorities such as Hennessy, Jones and Foley. However, many answers tended to be discussing *prime ministerial* government, rather than *presidentialism*. Such responses received credit, but not as much as answers which explored the concept of presidentialism specifically.

Most answers demonstrated good balance and essay structure as well as contemporary knowledge. It was also common to see answers that pointed out the distinctions between a head of government and a head of state. Such responses tended successfully to point out that there are more constraints on a head of government than on a head of state and that British prime ministers face such constraints whether they are acting out the role of either.

The most common weakness, as implied above, was for candidates to rehearse well prepared answers which were evaluations of prime ministerial power, rather than the extent to which the prime minister can be seen as a president.

However well written an answer is, however much knowledge and understanding is shown, part (c) answers should have a coherent structure, normally including a useful introduction and a meaningful conclusion. Here is an example of a good answer which lacks such a coherent structure, but still does well.

(c) There is much evidence that the Prime Minister has become Presidential. Firstly, the growth in 'special' leadership has been very obvious, where Party leaders distance themselves from their parties and make it all about themselves. Secondly, the increasing spending on money that is evident in elections is more noticeable - this is a clear parallel with politics in the US. Thirdly, the ease at which Prime Ministers can ensure law and get legislation passed - Blair in his first two terms had no defeats in Commons. It is also obvious with the Prime Minister's reduced use of the Cabinet - their role as a collective group in formulating policy was chipped in recent years - Blair especially enjoyed running a 'saga' Cabinet, ~~that~~ where many bilaterals were made between individual Ministers and their departments. Building on this, the Prime Minister

((c) continued)

was expanded his use of advisers as an alternative to the Cabinet. Harold Campbell under Blair is a notable example.

Connected with the increased money in elections is the 'can image' that politicians are creating. David Cameron counsel on the Big Society, Blair had 'Blairism' and Margaret Thatcher had 'Thatcherism'. Finally, the increased involvement in foreign politics since the 1970s - the latter stages of the Cold War with Thatcher right through to Iraq in 2003 with Blair demonstrate this parallel with Presidentialism.

However, it must be noted that Prime Ministers will only ever resemble Presidents - they will ~~not~~ never become one, and this is for a number of reasons.

Firstly, UK politics is based on the 'Westminster ^{system} ~~system~~' and a parliamentary Government - this

((c) continued)

Means Parliament produces Government and the Prime Minister is leader of the largest party in Commons, leading to a fusion between the executive and the legislature.

Secondly, the Prime Minister may choose to run a Cabinet Government, where the Prime Minister is simply 'first among equals' - this was evident in some ways under Gordon Brown, which leads me onto my next point. Gordon Brown's Parliamentary Reform is heading pure back to Commons meant that the idea that the Prime Minister is becoming a President ~~is~~ is being undone, and the idea his cabinet serves little purpose is also being undone.

The Prime Minister thus needed the support and approval of Parliament to deliver his and sign treaties for example.

Thus, to conclude, it is possible

((c) continued)

that the Prime Minister is becoming like a President in some ways, but in others ~~that~~ this is not true, and so what is more likely is that the Prime Minister could be considered running a Prime Ministerial Government, or a Cabinet Government.



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Examiner Comments

In terms of AO1 and AO2 this is a strong answer, especially as it tends to concentrate on the role and strength of the prime minister as an individual, separate from government. Thus it is well focused on presidentialism. It is not especially long, but is very relevant and shows good understanding.

However, the answer has no real introduction and the conclusion is cursory. It does not lead the reader logically through the arguments. So it scored less well on AO3.

AO1: 8 marks

AO2: 8 marks

AO3: 5 marks



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Examiner Tip

Always include an introduction which will guide the reader through the main points. The conclusion should be firm and supported by evidence.

It should be noted that answers to (a) part questions should identify the facts or issues as required, but should also offer some explanation of those facts or issues, explaining them in some way. Such explanations need only be brief to obtain additional marks

Indicate your first question choice on this page.

Put a cross in the box indicating the first question that you have chosen.
If you change your mind, put a line through the box
and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen Question Number: Question 1 Question 2

- (a) Fixed term Parliament affects prime ministerial power because it prevents prime ministers 'using their prerogative power to dissolve Parliament and call a general election when events turn in their favour'. This essentially stops prime ministers from using their ability to call elections so that it will favour them. It also effects Parliament as it means prime ministers 'can plan ahead to complete their programme by a known date'. This means they can set smaller targets in between to reach an overall goal. It also effects prime-ministerial power as they are limited from using programmes that will last longer than 5 years.



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Examiner Comments

This answer correctly identifies two effects of fixed term parliaments on prime ministerial power. There is also some explanation, not lifted directly from the passage, so full marks have been awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Always try to add some explanation of the points you have identified, even brief ones. Avoid simply quoting parts of the source passage by way of explanation.

Three suggestions were required and most candidates provided these clearly. This is true of this example. However, it has a serious flaw which keeps it only at the lower end of level 3

(b) One way in which a reform could limit Prime Ministerial power is through establishing a codified constitution. This would clearly outline the role of the Prime Minister, giving set boundaries and guidelines within which to operate. This would limit the Prime Minister as they would no longer be able to act as they wish and effectively decide the limits of their own power. It would effectively be yet another way in which to hold the PM accountable, as described in the source.

Further separation of powers may also reduce Prime Ministerial power. For example, giving more power to the cabinet might reduce the Prime Minister's role as head of state and of foreign policy, ~~and~~ the Prime Minister would therefore hold far less power than he/she currently does.

Moreover, the House of Lords could be presented with more power, thus holding the government, and by extension the Prime Minister, to account, once more reducing their power. This would therefore further reduce Prime Ministerial power by giving them yet another obstacle through which they are bound.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Three points are clearly made and explained. However, only two are fully satisfactory - on a codified constitution and reform of the House of Lords. The other point, about giving cabinet more power, is fine and would certainly curtail the power of the prime minister, but the answer does not explain specifically how this might be done. It remains only a vague aspiration. Thus the mark is at the bottom of level 3 for AO1, because the third point is too vague, and in level 2 for AO2 because there is a lack of explanation of the second point.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always try to explain the points you make as fully as possible. If you make a statement, you need to explain and justify it if you can.

Question 2

2(a) Most candidates could identify two criticisms accurately, but very few included any explanation of why the increased size of the House might create problems. Even a brief point, for example that increased size would make legislation slow and make it difficult to achieve consensus, would have been sufficient to glean an extra mark. More however, understood why rewarding party donors might be criticised.

2(b) Most candidates were able to identify three considerations, though many struggled to explain the points from the passage well, with some confusion about maintaining party balance and giving peerages to party loyalists. They did qualify as two separate points but were often conflated by candidates and this led to some confused answers.

There were many who understood, accurately, that some are chosen for their knowledge and experience, often choosing Alan Sugar as their answer. This was, indeed, a very good example, but it was a little monotonous to see the example used so many times. It would have been good (not essential of course) to see a wider variety of examples, such as Baroness Warsi, Lord Adonis or Lord Winston.

Surprisingly few added that a place in the Lords is often given to former politicians and civil servants merely as a reward for past service. On the whole, however, the question was answered quite well.

(c) This question should have produced many knowledgeable answers, especially in view of the recent parliamentary debates on the issue and widespread public comment, and so it proved on the whole. Most candidates could discuss a good range of issues on both sides of the argument. Balance was generally well maintained and plenty of marks gained under AO2 for sound evaluation. That said, there was common confusion about whether elections would improve or worsen the social representation of the Lords, with some saying they would bring in better members, and others suggesting the House might be full of 'party hacks'. Either approach was valid as long as it was argued in a cogent manner.

Some of the very best responses discussed the impact of various electoral systems that might be used and/or discussed the terms of office, with some stating correctly that 15 year terms would hardly create accountability. In addition, it was encouraging to see so many candidates discussing democratic legitimacy as a concept.

The most common weakness was lack of range, reducing scores for AO1. Too many candidates were content to raise just two issues, when examiners were looking for three or four for the higher marks.

(a) This answer clearly identifies two criticisms and explains *one* of them effectively (excessive size), but does not successfully explain why rewarding party donors is undemocratic.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 1** ☒

Question 2 ☒

(a) David Cameron has been criticised for ^{his method of} appointing life peers. The first point to make is that too many people are being appointed within a short timeframe. This gives the possibility of overcrowding in the House of Lords. If this were to happen, it would 'cease to be able to function' because of the various opinions. This would affect legislation as the process would take longer than usual. Another point is that the number of peers from each party is not proportional to the outcome of the last general election. Ed Milliband accused the Prime Minister of 'filling the Lords with Conservative party donors which would definitely affect the number of lords associated with each party. This could also affect decisions made because if this is the case, they are more likely to be made in favour of the Conservative party's mood.



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Examiner Comments

Note that the explanation of excessive size and why it is a problem is not long and not complicated and 4 marks are awarded. To gain full marks would have required an effective explanation of both points.



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Examiner Tip

As with question 1(a) always try to add a little explanation of your answers, using your own words rather than simply lifting passages from the source.

This question required three reasons for appointments, with good explanations and one taken from the source

(b) When appointing life peers there are three main factors which are usually taken into account. These being party allegiance, experience and credentials and finally party representation within Lords.

Firstly, party allegiance is a huge factor when appointing a life peer so whatever party is currently in government their choices for life peers will almost certainly come from that same party. For example one of Cameron's 117 appointments they are almost certainly all Conservative party members who ~~share~~ have share similar values to the current party in Government. The likelihood of a Labour peer being appointed under a Conservative government is ~~also~~ almost zero. Tied in with party allegiance is the donations a party receives from wealthy businessmen. These can also persuade Prime Ministers on who to appoint however this is a more controversial issue.

Another factor is the past experience of a possible life peer. The House of Lords is primarily meant to be a revising chamber and so to carry out this role to its maximum ability it needs peers who have experience and know what they are doing. The Lords is a house of expertise & knowledge and hence it is necessary

((b) continued) to appoint someone who can provide that, people like leading businessmen.

Finally, one final factor that is taken into account is that in theory the Prime Minister should attempt to do his best to make the Lords as representative to the public as possible and trying to reflect the make-up of the Commons in order to be fair. A life peer should be, to an extent, popular with the public. As the Lords is unrepresentative & unelected a Prime Minister would usually attempt to appease the public with an appointment that is popular.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

Though the reason taken from the source is not explicit, it is present in that the answer discusses party allegiance in general terms and thus meets the criteria for level 3 in AO1. Two reasons are clear and very well explained; the third is valid but does not show full enough understanding to obtain full marks within the level. The quality of the explanations is such that level 3 for AO2 is justified.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When asked to make three points, make three, no more, no less if you can. Always, with part (b) questions, include at least one point from the source and explain it in your own words.

This question was one that many candidates could prepare for and this candidate is no exception. They have obtained level 3 marks for AO1 and AO2, but have stayed just in level 2 for AO3

(c) It has been widely discussed about the reform of the House of Lords (or second chamber) and ways to make it more democratic, as many say Labour's constitutional reforms from 1997 to 2010, including the House of Lords Act of 1999 where all peers became appointed except 92 hereditary peers, were not completed and left undemocratic elements.

All three main parties, Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrats, agree that the Lords could be partly elected - 80% - and partly appointed - 20%. This would be more democratic as people would have more say as to who is scrutinising and changing public legislation that is potentially for the citizens' benefit, for example in February 2012 there was a backbench rebellion in the Lords against the Welfare Reform Bill drawn up by the coalition government.

However, due to the Salisbury Convention, the Lords can not delay anything that was proposed in the most recent government's manifesto - so they are still abiding by the peoples' wishes. The 20% appointed peers would mean that some expertise is kept. The whole situation would just make the second chamber more legitimate. However, many say that there is no point in having two elected chambers as if there is a majority in the Commons, there will most likely be a

((c) continued) Majority in the Lords - so the majority's legislation ~~will~~ will get through - MAJORITARIANISM and elective dictatorship as not enough checks on the government.

The coalition has also proposed to reduce the size of the Lords from over 600 to 300 peers, but backbench Tory MPs rebelled in July 2012 saying was too small and the Lords would not be able to do its job properly.

A wholly elected House would again be more democratic as it would put political sovereignty into the hands of the people at times of election. The Conservatives also said elected peers would run 15 year non-renewable terms, so the majority in the Commons could change while remaining unchanged in the Lords so every 5 years (due to Cameron's new five-year fixed term constitutional change) the Commons would change over.

With the partly elected House, the government would not be able to appoint new peers without a resignation or unfortunate death, so as not to distort the proportion. This means they would have to wait 15 years for a set of fresh faces and new ideas, opinions and perspectives in our fast changing society. As well as this, who would

((c) continued) ...decide what current appointed peers to keep and are? As this could distort the party representation in the house

To conclude, although more democratic, the changes seem like a lot of work and the second chamber has no real political power anyway, they are more of a traditional check on the government – there are over 20 archbishops who only sit in because it is what they're supposed to do by convention.



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Examiner Comments

This is a good solid answer and is mostly in level 3. The reason it is not at the top of level 3 for AO1 is that the range of points is too limited. Several more balancing points could have been added and those that were used were superficial. Similarly, the unbalanced nature of the assessment costs some marks in AO2. It is level 2 for AO3, partly because the structure suffers from that lack of balance in the arguments and partly because not enough appropriate political vocabulary is used. It is a little too informal in places.



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Examiner Tip

Try to use as much conceptual political vocabulary as you can, including such terms as accountability, legitimacy and representation. This answer uses some, but not enough. In addition, evaluations must be reasonably balanced and not too one sided.

Question 3

This question was particularly popular, with many candidates demonstrating wide-ranging knowledge of constitutional reforms since 1997, including those introduced under the coalition. Unfortunately some assumed that reforms such as Commons boundary changes and the power of recall of MPs had taken place, whereas, in fact, they remain only proposals. Such sections of an answer could not be credited as the question specified what had actually been done. Not surprisingly, devolution, the Human Rights Act and Lords reform figured extensively, but it was encouraging to see that the Freedom of Information Act was commonly discussed. A substantial proportion of answers mentioned fixed term parliaments, but most sadly failed to show understanding of how this may impact on democracy in the UK.

Stronger answers discussed the concept of democracy before evaluating specific reforms, referring to such issues as decentralisation, representation, accountability and legitimacy. This approach usually proved successful, gaining good credit under AO2 and AO3. Deconstructing questions in this manner is a worthwhile technique, often providing a logical introduction. Many candidates also used the conclusion successfully by giving an overall assessment of the extent to which democracy has been enhanced under these reforms.

Assessments of devolution were the most successful sections and a few very strong answers pointed out that the devolved governments use proportional representation for their elections and so, though electoral reform for the UK has foundered, we have still seen considerable change in this area, with consequences for democracy. Many also showed shrewdness in understanding that, though Lords reform has been very modest, the way the Lords operates has changed as a result, and that this can be seen as a democratic advance as it is an additional control on executive power.

Assessments of the ways in which the HRA and the FOI Act may have enhanced democracy were, however, usually rather vague or non-existent. Candidates tended to understand how they operate, but not how they relate to democratic principles. Discussions of the changing relationship with the EU were valid, but again, assessments of how this relates to democracy were often weak. A few were able to refer to extensions of economic and social rights, which can be seen as enhancing democracy, but most simply made generalised negative comments without discussing the democratic deficit in Europe.

In general, therefore, answers were sound to excellent and it is clear that there is widespread knowledge and understanding of constitutional reform in the UK.

Introductions are very important. They can be of various types. One is to set out how you are going to organise your answer, and to list some key points.

Others may deconstruct the terms used, or may serve as a kind of plan, setting out all the points briefly before they are fully discussed.

This is an example of the first type of introduction which does its job well.

In the UK we have an uncodified constitution, where unlike the USA for example we do not have a single - identifiable source of constitutional sovereignty. Since 1997, the UK has seen dramatic 'constitutional' change in such ways as devolution or the Human Rights Act of 1998. This has led to arguments in favour of the UK being made more democratic, however it is also fair to criticise this by noting how power is still centralised in Whitehall resulting in a stagnation of democracy. This essay will critically analyze arguments for and against to note whether the constitutional reforms since 1997 have made the UK more democratic.

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Examiner Comments

The candidate mentions two examples of points they are going to raise. Then they set out that there are two sides of this issue i.e. that some reforms have enhanced democracy, but that there remain undemocratic elements not yet tackled. This is a well organised, clearly written essay which is consistent with a Level 3 answer.

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Examiner Tip

Good though this introduction is, it does contain some unnecessary remarks. The fact that the constitution is uncodified is not really relevant to this question. It does no harm but could have been left out. In order to save time avoid adding remarks which do not advance your answer.

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Questions in Section B require some kind of evaluation. The best technique (though not the only one) is to evaluate each issue as it is raised, demonstrating an understanding of both sides of an argument. This clip is an example of this approach.

Reform to the House of Lords has been something which has certainly helped increase democracy. Prior to the Parliamentary Reform Act the House of Lords was wholly hereditary. Since, however, it has become mainly appointed, with just 92 hereditary peers. But there is clearly still a huge problem in that they are not elected, and therefore the power does not lie in the hands of the people. The proposed legislation would create an 80% elected House of Lords which would be far more democratic. Although not as democratic as a purely elected House of Lords.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate writes very plainly, but exceptionally clearly. He/she could use slightly more 'conceptual' language but the meanings are very clear and will achieve level 3 on all three assessment objectives.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Above all the point about Lords reform is accurate, succinct and shows clearly the extent to which it can be seen to have enhanced democracy. More could have been written on this issue, but if the candidate wishes to raise a wide range of issues he/she may be wise in keeping this section quite short.

As stated above, each issue should be analysed and evaluated. This example evaluates and does not analyse, but is enough for level 3. The evaluations can be added point by point, or as a collection at the end of the answer. Either will do, but this way looks more organised.

Question 4

This proved to be an unpopular question, which was unfortunate as the Human Rights Act has been in existence for some time and has attracted much publicity and comment, with many examples of how its operation can be either praised or criticised, not least in relation to the issues of terrorism, immigration/migration/asylum and Leveson. On the other hand, the answers seen tended to be weak, which perhaps indicates that candidates who were not sure of their ground, chose question 3 instead.

Among those who did attempt the question there appeared to be widespread ignorance of the relationship between the HRA and Europe. A majority of candidates still believe the HRA emanates from the European Union. In recent exam series this fault seemed to be in sharp decline, but it has returned significantly. All the resources clearly state that the HRA does not stem from the EU and is not administered by the EU and candidates would benefit from exploring and learning this. Where candidates did make the error, examiners judged whether it was fundamental to the nature of the answer. If it was, virtually all credit was lost, but if it was not, the error could be ignored in the interests of positive marking. Those few who understood that the negative comments on the HRA could translate into anti-EU sentiment were, of course, correct and so received due credit. Others referred to external jurisdiction being controversial (often stating wrongly that the EU was the external body concerned) and this was valid, even with the error included.

That said, responses usually lacked a good range of issues, often being confined solely to the issue of human rights versus national security, quoting such cases (accurately) as Belmarsh, the Afghan hijacking case and Abu Qatada. The other common and successful approach was to question whether judges are the appropriate authority to be judging issues which affect the national interest. Very few discussed Leveson issues, where the conflict between privacy and freedom of expression have been thrown into focus, partly by the HRA itself. Interestingly, however, a good proportion of candidates were able to discuss reasons why it is not controversial (for example the popularity of rights being better safeguarded generally as a protection against over-powerful government) and most did make a fair attempt to evaluate and maintain some balance in their answers.

Thus, while marks held up quite well for AO3, the scores for AO1 (particularly in view of the limited range of issues raised by so many) and AO2 tended to be low. After the passage of time, candidates should by now have a more thorough and accurate knowledge and understanding of the impact of the HRA on UK government and politics.

The political status of judges is commonly misunderstood, but here is an example of passage from an answer that shows good knowledge.

Chosen Question Number: **Question 3** ☒

Question 4 ☒

It could be said that the Human Rights Act introduced in 2000, is controversial; it ~~is not~~ has ~~to~~ begun to question the independence of the judiciary, as well as the power of Parliament - but it does mean that some of our rights and responsibilities are now (at least) semi-entrenched.

Firstly, it could be said that the Human Rights Act is controversial; it has given too much power to the Judiciary, with more power comes less independence - they are more likely to 'take sides' on political matters; this can be seen by the increased number of Judicial reviews in recent years that consistently favour human rights over civic duties. These judges are neither elected or representative of society at large; they are taken from a select elite group of (mainly) Oxbridge educated, upper class, conservative white etc people that do not represent the views of society as a whole - how could we, as a democratic electorate, ~~choose to~~ allow such important decisions be made, on our behalf, by such a select group?



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Examiner Comments

In plain, clear language, the candidate is showing understanding that there is a problem when unelected judges are asked to make judgments about issues of great public importance. The candidate went on to use the treatment of the 2011 rioters as an example. Though it had a tenuous link to the HRA, he/she made it relevant by discussing the riots to make public demonstrations etc. The mark is consistent with a high Level 2.



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Examiner Tip

It may seem a small point, but the candidate is clearly demonstrating that he/she is starting with a point that may be considered one of the key issues. It is always worth beginning an essay with the more important points and leaving those of less importance to the end.

Conclusions are important. They are generally of two types. One type summarises the arguments, which is the case in this example. The other is to reach a firm conclusion. This was probably difficult to do in the case of question 4, as it requires a 'to what extent?' answer. Firm conclusions are appropriate when the question asks for a 'yes/no' answer.

Therefore there are two aspects of the Human Rights Act that are particularly controversial; the weakness of it and its restriction on government. It is controversial to a great extent because of the terrorism hysteria and the traditional "Tough on Crime" consensus of the major parties, however its removal would show a potentially dilatory nature of Parliament, which would risk Cameron's de-legitimation of his party and would be controversial as it splits the coalition's views. To conclude, its basic principles are not controversial but its implementation is criticized widely and its protection ^{of rights} appears weak and is undermined by the Government, allowing it to seem more delicate and insignificant.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This conclusion presents a good, well written summary which also demonstrates good political awareness. However, it also demonstrates a weakness evident in many responses to this particular question: lack of range. The candidate admits that they have only discussed two types of issue. The candidate should have discussed at least three, preferably four. Nevertheless the mark for this essay is consistent with a high Level 3.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

As described above, you should always include a conclusion, even if you are running out of time. If you are short of time, do include even a short conclusion referring back to the question and emphasising that you have answered it.

Summary

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

- Candidates need to be aware of the significance of the Human Rights Act together with the nature of some significant cases of political importance.
- It is important that candidates should understand that the European Convention on Human Rights does not emanate from the European Union.
- Questions which relate to the powers of the prime minister require candidates to be able to distinguish between prime ministerial government and presidential government, even though the two concepts do overlap.
- Candidates should be able to distinguish between reforms that *have* been implemented and those that are merely *proposals*.
- Where the question requires information taken from stimulus material (Section A), it is vital to include reference to the stimulus in the answer.
- In Section A, (a) part answers, as well as identifying relevant points and issues it is important to add some explanation without quoting directly from the source material.
- Longer answers in both section A and section B should include a meaningful introduction and some kind of conclusion.
- Evaluative answers should be balanced but need not be fifty-fifty balanced as long as both sides of an argument or issue are covered well.

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