

Examiners' Report
January 2013

GCE Government & Politics 6GP03 3A

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Introduction

This paper saw a pleasing level of focus on contemporary events, with a marked jump in the degree of discussion of coalition policy, particularly in those questions that forced such a focus (such as Questions 6 and 8) but also in Question 4 which triggered an impressive level of awareness of contemporary debate over Heathrow and 'Boris Island'.

It is encouraging to see so many candidates and centres adopting the contemporary approach that this paper demands, and actively embracing the opportunities to show their knowledge of current policy and debate.

Nevertheless it was noticeable that a significant number of candidates continue to avoid the more contemporary focus, and look for opportunities to take a more historical approach over such issues as economics and law and order, which was particularly apparent on Questions 3 and 8. Such an approach, which is sometimes rooted in an understanding of politics that precedes even Blair, does not serve candidates well.

In this paper candidates showed a fear of the economic questions which many of those who did tackle those questions were able to prove unnecessary. It may be that the two short responses 'competed with each other' for candidates, but both questions were accessible and offered strong scope for contemporary awareness.

Law and Order, whilst proving a more popular topic, continues to entrap candidates who wish to focus on a general 'soft vs. tough' debate, whereas both questions sought consideration of more specific areas - one on policing and one on punishment vs. rehabilitation.

The final common weakness of many candidates was a tendency to engage the question, but not the whole question. The key words 'to what extent' continued to be disregarded by a surprising number of candidates, whilst the failure to address both parts of a double assertion (such as Question 8 with its twin focus on social unfairness and political popularity) is a less serious fault but can still prevent candidates from accessing Level 3 marks. Some candidates also failed to note the subtle distinction between the modifiers 'between government and opposition' and 'between the major parties' which prior to 2010 were able to be considered as one and the same, but are no longer.

It was pleasing to see a reduced number of candidates eschewing a political approach in favour of a Business Studies approach (Questions 1 and 3), a Geographical approach (Question 4), a Sociological approach (Questions 7 or 8) or any of the numerous other such traps for those who study related subjects. In general there was a strong political focus.

It was also very pleasing to see a more subtle understanding emerge of synopticity, which was encouraged by the variety of essay questions. Whilst Question 8 did offer a certain level of traditional dichotomy between different parties, Question 7 encouraged candidates to consider both changing party views and alternative views within parties, and Question 6 enabled the strong use of alternative political viewpoints from outside the party system - from pressure groups and campaigners. Candidates were often able to engage synopticity within individual points, making use of different interpretations (for energy of the Green Investment Bank, or the means testing of Child Benefit) to support different points of view. The major synoptic weakness was a failure amongst many candidates to specifically engage and contrast the different views, as opposed to tackling one 'side' followed by the other.

Question 1

This was by far the least popular short response question and evidently many candidates were 'frightened away' by its specific focus on inflation. This was perhaps surprising in that this was the only short response not to demand a two-sided answer, with candidates given a clear steer as to their line of approach.

There was a high variance in the level of awareness shown of the contemporary political situation with weaker responses failing to discuss what the problems with inflation were at all, and the strongest responses showing detailed knowledge of the levels of inflation, the missing of MPC targets, and the subsequent number of letters from the Governor of the Bank of England to the Chancellor. It was notable though that relatively few candidates drew an explicit contrast between the low interest rates needed to promote growth and the higher rates that are seen as more likely to limit inflation.

Level 1 responses were often marred by failing to engage 'since 2010' - some attempted to remedy this by assuming that the Coalition had continued a Keynesian approach of over-spending which had fuelled inflation. Others simply stated that there were issues with inflation without clearly engaging the reasons for them.

Level 2 responses were characterised by either a solid exposition of a single point - such as the tension between quantitative easing for growth and curbing inflation; or the lack of direct influence of the government as opposed to the MPC - or else offered two points but failed to develop them sufficiently well. A number of candidates recognised that there were economic factors beyond the control of single countries, but could only offer a vague explanation of what they were.

Level 3 responses were able to engage specific factors outside of the UK economy that had contributed to pressure of prices, with some impressive use of the impact of flooding on food prices, and of instability in the Middle East on energy prices. Strong awareness was often shown of the role of the MPC, and of the various tensions between policies designed to promote growth and those needed to limit inflation. Both quantitative easing and interest rates were used effectively by some candidates in this regard.

Indicate your first question choice on this page.
You will be asked to indicate your second question choice on page 6.

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

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

The government has found it hard to control inflation since 2010 because of many factors, such as the recession, the EU and many banks going bust. Inflation is when prices rapidly increase in a short ~~amount~~ amount of time. The biggest reason why the coalition government may have been unable to control the rise of inflation since 2010 is due to the economic crisis that the UK and many countries are ~~currently~~ currently in. Due to outside factors such as the EU and Greece ~~and~~, Spain and Ireland having to be bailed out, this has made it difficult for the government to control inflation as other countries economic crises are affecting the rise in inflation in 2012.

Also it is difficult for the government to control the inflation from 2010 because of the recession ~~the~~ UK was in ~~the~~ and also from the 40 million debt the previous government Labour has put the country in. Due to the current coalition government having to reduce these debts and having to enforce major ~~spending~~ spending cuts, it is hard for them to control inflation as ~~cuts~~ ^{cuts} in the state need to be made, according to them to keep UK economically

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 6

efficient.

Also the fact that the coalition government has decided to only increase benefit by 1%. Maybe price of inflation shows the coalition government are finding it hard to control inflation since 2010 as there welfare cuts may be why inflation is rising as poverty is increasing.



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Examiner Comments

This is an example of a response that attempts to make a number of points, but those points are either asserted and not argued, such as the impact of the Euro crisis, or else are not germane to the question, such as the spending cuts. This candidate does not make any clear valid points and subsequently remains in Level 1.

This answer was awarded 3 marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Points must be relevant to the specific question, not just the general topic, and must be argued not simply asserted.

This is another response to Question 1.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

The government has found it hard to control inflation since 2010, because of the financial and Eurozone crisis and Fractional reserve banking and quantitative easing. ^{Inflation is the devaluing of currency.}

Gordon Brown implemented Keynesianism, which is state intervention, in the economy and the belief it is more important to control ~~inflation~~ unemployment than inflation. This made inflation hard to control, because interest rates were at a historic low, to deal with the financial crisis from

Inf Gordon Brown's perspective.

Inflation has been hard for the government to control since 2010, because of the Eurocrises. A major amount of the U.K's exports are to the EU, so the pound has been somewhat debased to keep up with the debasement of the Euro, to make exports easier.

Governments since 2010 have found inflation hard to tackle, because of fractional reserve

banking and being ill informed of it. Fractional reserve banking happens by a deposit into any a bank allowing bankers to create credit on that deposit and credit upon the credit. Conservative backbencher Mr Steve Baker believes a lack of awareness about this from politicians, results in inflation, because Fractional Reserve Banking gives banks the power to create credit backed by nothing and not even backed by money issued by the Bank of England. Steve Baker is an Austrian economist and believes in sound money and is a member of positive money.



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Examiner Comments

This is a much stronger answer than the previous response and is a good example of credit being given for unexpected but valid arguments: in this case the argument about fractional reserve lending is well-made and, whilst not being politically undisputed, is certainly a valid point of view.

The content on Gordon Brown is weak for a post-2010 focused question whilst the point on the Euro crisis is acceptable but not argued in sufficient detail to carry this into Level 3. The response instead reaches the top of Level 2.

This answer was awarded 10 marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Valid points that are not included in the mark scheme will still gain credit.

This answer secured a strong Level 3 mark.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Since 2010, simple commodity prices have been rising worldwide. The cost of food, chemicals, building materials and oil have been rising unabated since ~~the mid~~ approximately the mid 2000s. ~~Consequently, the rate~~ The economy has simultaneously been at a very low rate of growth, dipping back into recession ~~and~~ to create a very rare double-dip recession. The fears of so-called 'stagflation', whereby the economy stagnates whilst inflation rises unabated has become a very real. Also, since the Labour Government instructed the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to lower the interest rate ~~at~~ after the financial crash in 2007-8, the Committee has kept the interest rate very low (at 0.5%), in accordance with the views of the Coalition, in order to promote the borrowing of money, and consequently spending is an attempt to boost the economy. However, the interest rate has historically been the 'brake' on inflation - growth and inflation go hand in hand normally, but since consumer confidence is at a low

due to fears of job security given the economic climate, the Government ~~aspires~~ and the Monetary Policy Committee are forced to keep the interest rate low in order to ~~promote~~ restore confidence, but you can just stand and watch as inflation continues to increase unabated. The Labour government could not combat the ~~cost~~ of inflation caused by rising commodity prices without raising the interest rate prohibitively high, and now the Coalition have not raise the interest rate (is only to prevent inflation) for fear of stifling economic growth. Another reason of that inflation has been hard to remedy is the use of quantitative easing to promote inter-bank lending - making it appear to banks that they are wealthier through devaluing the currency. In conclusion, the Government has found it difficult to control inflation due to international prices rising, and the domestic fear of ~~stifling~~ ~~can~~ preventing the economy recovering through raising the interest rate.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

There are three clear and valid points here - rising commodity price, the need to keep interest rates low in the face of limited growth and the impact of quantitative easing. This is coupled with a strong awareness of the role of the MPC and of the political and economic dangers of 'stagflation'.

This answer was awarded 14 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

You do not need to cover every possible point to get a high mark - two strong, detailed points can often carry you into Level 3, and three strong points can take you as high as full marks. The quality of the points is as critical as the quantity.

Question 2

This was the most popular of the short response questions. It was a shame to see a number of candidates take their context no further than Labour's 50% policy (or erroneously assert that the coalition had maintained this policy) although this did not entirely exclude Level 3 marks if the specific points made were strong enough.

Most candidates recognised 'to what extent' and were often separated by the strength of their points, and how well they developed them on each side of the debate.

Level 1 responses were rare and were usually characterised by a brief assertion of points without evidence.

Level 2 responses generally recognised the two sides to the debate and often embraced the common points of economic benefits vs. the cost, and the value, of degrees. What usually distinguished them within Level 2, and from Level 3 responses, was the level of detailed argument offered - weaker responses stating that more graduates meant a stronger economy, but a less worthwhile degree. The question of 'mickey mouse' degrees was often asserted rather than argued.

Level 3 responses showed a willingness to explore the sides of the debate in detail often showing sophisticated awareness of the specific threats to Britain's economy, and the ways that more graduates could aid this - emerging Asian markets and high technology jobs were discussed well in this respect.

On the other side of the debate the arguments as to degree devaluation were made in a more detailed and sophisticated way, often with reference to the need for higher degrees to distinguish graduates, and the lack of genuine graduate level jobs currently available. Candidates also did not simply assert that most university places meant more cost for the government, but argued with reference to the number of graduates who would be unlikely to pay off their debts.

More marginal arguments, such as a perceived lack of manual workers and an assumption that more graduates meant more people in better jobs, lower crime or a more politically aware populace, were also given more consideration than they deserved, receiving only minor credit. Arguments as to cost were sometimes out of date, being based on the pre-coalition assumption that the government automatically met most of the cost.

A small but surprising number of candidates equated sixth form with higher education.

This is a Level 1 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Increasing the number of students in higher education has both advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages such as, by having a high level qualification people are more likely to get steady careers in which will enable them to contribute to the economy rather than living off benefits.

However, having more and more people going on to higher education means that there is greater competition and higher demand in particular subjects. It has allowed there to be a rise in tuition fees.



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Examiner Comments

A brief listing of points without argument cannot escape Level 1.
This answer was awarded 4 marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

To secure more than a small number of marks you must argue your points, not simply assert them.

This is an example of a mid Level 2 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Higher education is education such as university. Over the ~~past~~ past few years there has been many policies that have effected universel for insterred the increasing tutuons for university.

First of all a ~~mean~~ advantage of increasing students in higher education means is that we can become natuonally competitive. This means that more people ~~gain skills to gain~~ have qualifications to more technical jobs. This then means more people will ~~have jobs~~ have high paid jobs. This ~~could~~ then ^{would} lead to more people spending more money. This could then stimulate the economy. This would then put us on a scale with nations such as china and America as more of ~~are~~ people are going to university ~~and~~ also might mean we could have 50% of ~~pep~~ students in higher education like Germany.

Another advantage of having increasing higher education numbers of students is that gives people who wouldn't usually think of going to university a chance. This could eventually mean that people from social deprived backgrounds might go to university as they now require the requirement. This can be seen as breaking the cycle of deprivation. This is also supported by Labour as it gives people from social mobility backgrounds a better chance.

However a disadvantage of increasing the number of people higher education could lead to significance of a degree decreases as in a case most people could end up getting one. Universities also believe that people it could be a waste of time for some people as they go to university but aren't smart enough to pass the exams.

Altogether, I believe ~~university~~ increasing ~~university~~ numbers of students in higher education is a bad idea. I ultimately believe this as ~~more~~ a degree could be seen as losing its value, ~~and~~ ~~and~~ less people might want to do hard labour jobs such as plumbing and people could end up wasting their money.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The first point within this response illustrates the dangers of assertion versus argument - the candidate moved with little pause from higher education to better paid jobs to a stimulated economy to a more competitive economy, without pausing to offer evidence or argument. The point can be made well but in this form secures only limited credit. This pattern continues in the remaining two points. None of the points are illegitimate but none are made in a fully developed way which leaves this response in mid Level 2.

This answer was awarded 8 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

It is important to include some brief 'political context' at the start of an answer - most candidates did reference Labour's 50% policy and some went on to discuss the coalition's alternative view. This does make a difference to your mark.

This is a Level 3 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

The previous labour government was intent on increasing the number of students in higher education, setting a target to have 50% of the ~~populati~~ young population to be in some form of higher education. The idea of having higher numbers of students in higher education has continued to some extent within the ~~rec~~ current coalition government.

It is often argued by business leaders that the number of students in higher education need to be increased in order for the qualifications and skills of UK workers to be enhanced. It can be said that having more students in higher education will enable the UK's job market to become more competitive, a clear advantage to the country, as there would arguably be a greater potential for companies to decide to create jobs in the UK, rather

then overseas.

It can be contended that if the numbers of students in higher education were not to increase, the UK job market and therefore economy would suffer to some extent.

A disadvantage that has been highlighted by graduates is that it will become even more difficult to secure a job after completing university. Because the number of graduates has increased in recent decades, employers are able to be very selective when hiring candidates for some jobs, resulting in higher qualification demands from employers, and therefore leaving many graduates without employment. If the number of students in higher education did increase, this ~~would~~ issue would become even more prominent.

Many business managers will contend that increasing the number of students will make it increasingly difficult to differentiate between candidates with various degrees, making their decision making process more time consuming and again, penalising candidates with degrees considered to be of less quality.

Those concerned with the financial aspect of increasing the number of students will highlight the potential for many government grant schemes

to come under strain. At a time when the government need to drastically reduce spending, ~~the point is~~ increasing the number of student loans could be considered questionable.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate begins by clearly setting the context, specifically in the case of Labour and with some awareness of a change without a total reversal under the coalition. The same competition and jobs point made by the previous candidate is also covered but in a more coherent fashion and with useful explicit contrast to the alternative. Similarly the point about the devaluing of degrees is clearly argued, and the effects on both graduates and employers are clearly discussed. Finally the candidate briefly, but legitimately considers finances and makes a useful cross-topic link to the state of the economy. This answer therefore secures a mark of 13; secure mid Level 3.



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Examiner Tip

Whilst it is critical to focus mainly on the specific examination topic addressed by the question there are some useful links to be made and these will be credited (particularly between the economy and virtually any other political issue).

Question 3

This question was of middling popularity but attracted more interest than the other short response question on the economy. It did allow candidates the chance to consider economic policy from all three parties - although specific reference to the Liberal Democrats was not a requirement to reach Level 3.

Many candidates did struggle with 'to what extent', and there was also something of a dichotomy between those who adopted a very contemporary policy-focused approach, and those who relied on historical and theoretical analysis. Some candidates were able to link the two and they often performed highly.

Level 1 responses often focused entirely on the historical Keynesian / Monetarist debate (which would have been effective had it been linked to contemporary policy and positions). Others briefly discussed economic policy but made no reference to growth.

Level 2 responses were often very solid but one-sided, with little specific argument as to agreement. Whilst some responses considered a range of points to illustrate disagreement, often in a sophisticated way, they remained limited to the top of Level 2.

Other answers considered the alternative only briefly, often with a short assertion that despite disagreements there was general consensus on the need to cut. Some Level 2 responses had a more general economic focus, and were credited in so far as their points dealt with achieving growth specifically.

Level 3 responses were often not equally balanced, favouring the lack of consensus, but were still able to advance at least one clear point that did demonstrate consensus, often in terms of the lack of a 'Plan B' and the relatively superficial level of the disagreements discussed. The focus on growth was strong at this level, and there was awareness of subtleties such as the speed, as well as the level, of cuts. Tensions within the coalition were used effectively.

This is a Level 1 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

The 3 main political parties disagree in many ways over how to achieve economic growth.

New Labour under Tony Blair and Brown (2007-2010) thought that public ~~the~~ spending was the main ~~the~~ source of increasing the rate of growth of GDP. This was evident in Gordon Brown's attempts to encourage public spending at the start of the recession in 2009. The conservatives disagreed with this method. They thought that ~~the~~ to stop overspending in the public sector would free up money to be used elsewhere, which would enhance growth. This was evident after David Cameron was elected in 2010. The result was a 1% increase in GDP in the final

quarter of 2010. Recently the Lib -
dems have had a conservative mindset
when it comes to how to achieve economic
growth as they are part of a coalition
government with the conservatives.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate discusses a valid policy contrast but their description of Labour makes no reference to post-2010, and their 'evidence' on Cameron's policy is weak at best given the triple dip recession. Ultimately only one point is considered and so this response stays in Level 1 with a mark of 5.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

If a question asks about whether the major parties do agree or disagree (as opposed to have agreed or disagreed) then the positions must be current, not predominantly related to previous governments or leaders.

This is a Level 2 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Economic growth policies within Government ^{highlight} ~~show~~ major differences between opposition parties and the solution a party chooses to achieve economic growth is highly reliant upon the party.

Traditionally the Conservative party believe in the free market and very little Government intervention. They promote entrepreneurship and especially seen through the Thatcher Government there is a strong belief / support on private sector. This though can be opposed by Labours more interventionist approach and the major use of taxation to fund the economy. Therefore ideologically and traditionally Labour and Conservative approach differ from the offset.

Currently the coalition are trying to relieve the deficit which they feel will therefore stimulate growth. The austerity measures put in place primarily focus upon cutting Government spending, this has happened in all departments but two, Foreign relations area and the NHS (which has been frozen in real terms therefore

cut.) Labour however in the past have used Government spending to relieve the depressions and promote economic growth.* Ideally, Labour would maintain spending or increase in needy departments and look to gain revenue through the increase in tax receipts. Therefore we can see Labour and the Conservatives differ in techniques to relieve the deficit.

* Post World War 2 (1946) we faced similar issues to now but spending was used rather than cutting which relieved the depression.

Conservative policy on promoting people off benefits is arguably a means of stimulating growth. Generally as a rule they will cut benefits to increase the incentive to work, they use the stick rather than carrot in the "carrot and stick" theory. Whereas Labour firmly look in tackling the causes of poverty and lifting people out, they will promote apprenticeship schemes etc. In the long run this employment will stimulate growth.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This historical discussion sets some context here but this could be done far more briefly, and be embedded into the first main point about cuts vs. spending.

Ultimately this candidate makes two valid points - about the cuts in general, and about the impact of benefits policy. However the response is entirely one-sided and so even several strong points of disagreement would not have taken this into Level 3.

This answer was awarded 9 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

When addressing a 'to what extent' question about policy difference it is critical to consider arguments on both sides - this does not mean simply consider the different views of the two political 'sides', but rather consider their similarities as well as their differences.

An example of a Level 3 response follows.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

In some ways the major political parties do disagree over how to achieve economic growth. For instance, Ed Milliband (Labour) and the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition insist that in order to produce economic growth in the British economy, major public spending cuts in the UK welfare/benefit system. The ~~how~~ coalition has also increased VAT from its previous 17.5% to the current 20%. The Labour party, led by Ed Milliband, argues that the current government are cutting too much too much too fast; and arguing that in order to achieve economic growth, the strategy should be followed. Ed Balls, shadow chancellor, has argued that if Labour were in government they would have decreased VAT, not increased the 17.5% VAT, but would have reduced it to 15%

for one year, in order to stimulate spending. Ed Balls also proposed cutting taxes for small businesses, taking on more workers - effectively increasing employment. However, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats argue that Balls' proposals

show that Labour is 'addicted to debt' and that tough measures imposed by the coalition will lead to economic growth, and ~~also~~ also lead to the removal of the deficit by 2017.

However, in some ways there is a degree of consensus on how to achieve economic growth amongst the ~~plk~~ political parties. For ~~instance~~ instance Ed Balls has claimed that cuts ~~are~~ to public spending are necessary to achieve economic growth, ~~have~~ and that the Labour government would have made cuts had they been elected, however they Ball's claims the Labour government would not have ~~made~~ made cuts as deep as the Conservative government and as fast. Therefore there is ~~an~~ a degree of agreement in that there would have

been some cuts ~~to~~ to the benefit system.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate, as with the other two, considered the obvious point about cuts, but in doing so also gave useful information on related tax policy. Crucially the candidate goes on to discuss similarities in approach. There is sufficient detail and balance here to reach Level 3, although a higher Level 3 mark would probably require a further valid point on either side.

This answer was awarded 12 marks.

Question 4

This was a popular question and it was very pleasing to see a genuine awareness of the current political debate, particularly with respect to the Heathrow second runway. The corollary of this was that only a very small number of candidates went 'beyond Heathrow' to consider arguments with regard to other airports.

One-sided answers were much less common than those to Questions 3 or 5 and there was very little wandering from the question asked. The discriminating factor was therefore usually the level of argument vs. assertion and the amount of detail and evidence presented.

Level 1 responses were rare, but would have been characterised by assertion with little evidence that expansion would either benefit the economy or harm the environment.

Level 2 responses generally recognised the two sides to the debate and embraced the themes of economy vs. environment. What usually distinguished them within Level 2, and from Level 3 responses, was the level of detailed argument offered - weaker responses stating the need for jobs and business vs. the environmental downsides of air travel in a straightforward and basic way. Tourism was sometimes cited but it was often simply assumed that 'more airport capacity equals more tourism'.

There was general awareness of the contemporary debate although it was not often explained beyond a simple statement of the situation.

Level 3 responses showed a willingness to explore the sides of the debate in detail often showing sophisticated awareness of the competing markets threatening Britain's business, and the specific industries that would benefit (and why). On the other side of the debate there was effective reference to the levels of carbon emissions, to Kyoto, and to noise pollution as well as CO₂ based pollution. The political context was considered in a more detailed way, with reference to 'where,' as well as 'whether', there should be expansion, and the political and local opposition to it.

The following response was awarded Level 2 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Airport expansion in the UK is a politically divisive topic between the parties and electorate. Arguments for airport expansion in the UK are held by the Labour party (plans when in power to expand Heathrow airport). These include the revenue from airport expansion, it would bring in a lot of capital into the economy, creating new jobs in the building of it and also keeping it running. Airport expansion would also bring in more tourism - again economic benefits, more people flying at cheaper rates has many benefits. The Labour party also argued that expansion would turn Heathrow into an international hub, like LAX in the USA, which would mean more flight paths and regular flyers/businesses would use the UK's airport as a global hub and somewhere to change. However, the conservative-liberal democrat coalition have decided that the arguments against airport

expansion although the arguments for, so have decided to scrap plans of airport expansion. These are mainly to do with the environmental aspects of expansion and how the electorate feel towards this. Airport expansion means the destruction of land, quite often greenbelt land as the expansion of airports. Damaging natural habitats, creating sound noise of more planes and flights for local residents. Greenpeace argue that it is not acceptable to build / expand airports on greenbelt land when it is unnecessary. NIMBY (not in my backyard) groups feel the same and airport expansion is seen as a electorally unpopular decision. Damaging the environment and local people's lives where they have to move elsewhere. Many argue that there are many other eco-friendly ways of improving travel transport and tourism in the UK. For example the coalition's high speed 2 (HS2) railway network. Overall, airport expansion is politically divisive.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate considers a range of points on both sides of the debate and may well have hoped to reach Level 3. What prevented them from doing so was the lack of development, particularly in terms of the points in favour of expansion - more jobs and more tourism are certainly argued by proponents but this does need evidencing.

The answer was awarded 10 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

For short responses it is better to focus on 1-2 points on each side and to consider them in more detail with evidence, than to rush through all of the legitimate points you can think of.

This answer is an example of a Level 3 response.

Chosen Question Number: ~~presence no. 2~~

Question 1 Question 2 Question 3
Question 4 Question 5

- Infrastructure
- green - 3.5%
- noise, health

There is much controversy over airport expansion, mainly between the ideas of benefits of economic growth and ~~environment~~ environmental damage. On the one hand airport expansion means that there is a huge increase ~~in~~ in the jobs available, considering the current timing especially that jobs ~~are~~ ~~struggles~~ more difficult to get with a worsening economic climate. It has been shown that ~~at~~ airport expansion could produce up to 40,000 jobs and ~~it~~ this would ~~help the~~ ~~country~~ contribute to improving the economy because people will have more money to spend which will stimulate growth.

Airport expansion can also ~~be~~ argued as a positive ~~or~~ element because it is significantly cheaper (and more efficient) to expand a current airport, than it is to produce new ones, ~~and~~ ~~value for money~~ for example, ~~at this~~.

has led to expansion of airports ~~particularly~~ particularly in the south-east, such as Heathrow terminal 5 in 2008, and Stansted expansion in 2007. This is a particular policy of the Labour government who carried out both these developments, in addition to the proposed third runway at Heathrow in 2009, although as both conservatives and ~~liberal~~ liberal democrats disagree with this, this plan has been scrapped, along with 'Boris Island'.

Moreover, there have been increasing numbers of passengers in recent years, and the conservatives particularly believe that it's a personal choice, and people should have the option to do so. Particularly as developments of airports in ~~the~~ other countries such as Paris, Amsterdam and Frankfurt mean that the UK needs to be maintained as an "international hub of aviation", as said by Cameron.

However, there are a number of arguments against, which the liberal democrats are particularly aligned with. Firstly, and most importantly the environmental impact, whereby in 2009, ~~more~~ more than 2% of the total CO₂ emissions globally were derived from aviation, and when we consider that more

has been a European pledge to reduce CO₂ emissions ~~20% by 2020~~ ~~18%~~ 20% by 2020, as the Clegg made it clear that the aviation industry should not be made exempt from CO₂ reductions.

Secondly, increased numbers of passengers due to ~~the~~ aviation expansion means that extra pressure is put on ground infrastructure; ground infrastructure ~~that~~ ~~at~~ which needs to be ~~improved~~ improved, and ~~and~~ definitely maintained. The cost of this ~~extra~~ work especially must be considered ~~at~~ during times of austerity.

Finally, there is the local impact it will have as there ~~is~~ it reduces house prices, and creates much more noise pollution, which ultimately can have damaging health effects.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The jobs section of this response, although giving specific figures in contrast to the previous example, could still be argued more fully. However the second point in favour is very well made, with strong awareness of recent developments (and not just at Heathrow). This leads into a clear point about competition, with specific competitors cited.

The use of specific evidence continues with the reference to carbon emissions and although the ground infrastructure point is not well developed there is sufficient detail and balance to clearly secure a Level 3 mark of 13.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Specific evidence is important and can turn high Level 2 answers into mid-high Level 3 answers.

Question 5

This was the most popular 'third choice' question and, as is often the case, the range of responses reflected this with a significant number of candidates failing to fully comprehend the requirements of the question having perhaps tackled it as a 'last choice'.

In this question in particular (although also seen with Question 3) many candidates did not recognise 'to what extent', which limited them to Level 2. More seriously a minority of candidates did not recognise the specific topic of *policing*, and were easily distracted by discussing law and order generally or sentencing policy. Finally a number of candidates failed to recognise the contemporary nature of the paper, although it was specifically highlighted in the question, and adopted an overly historical approach.

Level 1 responses often fell into one or more of the errors identified above, and in particular commonly fell back on a simplistic historical division of the 'tough' Conservatives versus the 'compassionate' Labour party. These responses rarely recognised any specific contemporary policy.

Level 2 responses were commonly able to identify two points of discussion, most often the approach of the Police and Crime Commissioners, and the Coalition cuts. Often these were both portrayed as straightforward divisions, with the quality of explanation determining the mark within Level 2. Alternatively some candidates were able to identify subtleties with one of these areas, such as Labour opposing PCC but standing candidates, but failed to consider a second point or did so only briefly. Time was occasionally wasted on discussions of tensions *within* parties or *within* the coalition - this incurred no penalty but did bring an opportunity cost as the question asked specifically about 'government and opposition'.

Level 3 responses embraced the need for balance, although this did not need to be equal. In addition to Labour's arguably ambivalent approach to the PCC there was awareness shown that Labour, whilst opposing the cuts, did not have a clear, radically different alternative. Some candidates also made effective use of the continuity on some policing policies, such as the retention by the coalition of increased police powers. The consensus on the need to reduce bureaucracy and focus on 'front-line policing' was also used effectively.

This response achieved low Level 1 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Tories - Thatcher years

Labour pre 1997

Tories ~~new~~ 1997 to Now

Labour new deal 1997+ - Tough on crime + tough on causes of crime.

Margaret Thatcher had always had a tough stance on crime. It was one of the main reasons she was elected

in 1979. She changed the laws to make sure that

criminals were punished for ~~not~~ committing a crime. They were not so ~~that~~ concerned with what caused the crime

but that the criminal was punished for committing the crime.

But in 1992 ~~the~~ Michael Howard released a report ^{proving} ~~showing~~ the number of people being convicted of crimes but they

were not concerned with rehabilitation and over 80% of offenders committed another crime within 2 years of release.

The Labour party pre 1997 was not so concerned in punishing the perpetrator of the crime but looking at the reasons the person committed the crime.

Such as poverty, deprivation, acting out against the government.

Under Margaret Thatcher's reign she ensured more police were recruited and that they received a pay rise.

By the time Tony Blair came to power in 1997 the Labour party had changed their stance towards policing. Tony Blair's main election message was

(Tough Stance on Crime, tough on the causes of crime)

The Labour party had begun to realise that the public were concerned with levels of crime and they would not win over more votes if they too didn't take a tough stance on it. They still believed in creating policies to try and prevent the reasons behind crime but could no longer ignore that public opinion was that criminals should be punished.

The Labour party has developed ~~more~~ other methods of punishing criminals such as increased use in electronic tagging + use of community service.

The Labour Party also increased the police force again to 140,000 trying to ensure ^{it became} multi-cultural.

The conservative party under David Cameron's reign has followed a similar path ~~not been able to engage~~ as the Labour New Deal policy.

of Tough on crime + tough on the reasons of crime,

Especially as with the coalition, working with the lib dems who also have similar beliefs to the Labour party on causes of crime.

Overall the conservative party has ~~always~~ promoted a tough stance on policing of crime. The Labour party have evolved over time under the influence of Tony Blair to recognise the peoples ~~belief~~ belief in tough crime but also believe reasons behind crime are just as important.

The conservatives under David Cameron's reign can not longer ignore that ~~there are~~ ^{are} usually reasons people commit a crime and that the government may be able to do something about that.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate adopts a very historical approach and much of their answer was not credited. Only a brief reference to post-2010 policy avoids a mark of 0, and even this is more general to law and order than to policing specifically.

This answer was awarded 3 marks.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

On a contemporary issues paper keep your focus as recent as possible with regard to the question asked.

This is a Level 2 response.

Question 1 ✗

Question 2 ✗

Question 3 ✗

Question 4 ✗

Question 5 ✗

~~The main issue with a policing strategy was~~
The introduction of elected police and crime commissioners
has caused conflict between the coalition and Labour.
Both the Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats included a
directly elected element to the police in their 2010
election manifestos and ~~was therefore fairly inevitable~~
the creation of the office of the PCC was ^{therefore} fairly inevitable.
However, Labour felt that it was 'the wrong policy, the
wrong priority at the wrong time' as ~~the~~ policing was
also facing a 2% cut to its budget. Labour therefore
viewed the £125 million spent on the elections as a waste
of money when it could have been used to ~~finance~~ hire
3000 police constables. Labour also felt that PCCs ran
the risk of being 'cheerleaders' for the coalition's policing
policy. They tried to balance this by putting up
Labour candidates for election.

Moreover, Labour have accused the Government of
falsely claiming that the 'proportion of front-line
officers has increased', arguing that 9 out of 10 of the
~~off~~ members of the police who face losing their job deal
directly with the public. Although Labour agree with
the government that the police ^{does} have to face cuts to
its budget in order to reduce the budget deficit, they
feel that the coalition has done 'too much, too soon'.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

There are two clear well-made points here, but a lack of balance. There is a brief nod given to Labour's acceptance of some cuts, but this is insufficient to push marks into Level 3. This answer was awarded 10 marks.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Where a question states 'between government and opposition' agreement/disagreement within the coalition does not count towards any requirement for balance.

This is an example of a Level 3 response.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

Policing is an extremely controversial issue with the government and the opposition due to the public's interest in it. This leads to the parties fighting over what is the best idea and what isn't. However, is there a consensus or are they in complete disagreement.

Some people would argue that there has been a broad consensus over the need to cut police. Because of the structural deficit policing cuts are necessary. This is because the government can't afford to be spending such a large amount of money on policing in the current economic climate.

However, despite broadly agreeing on this issue, the government and opposition disagree on the figures. The coalition have cut policing budgets by 20% whereas Labour ~~is~~ claimed they would have cut it by 12%. The coalition agree the scale of these cuts are necessary because of the structural deficit. However, Labour argue that 20% is too extreme. It leads to unemployment and uncertainty with the public over how important the coalition consider policing to be.

The current government and opposition are also not in agreement over the recently elected police and Crime Commissioners. The coalition organised an election in November 2012 for the public to choose their own local police and crime commissioner who guides local policing in your area. However, with the turnout at approximately 12% Labour, claimed there was a lack of legitimacy and also the public aren't interested.

In addition, they also disagree on some of the powers the police have. When Labour were in power, they introduced Section 44 powers allowing the police to stop and search anyone in a specific area. They also extended detention without charge from ~~14~~ 24 hours to 36 hours and from 14 days to 28 days for terrorist suspects. They also wanted every citizen to have ID cards. However, the coalition government scrapped ID cards and Theresa May, the Home Secretary suspended section 44 powers. The coalition have also reduced the detention of a terrorist from 28 days to 14. Labour in opposition still believe that the Coalition aren't being tough enough on terrorism or other crimes. The coalition also replaced the Control Orders brought in under Labour with TPIMS (effectively watered down control orders).

Overall, the government and Labour in opposition seem to disagree over a lot when it comes to policing.

They only seem to agree with the need to cut policing budgets but even then they disagree with the details.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The 'agreement' here is relatively brief but it is clear and well explained in terms of the structural deficit. The points on cuts are well illustrated with figures and whilst the PCC point is less well developed than in the previous response, it is the range of points and just sufficient balance that takes this into Level 3.

The final point, although it does relate to police powers, wanders away from the policing aspect in terms of ID cards, control orders etc. It is worthy of some credit but this response cannot go higher in Level 3 because there is insufficient balance.

This answer was awarded 12 marks.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Even stronger candidates need to take care to keep explicit focus on the question - terrorism, policing, sentencing etc are all aspects of Law and Order policy but are not the same.

Question 6

This was a moderately popular question and it was pleasing to see that most candidates who tackled it did not simply repeat a rehearsed environmental response but instead embraced the specific focus on renewable energy. Most candidates were also able to adapt to the premise that a Conservative led government might be overly focused on renewable energy, although a small minority struggled to come to terms with this concept which made it hard for them to maintain their focus on the question.

There was generally good use made of specific policy initiatives and in some cases candidates were able to use a specific policy to address both sides of the question, the Green Investment Bank being a case in point. Candidates showed good awareness of the context of European targets, and explored a range of government environmental policies.

There were a few basic errors that marred some responses, for example in terms of what constitutes 'renewable' (both Fracking and Nuclear being advanced by some candidates), but these were exceptions.

The weakest responses did sometimes fall back on the general pros and cons of coalition environmental policy, without specifically engaging renewables, but this was rare. More common was argument by assertion, or confusion about the nature of renewables.

Middling responses could often offer sound examples of coalition policy that did target renewables, but for the other side of the debate would often fall back on asserted opposition or general 'this doesn't go far enough' arguments. Specific examples of non-renewable policies such as Fracking or Nuclear were not often used, or their nature not fully understood. Alternatively both sides of the debate were engaged but the policy examples were too general.

The strongest responses were driven by specific policy and were able to illustrate effectively how each of these supported one or both sides of the question. Specific tensions within the coalition, for example over nuclear policy, were often discussed and the views of pressure groups were brought in to good effect.

In terms of synopticity this question posed a challenge in that the parties are prima facie fairly united on environmental and energy policy. This prompted some candidates to fall back on 'some say, but others argue', which left them struggling to exit Level 1 on synopticity. Other candidates embraced the challenge and discussed tensions within the coalition (and even between Conservative ministers and backbenchers) whilst also making effective use of the views of Pressure Groups.

This is an example of a Level 1 response which scored 16 marks.

I am going to be discussing the statement, 'the Government's approach to climate change placed too much emphasis on renewable energy.'

Current priorities among the coalition government, although an important agenda issue do not lie on Green Issues facing Britain, Europe and the world. Due to financial restrictions the Prime-minister cannot simply dip into the treasury funds and develop projects such as sustainable and renewable energy plans. Although a resource which can be well used, wind farms, tidal control and solar pannels are a costly option for the government to invest in, but does to the government's emphasis focus to much on the occurring agenda of renewable energy or does other options lie on projects such as the Green Bank, Electric cars and public transport. The route from Rotterdam to Amsterdam is 'littered' with wind farms, promoting a much 'Greener' culture. But can this same enthusiasm be delt with in Britain, arguments for and against investm ents and projects like these are often mentioned but not enforced. Perhaps a political party which

socially and culturally focused on Green issues would promote a 'healthier' and Greener Britain, a party for example like the 'Green Party.'

Perfect investment 'facilities' are all around Britain, tidal renewable energy for example in the Humber and East Coast. Wind farms in some countryside and highly environment such as in Wales and the Yorkshire

moors. Above all perhaps the government should bring more cards to the table in investing in a 'Greener' Britain and not just rely on renewable energy enthusiasts to promote cleaner and affordable living. The agenda should be publically discussed and promote wider answers.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate shows a clear awareness of the variety of renewable options available to government, as well as some of the financial limitations they face. However they are not quite able to turn this knowledge into direct engagement with the premise of the question; essentially they remain limited to the argument that the government could do more and therefore they remain in Level 1.

Marks were awarded as follows:

- A01: 5
- A02: 4
- Syn: 3
- A03: 4



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Always start with the question - an essay will always want you to engage with at least two points of view - so read the question carefully, work out what they are and then engage all of them.

The following example is a mid Level 2 response which scored 24 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

Recently ~~the~~ Governments all around the world have been put under huge pressure to reduce the amount of ^{CO₂} and greenhouse gases. ~~CO₂~~ emissions that are being released. The UK government have focused heavily on the use of renewable energy - such as the use of wind energy. But this must not be exaggerated as they have also discussed heavily the use of nuclear energy.

One of the reasons why they've been discussing the use of wind energy, is the fact that it is 'cheap' and cost-effective. At a time when there exists an economic deficit, and recession, it is crucial that the government money is spent wisely. Therefore, to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases, wind forms one strongly suggested. Not only would the making be a ~~cheap~~ ^{cheap} source of energy, but also the consumers will benefit.

The energy that comes from wind is actually cheaper than other sources of energy. Although it is private companies that mainly own "energy ~~business~~ ^{the} ~~business~~ ^{business}", the ~~govt~~ government would reflect and play a large part in its investment. If the owners of these companies, charge a fair amount of money for the energy, then ~~it~~ it'll be in

turn effect who's in power. This is because the consumers of the energy are also voters. If the government listen to what the voters want, then it'll mean a 'good name' for them.

Not only do we focus ~~on~~ the opinions of ~~the~~ the ordinary person, but looking at major pressure groups. Environmental pressure groups, ~~which~~ would put an increasing amount ^{of pressure} on the government for the use of renewable energy. If the government did not focus on this use, then "un-popularity" would grow strong within the people. Also most environmental pressure groups have many members - which will then result in less votes.

Having said that, it is important to discuss other proposals by the government that are not forms of "renewable energy." As stated before the government has been put under pressure to meet its international agreements. Therefore another ~~some~~ source of energy may have also discussed is the use of nuclear energy. Although, nuclear is not renewable, meaning the ~~the~~ uranium that it uses, it produces huge amounts of energy with very little fuel. So at a time, and modern age, where the use of energy is rate of high, it's important that ~~the~~ the high demand for energy is ~~not~~ satisfied. Clearly nuclear would be able to achieve this, as it does not produce any greenhouse gas gases, ~~therefore~~ along with

creating lots of energy, ~~if~~ the government will definitely be able to meet its international agreements.

Another reason why nuclear has been discussed, is because owners of these ~~of~~ power stations will benefit. This is because they put 'little into it' - meaning little fuel, yet so much energy, which in turn means more profit. The government would gain here, because ~~if~~ it then has to tax these companies. If these companies ~~are~~ ^{are} taxed then, it will mean more revenue ~~for~~ ^{for} the government. And if the ^{government} ~~gov~~ has more revenue it means money could be spent more on public sectors, which then means more votes for the government. So this is clear evidence, that government are not only concentrating and putting huge emphasis on renewable energy, as other sources offer much more.

Another reason why government have not overly focussed on renewable energy, such as wind, is because of the huge numbers of people in animals rights groups. When wind is used, many of the times, birds that are flying over die as the propellers kill them. Groups such as RSPB, have huge disagreements with this use. Again, resulting back to the use of votes, government would lose out. Because, huge ~~of~~ pressure groups will pressurise the government

into closing another alternatives.

However, it could be said that great emphasis has in fact been placed on renewable energy, especially the use of wind. As the UK is a very windy ~~country~~ ^{country} where it makes sense that we use what ~~we~~ we have.

So, if lots of our energy is from wind, ~~it~~ it means that the economy will increase. This is because we can produce lots of energy through ~~wind~~ wind, then sell it to other countries. Other countries might then be giving the UK an economic boost. Again in a time where money needs to be saved, and wisely spent, it would be of huge advantage to use this type of ~~new~~ renewable energy.

Also government have placed emphasis on this, as it will also create jobs. ~~Again~~ Again a time where unemployment is on the rise, it'll be a huge opportunity to create jobs for the unemployed. ~~at~~ which again would mean ~~more~~ more votes for the government.

~~At~~ Although exists an argument that government have to keep 'in the ~~competee~~ competition' with other countries ~~in~~ and the world. Many argue that renewable energy is in fact the most safest of energy. Looking at governments other proposals, such as nuclear, comes along with it

many dangers, and health implications wind energy is safe to society and does not have numerous amount of dangers.

To conclude, it could be said that, there has been great emphasis on renewable energy, to reduce climate change. But alongside the discussions of 'renewables', other forms of this reduction has also been thoroughly discussed. For e.g. nuclear power energy. But it is also heavily depending on the party that you follow, as different parties discuss one thing more than the other. Taking the liberal democrats, who largely focus & emphasize on the use of renewable energy.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate clearly engages the question, providing balance with consideration of both nuclear and wind policy and reference to international agreements as a driving force. They are also able to bring in different points of view about the appropriateness of these responses. They do suffer somewhat from not broadening their focus of examples, and this ends as a 'middling response' in mid Level 2.

Marks were awarded as follows:

A01: 7
A02: 6
Syn: 6
A03: 5



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

No matter how germane or useful a particular example or point is, breadth is also important - good essay responses will consider at least 2 arguments in detail on each side of the question and often more than this.

This response achieved Level 3 marks.

Question 6 ✕

Question 7 ✕

Question 8 ✕

~~In recent decades, Plan~~

into - increasing importance of climate change

Emphasis on renewables - renewable targets set, wind farms,
Greg Ball 2012

not 'renewable pp' - energy act 2011 (green deal), fracking

In recent decades, there has been an increasing focus from governments on the issue of climate change. As scientific evidence becomes more convincing, and environmentalist groups become more popular, the governments of recent years have been attempting to solve the issue in various ways. The coalition have approached climate change with both a focus on renewable energy and alternative ideas, although some critics have argued that too much emphasis has been placed on expanding the use of renewable energy.

The continual setting of targets related to renewable

energy can be considered to be highlighting the coalition's over-emphasis on this potential solution to the issue of climate change. Prime minister David Cameron and deputy prime minister Nick Clegg have announced a target to increase the proportion of energy produced from renewable sources to 15% by 2020. Additionally, the coalition is aiming to have 40% of the country's electricity produced from clean, no carbon emitting sources (including renewables) by 2020, rising to 100%.

Many environmentalists consider this to be a positive step forward in the government's approach towards climate change. However, others who have equal concern for the environment fear that such emphasis on renewables is making the government's approach to climate change far too narrow, with a broader range of policies needed in order for their approach to have a correct balance.

The recent Energy Bill 2012 is a clear statement of the government's commitment - and possible over-emphasis - on increasing the investment in renewable energy. The bill will give energy companies increased funding to invest in renewable energy, by raising consumer energy bills by £7.6 billion by 2020. The government has defended the policy, stating that the raising of bills will allow energy companies to invest more heavily and confidently into

renewables. Many consumers disagree, arguing that the government has placed too much emphasis on renewable energy, and as a result they have increased energy bills even higher. Energy bills have already risen by, on average, 30% since 2010.

The government's pushing of wind farms, another renewable source, has attracted criticism. Many ~~not~~ residents living close to potential wind farm sites have criticised the government for failing to examine other approaches to climate change. The government defends their focus on these projects by contending that it is necessary for emphasis to be placed on renewable energy, as it can be considered one of the most viable ways of tackling climate change.

The Energy Act 2011 is an example of the government not placing emphasis on renewable energy. Within this act is the coalition's new 'green deal' where energy companies will pay for homes to be made more energy efficient through insulation in return for increased energy bills for that home for the following 25 years, paying back the energy companies investment into the home.

The scheme has been praised as it shows that the government is not completely focused on renewable energy. However, in November 2012 The Daily Telegraph noted that not one household had yet

taken up the government's new 'green deal'. This implies that the act could be just a 'token gesture,' with no real attention being paid to this alternative. The government disagree, stating that it is a long-term scheme, with interest likely to increase as the public become more aware of the existence of the initiative.

A further example of emphasis away from renewables is the recent idea of introducing 'Newt Credits,' revealed by The Times in January 2013. The Environment Secretary Owen Paterson says that the scheme allows developers to purchase credits, allowing for emission producing infrastructure to be offset by creating new environmental habitats, reducing the impact to the environment of new development. Whilst environmental group, 'Campaign to Protect Rural England' reacted with caution, it is evident that a scheme like this shows further emphasis being placed away from renewable energy.

The government also argues that continuing the process of fracking for shale gas is a viable approach to climate change. While the process does produce carbon, it is at a far lower level than traditional methods. Former CEO of Shell John Hoffmeister is in favour of fracking, but environmental groups strongly disagree. Despite this disagreement, it can still be argued by Hoffmeister that carbon

emissions will reduce, as well as a potential drop in the price of energy.

It is evident that a large emphasis has been placed on renewable energy. However it is also clear that there are numerous alternative approaches to climate change that are currently either in operation or development. This shows that emphasis has only been placed on renewable energy to a certain extent.

Supporters of renewable energy argue that emphasis has rightly been placed on renewables, as they are arguably the best approach to take against climate risk. As a result it can be contended that the government has placed a large emphasis on renewable energy, but it is the correct amount of focus when analysing the potential that renewable energy provides.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a clear and straightforward response that clearly grasps the requirements of the question and engages both sides of the debate. Although the 'pro' side is stronger, there is sufficient balance to achieve Level 3. Critically specific policies are engaged that provide robust evidence, and references are made throughout to varying views including those of environmental groups and the press. Further 'con' evidence, perhaps on fracking and nuclear, could have taken marks higher in Level 3.

Marks were awarded as follows:

AO1: 10

AO2: 9

AO3: 7

Syn: 9



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Balance is essential to achieving a Level 3 mark in essays but this does not necessarily mean equal balance, provided there is sufficient consideration given to each point of view.

Question 7

This was the most popular of the essay questions but this was, in part, because some candidates erroneously identified it as requiring less very contemporary content. Whilst the question did expect candidates to consider more than one government, and made no restrictions as to timescale, it is expected in a contemporary issues paper that candidates will include at least moderate reference to the government of the day, and that this will significantly outweigh discussion of governments of 20 or more years ago.

Most candidates did show an awareness of the inherent political tensions within this policy area, and many could apply these to both Labour and Conservative governments.

However, a number were let down by a focus that was overly general rather than linked to specific policy.

The weakest responses were, as with Question 5, sometimes distracted from the punishment vs. rehabilitation debate into a more general law and order focus taking in anti-terror, civil liberties, police numbers etc. There were some policy errors (particularly an assertion that various governments introduced the concept of prisoner education, which has in fact been present for much longer in various guises), and an over-historical focus with too much of the governments of Thatcher and Major relative to those of Brown and Cameron.

Middling responses were still prone to some of these distractions but had a greater focus on specific policies with some useful discussion of ASBOs, community sentencing and prison numbers. There was often awareness shown that governments since Blair have adopted a dual approach, although the level of specific evidence offered varied.

The strongest responses often focused entirely on post-1997 governments enabling them to consider contemporary policy in much greater detail. Specific policy examples were offered of both punishment and rehabilitation, with reference to the rationale of each. In terms of the coalition the contrasting approaches of Grayling and Clarke, and in some cases May, were put to strong use, and consideration was given to the impact of events such as the London Riots on both policy and rhetoric. The very strongest responses were able to identify tensions within Grayling's own approach in terms of the rehabilitation revolution and the new super prisons.

In terms of synopticity this question allowed candidates to consider differing political views within governments (including between ministers of the same party), and many did so effectively. A few attempted to draw a straightforward and crude dividing line between Labour and the Conservatives which, if it ever existed, dates from the 1980s or earlier, and this left their synopticity mark firmly in Level 1.

The following response was awarded 16 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

The fact that in 1987 the encouragement of people to become police officers and the building on new prisons must show that the Thatcher government wanted to come down hard on crime in an attempt to discourage it. They saw rehabilitation as a way out of solving crime so people who were locked up would be a visually a deterrent for people who were thinking of going the same way.

The 1982 criminal justice Act gave magistrates bigger powers when prosecuting criminals, which lead to them being able to hand out bigger sentences. This is seen as a direct way of ~~get~~ increasing the seriousness of punishment. It meant that Thatcher had absolutely no thoughts on giving out rehabilitations. Also more stop and search powers were given to police.

The 1984 Police & Criminal ~~Law~~ Evidence Act (PACE) gave the police the power to stop marches and demonstrations if they believed it was in danger of breaking the peace. This was controversial as it was inspired by the Miners strike and the demonstrations that turned violent and broke the peace. This is another bit of proof that suggests the Thatcher government was to ~~found~~ founded on punishment.

The 1986 Public Order Act was another one of Thatchers punishment acts. This gave the police a further extension to their stop and search powers as well as allowing them to search your property.

before you were even arrested on any charge, as long as they had been granted permission to do so.

The 1991 Act Criminal Justice and Public Order Act was the Act the '27-point plan' was introduced after Michael Howard had dropped it in 1983. He wanted to have more detention centres for 12-16 year olds in an attempt to punish them there instead of in a future prison cell. He also wanted the punishment of tagging to be used, which involves a tag around the ankle keeping you in a certain radius. Howard wanted even more prisons to be created to house what could be described as a massive crack-down on crime.

When Tony Blair put forward his 1997 general election, he said he wanted to be 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime'. This seemed to take ideas of rehabilitation from the left and punishment on the right. But in effect he was mostly towards tough punishment on crime rather than rehabilitation.

This can be shown in the days that Suspected Terrorists could be held. It was put at 14 days, before moving to 28 days. Blair and the Labour party saw it as time to prepare a case against them, but soon wanted 90 days, but the Lords rejected it as well as the alternative 42 days.

While he was in power he oversaw crimes being given mandatory sentences (e.g. murder = life) which seriously increased the prison population to record highs. The 'Tough on causes of crime' seemed a distant memory.

The 2010 coalition have continued to see the prison population with the early release scheme still in force to help reduce the number. But it seems with the approval of the new 2,000 capacity super-prisons going to be they expect crime to keep on rising before part the levels Labour have seen. With the new Justice Secretary Chris Grayling being a right-wing Tory, he is seen as a even bigger shift towards harsher punishments.

The coalition also imprisoned a large number of people from the 2011 summer riots as well as the use of rubber & bullets. This suggests again that they will continue to get harder on crime punishment or at least & continue with their current stance. They favour prison over e.g. toys and crèches because it's seen as the toughest form of punishment available.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate addresses a good deal of material but falls into a number of the traps discussed in the question comments section. Firstly the material has very little contemporary focus. Secondly it wanders in places from punishment vs. rehabilitation into a more general law and order debate. There is a small amount of coalition content but it is rushed and superficial.

The most serious weakness here is a failure to engage the debate, as opposed to describing the policies of various governments, and it is this that leaves the synopticity mark stuck firmly in Level 1, while the other marks move, just, into Level 2.

Marks were awarded as follows:

AO1: 5
AO2: 5
Syn: 2
AO3: 4



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In a contemporary issues paper the two critical priorities are firstly to make it contemporary, and secondly to address the issues (in this case punishment vs. rehabilitation). A descriptive and semi-historical approach achieves neither and therefore earns relatively little reward.

This response was awarded 25 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

7) The law and order and its implication on UK governments have been very important. Conservatives traditionally focused on punishment saying that "prison works" while Labour have focused on punishment as well as rehabilitation with Tony Blair ~~being~~ ^{being} "Tough on crime, tough on causes of crime". However, the coalition government have distance itself from their traditional sets of policies with David Cameron saying that we are "tough but intelligent" on law and order. The Liberal Democrats have been the main party that put too much emphasis on rehabilitation.

Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher and John Major have been focusing too much on the punishment. In the 1980s, they increased the power of police and the number of prisons. They argued that it is an individual responsibility to obey the law and order and "if you don't want to do the time, don't do the crime". They rejected the idea that factors such as poverty would be the reasons for people committing the crime. This was apparent when they introduced the "sus law" which give the police the power to stop and search people in the street. Policies that would attack poverty and unemployment was absent during this period of time.

However, when the New Labour came into power, they realised that we need to attack factors that contribute to people committing crime -

They introduced the ~~the~~ New Deal which would get people out of unemployment. They also made some changes such as Czar legal in order to reduce the number of people going into prisons because of their minor crimes and then become a real criminal in prisons. The Labour government also introduced Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to encourage youth staying in education and creating youth centres to let teenagers to hang out during day time as opposed to committing crimes. The funding for education and benefits have also increased which

meant that less people are in poverty and more people are educated.

These factors were all there to prevent and rehabilitate people.

However, it is argued that there were policies such as ASBOs that were mainly focused on punishment on teenagers. Other policies included

introducing 23 new criminal laws which meant that that government forced people to commit crimes. Also, the number of prisoners reached 83,000 compared to just under 30,000 in the 1970s.

This shows that the New Labour arrested more people during their terms in office. Furthermore, it is argued that Labour government wanted to look tough for electoral purposes therefore arresting more people would show that they were succeeding in tackling the crime.

To a large extent, the Labour government were following a set of ideology which was to tackle the source of crime but they modernised the party through introducing new laws for electoral purposes.

The coalition government has argued that their approach is different from the previous governments. At first, Ken Clarke put too much emphasis on rehabilitation and he argued that 70% of criminals would reoffend.

Therefore, they introduced the payment-by-result methods which give the probation jobs to private companies. The coalition government also introduced the "two strikes and you are out" which meant that if an individual commits two serious crimes then they would have to be in prison for life.

The introduction of mandatory sentences shows that coalition is mainly focus on crime rather than rehabilitation. However, when the riots of 2011 happened, many saw David Cameron as "soft on crime" in which after that he changed the direction of government policies towards law and order. The coalition government has also made significant cuts towards welfare state which means that it would be harder for

government to focus on rehabilitation. However, one could argue that the "payment by result" methods in order to rehabilitate offenders through private sectors is privatisation that is only compatible with their ideology. For example, the government's close

relationship with C4.s is considered to be not in the benefit of society but rather few individuals.

In conclusion, the labour government is considered to be more focused on rehabilitation as opposed to conservative government. This is mainly because there is a difference in their ideology on how to tackle the crime. The conservative believes that there is not many factors that entice an individual to commit a crime, saying that it is "individual responsibility" while labour has been associated with policies such as "respect agenda" that would concentrate on rehabilitation.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

In some ways this candidate falls into a similar trap as the previous example, in terms of historical content, but they are distinguished in three clear ways. Firstly rather more time is spent on post-1997 governments. Secondly the coalition content, although still a little rushed, is more clearly addressed to the question. Most critically there is an effort throughout, including in the pre-1997 content, to tie the policies to the specific issue of punishment vs. rehabilitation.

Consequently this response receives a mark in the middle of Level 2.

Marks were awarded as follows:

AO1: 7

AO2: 7

Syn: 6

AO3: 5

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

There is a difference in views amongst law and order between the three main political parties. ~~Lab~~ Labour's famous 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime' is slowly starting to brush onto Conservatives and now coalition policy.

Under coalition, prisons are viewed as a form of punishment for criminals. Allowing judges to set minimum-maximum sentences has also increased the length of sentences for a lot of criminals.

It however prisons are argued to not reform or rehabilitate criminals and in fact can have a damaging effect on social welfare.

It has been suggested that the vast majority of inmates are either mentally ill, ~~the~~ ~~and~~ ~~drug~~ ~~addicts~~ or illiterate. Prisons arguably don't resolve these issues and simply act as a punishment. The Government plans to increase prison sentences as a deterrent for potential criminals however it ~~isn't~~ doesn't appear to be working as crime rates appear to

be increasing and ^{many} many criminals that are released commit crimes again within the first year of release. This suggests that prisons don't get to and resolve the main reasons for crime or even act as a deterrent.

Under Labour's approach to crime, which were to not only be tough on sentencing but also to address the social issues, crime started to reduce.

Labour would tackle the social causes through what they believed to be the best ~~not~~ remedy, "Education, Education, education". Labour believed that this would deter people from having to commit crimes for money as with a quality education they would be more likely to gain employment and it would also discourage them to ~~or~~ become drug addicts.

Lib Dems were also fond of tackling the social causes of crime and ~~is~~ pledged that wider use of community service and rehab were necessary to rehabilitate and not just punish, although this was criticised being a soft approach and not punishing and deterring people enough from committing crimes.

Under Coalition, there has been an increase in the use of community service and the Coalition

plan on reducing prison population by 3000 and have also just recently ~~closed~~ planned to close 6 prisons and part-close 3 prisons. This may be as a result of or the ~~best~~ reduction however it may ~~then~~ result in a different form of punishment for some prisoners i.e. community service and rehab.

It is argued that ~~the social~~ ~~cause~~ prisoners are not rehabilitated when in prison and so are much more likely to re-commit once released as the reason for their criminal activity hasn't been resolved.

It is said that prison acts as a school of crime and rather than punishing people and discouraging them from re-committing, it acts as a place in which prisoners can share tips and teach other prisoners how to commit particular crimes. This doesn't rehabilitate people but could actually encourage ~~the~~ prisoners to re-commit once released given the new skills they have learnt.

Most prisoners are illiterate and have very low, ~~are~~ no education and skills. This may prevent them from getting a job when released and on top of having a

Criminal record and there being few jobs in the economy, it is sometimes seen as ~~the~~ the only option to make money by re-committing. The Coalition have pledged that there will be a wider use of education inside prisons so prisoners can get a job and not turn back to crime. This is something that already existed inside ~~prisons~~ prisons however the Coalition have widened the use of it to prisoners. It prisoners can also gain qualifications that are respected amongst the workforce and so again, gives them a higher chance of not having to re-commit.

Prisons don't resolve the issue of drug addiction as drugs are readily available inside prisons and it is also claimed that people who go in to prison without an addiction often come out with one. This ~~heighten~~ heightens the chances of re-committing for drug money. Lib Dems support the idea of rehab ~~for~~ for ~~the~~ prisoners with drug addictions and there is an increase in this use under Coalition however it is often seen as not being a sufficient punishment for criminals.

With Lib Dems being highly in favour of community

service sentences rather than prison sentences, it has put pressure on the coalition to provide such sentences more commonly. Lib Dems are in favour of community service as they believe it gives something back to the community and makes the criminals realise the damage their crimes caused to their community. However this is argued to not be a good enough deterrent for potential criminals and it doesn't reform criminals either in that they are still likely to re-commit. Another issue regarding community service is that it ~~can~~ is not appropriate for very serious crimes such as ~~the~~ murder and rape. For these particular crimes, prison is the only option. ~~as~~ ~~of~~

Many claim that prisons do work in ~~the~~ for serious criminals because it keeps them off the streets and out of the community, therefore creating a safer society. For some cases of mentally ill people, for example, they may never ~~be~~ be fit to be put back into society and so cannot be reformed and therefore prison is seen as the only option.

There are views that law and order policies amongst the Government places focus too heavily on punishment and not on rehabilitation. In ~~some~~ most cases, prisoners may be seen to be

Safe to go back into society, we offer rehabilitation however some may simply not be safe for society. Rehabilitation may decrease crime rates and re-offending rates however this and under Labour this had a positive effect along with the drivers focus of education to prevent crime happening. All three main political parties have different viewpoints on how to deal with criminals but do in fact cross over on much of their ideology. A balance is required between the level of punishment and the level of rehabilitation that a prisoner receives to not only deter and prevent criminals from committing crimes, but also rehabilitate to prevent re-offending by addressing the social issues and retraining behind acting in a way of criminality.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This answer had a much more contemporary focus, relating to both Labour from 1997 and the Coalition government. It shows an awareness of specific policies on both sides of the arguments (such as rates of reoffending and of mental illness and 'the universities of crime' argument vs. the closure of prisons and increased use of community sentences). It also discusses the argument that prisons are, in fact, effective.

It does not achieve Level 3 on all Assessment Objectives because it requires more discussion of specific policy, but it goes high within Level 2.

Marks were awarded as follows:

AO1: 10

AO2: 9

Syn: 8

AO3: 6

Question 8

It was pleasing to see that, even without a specific pointer within the question, virtually all candidates recognised that this was about post-2010 coalition policy, and there were no efforts to focus on the policies of earlier governments (except occasionally to illustrate either contrast or continuation from the Labour government). Nevertheless and perhaps surprisingly given its very contemporary focus, it was only of middling popularity.

Virtually all candidates were able to address general arguments in favour of or against limiting benefits. However a significant number failed to show sufficient awareness of *specific* relevant policy debates on universal credit, means-testing of child benefit, housing benefit cap etc and could only recognise common themes within the coalition's policies and opposition critiques.

Furthermore many candidates did not *fully* address the question. This question wanted candidates to discuss two issues: whether the changes were socially unfair, but also whether they were politically popular. Many candidates either embraced the premise of the question - offering evidence of both political popularity and social unfairness but not of the alternatives - or else entirely disregarded the issue of popularity and focused exclusively on (un)fairness.

Whilst it was expected that social fairness would be the main focus of an answer, there was definite scope for candidates to discuss the assertion of popularity, given the controversy of the child benefit proposals, and the criticisms made by various pressure groups of the impact of other changes.

The weakest responses were sometimes distracted by their own personal views, failing to recognise that there is a genuine debate. They sometimes avoided or skirted specific policy, instead delivering generally critiques or justifications.

Middling responses were more willing to consider the particular pros or cons of specific policies, but quite often could not do both. Alternatively some candidates recognised the debate but maintained it in terms of general principles - that someone has to pay, that not all claimants were genuine vs. the general need for welfare, the impact of families etc. Candidates at this level generally either ignored the question of popularity or assumed it to be correct, often with brief justification in terms of the media and public perceptions of claimants.

The strongest responses addressed both aspects of the question, tackling the issue of social fairness in particular in considerable detail and with reference to specific policy. Some could recognise subtleties within this concept, such as the argument that child benefit has only been restricted to those who did not need it vs. the 'squeezed middle' argument. Discussion of popularity was still generally either brief (but two-sided) or more detailed but one-sided - either was sufficient to enter Level 3, though a more detailed two-sided approach, which was rare, was necessary to reach the higher end of the level.

In terms of synopticity this question did give ample scope to consider the rival views of different parties, including within the coalition. Stronger candidates were also able to bring in the views of the media and of relevant pressure groups such as CPAG and, in a few cases, the Taxpayers' Alliance.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6 ✕

Question 7 ✕

Question 8 ✕

Limiting state benefits is a popular political move due to the amount of money is spent on benefits each year which is huge so any move to cut the billions spent on benefits and the welfare state is going to be popular with most politicians and seen as combating the dependency culture but outside of Parliament it may not be so popular with everyone else at all.

Reasons why some may view it as socially unfair are that while there is a dependency culture and it is a big problem that needs dealing with there are actually some people / families who work hard and everything else but who simply cannot make ends meet without a little bit of help from the welfare state so are in a way dependent and apart of the dependency culture but not because they chose to be so cutting benefits that help people and families live but to make ends meet can be seen as socially unfair and would be rightly so where as the people / families who just live off the state are completely dependent and have no interest in getting a job so are dependent by choice they are the kind of people who need to have their benefits cut so they are forced to go

out and get a job in order to make up for the money they have lost it is completely fair but making the limits universal (so apply to everyone) instead of means tested is unfair on those who do have a job and income but need benefits to be able to make ends meet and look after their families so it should be means tested on

whether they have a job the income from the job and the expenditure on essentials such as groceries, gas, water, electricity, clothing (basic) and heating etc. would mean that means testing it using that method would tackle the dependency culture it would make it fair and could be like a top-up series which would also cut the cost of benefits bill which would over time save money and cut the benefits bill hugely over a few or maybe more years.

reasons why it is a popular political move is that it cuts the benefits bill almost immediately leading to savings which would allow the government to be able to reduce the deficit which is a very big important political move to be made by the government. Solving benefits is popular politically because of what the money saved can be used for elsewhere or where it is needed the most.

Shouldn't universally limit benefits should be means tested to ensure it is fair but still tackles the dependency culture.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate has engaged some general arguments with respect to limiting welfare but these arguments are quite simplistic in places and, even more importantly, they have made very little reference to specific policy. This leaves them struggling to exit Level 1.

Marks were awarded as follows:

- A01: 4
- A02: 4
- Syn: 4
- A03: 4



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In a contemporary issues paper reference to current specific policy, and where applicable current policy alternatives, is essential. Similarly providing contemporary specific evidence is very important. Both should be embedded into your arguments allowing them to be argued in a contemporary way not asserted in the abstract.

This response was awarded 27 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

It is clear that limiting state benefits paid to families is politically popular as seen in the Conservatives recent stance on cutting the system. However, it has also been well noted that it will make families who are currently living off benefits much poorer and it is therefore socially unfair.

Political support can ~~be~~ be seen through the recently passed Welfare Reform Act 2012. George Osborne proposed through the Act a single-streamed benefit. The idea of this would be to prevent a "dependency culture" that Margaret Thatcher once spoke about by introducing a 'means testing' type approach. This would mean houses and families would be inspected to see if they were genuinely seeking work and were receiving the correct funds. Means testing can be seen a socially unfair because many of the families on benefits would think it as invasive and impractical.

The means testing approach has been influenced by the ~~same~~^{similar} 1920's Policy which proved very unpopular.

It has been reported ~~for~~ by the BBC that over ~~a~~ 2 million people will be affected by this Act. ~~Some~~ Disabled people are estimated to lose up to £40 a week which will put a huge strain on their living ~~res~~ expenses. This has proved very controversial but the Conservatives insisted that everyone ~~needed~~^{needs} to "pull together" during the recession and these cuts were necessary.

It has been unclear how Labour would have dealt with the benefit system had they won the election in 2010. They have opposed the cuts of £110bn to benefits the Osborne ~~had~~ spoke about in his Autumn Statement since they have said that the families who most need it should not be having it taken away. This is evidence to suggest that the reduced benefits to families have not been politically popular.

Families have been forced to leave London since the Coalition have ~~reduced~~ put a cap of £500 a week onto benefits. This is certainly socially unfair because families are being forced to move location potentially away from jobs, families and friends because of these cuts. ~~It has been the~~ Although, it could be argued that it ~~is~~ is not unfair and the old system was more unfair to ~~it~~ someone not on benefits because families were living in million pound terrace houses in London. This would have ^{cost} the taxpayer, who is ~~already~~ ^{still} funding benefits anyway, much more since accommodation in London is so much more expensive. Should families on benefits be living in houses that someone who is in work and not on benefits could not afford?

The original idea to cut benefits is to make employment look much more appealing to those on benefits. The conservative principle, under Thatcher, was that those in work should have more money than those on benefits, which

Very few people would disagree with. If this is so, then the cap of £26,000 a year is not socially unfair and merely adds an incentive for those claiming benefits to seek employment.

There are, of course, ~~have~~ ~~proposed~~ ~~to~~ limitations on the ~~amount~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ amount of child benefit people receive. If a family earns more than £80,000 per year they lose child benefit. ~~This~~ The majority of people wouldn't consider this to be socially unfair at all because those who earn a relatively high wage do not need any funding from the state. If this is the case, other benefits such as a free bus pass for wealthy elderly people are ~~not~~ unnecessary and by removing such things would mean there would be less need to ~~not~~ make cuts to those ~~who~~ who genuinely need the benefit.

In conclusion, it is evident that in some political parties, notably the Conservatives, that cutting benefits

from for families has proved politically popular. However, there is definitely opposition, politically, from some sections of the Labour party who have argued there are ~~these~~ less important things that should be cut first rather than benefits that can have a heavy effect on individual lifestyle and opportunities. A lack of opportunities and a lower ~~level~~ standard of living can be seen as unfair but the Conservatives put the argument forward that if you reduce benefits ~~and~~ ^{there} is an increase in incentive to find employment. ~~whereas~~



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This candidate shows an impressive awareness of the specific changes proposed and the individual impacts of these changes. Had they been able to link this into the general points of debate in a more coherent overarching way they might have reached Level 3. As it is the lack of a more drawn out overall 'story' keeps them in mid-high Level 2. Whilst synoptic explanation might have been detailed they gain credit for explicitly contrasting different views with respect to specific proposals.

Marks were awarded as follows:

A01: 8

A02: 7

Syn: 7

A03: 5



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Knowledge of relevant contemporary policy, and different points of view with respect to it, will take you a long way, but to achieve Level 3 it is also necessary to tie the policy together in a clear overarching way that supports the thrust of your argument.

This final response to Question 8 was awarded 34 marks.

Chosen Question Number:

Question 6

Question 7

Question 8

~~There are a number~~

The limitation of State benefits to families is considered a political 'hot topic' due to its controversy and how it ~~politics~~ has been viewed politically in both a ~~political~~ ^{social} and economical sense; especially with the recent austerity cuts to welfare ~~and~~ such as the cut in childcare and proposals to replace various benefits under a new 'universal benefit' ~~as~~ as part of the Welfare Reform Bill.

It is incorrect to assume that every political party consents to the limitation of State benefits and the introduction of the new Welfare Bill. As the Conservative Party pointed out

"Someone has to cove wult" when it comes to cuts in welfare. The Liberal Party agree that cuts are 'harsh but necessary' in order to rebuild Broken Britain and to 'boost the economy'. However the Labour Party ~~does not~~ ~~comment~~ along with various pressure groups including the likes of Shelter completely oppose the proposed policies as ~~At~~ ~~Butte~~ Yvette Cooper once claimed that it "completely demonizes the working class".

Firstly, the proposal of the Universal Credit by the Coalition government has been hugely contested. The Universal credit ~~has said to~~ aims at ~~to~~ capping the amount of benefit that can be claimed by 1%, which as Chancellor George Osborne has claimed, will improve the state of the economy. It also aims to combat ~~bread and as the~~

Pseudulent claimants of benefit (by putting 7 benefits into one large credit) which the government aims to combat "Scroungers" as they believe that the majority of people claiming benefits are 'scroungers' and blame Labour for introducing a 'dependency culture' on benefits. However, Labour combat this by showing evidence that ~~the~~ ^{60%} ~~majority~~ of ~~these~~ ^{these} people who will be affected by the cuts are in employment, which strongly suggests that work does not pay. They also suggested that much of the 'dependency culture' has been created by the mass media. ~~As one~~ As it has been suggested by Shelter "people choosing to live a life of benefits is a lie". The introduction of a Universal Credit would completely undermine the morale of the working class people. Although, Ed Miliband has

recognised that there is a problem with scroungers ~~but as~~ ^{who} who will be addressed however he will not "label the mass majority as them."

Additionally, the recent cuts to child benefit ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~also~~ faced ~~much~~ ^{little} political ~~controversy~~ ~~and~~ or social disapproval. Opponents argue that no such cut should be introduced in the face of "Breadline Britain" when there are 22,000 children in the UK living in relative poverty. However, the governments have pledged and guaranteed that anyone earning less than £50,000 will not be affected by the cuts, those earning between £50,000-£60,000 would have them capped and those earning above £60,000 ~~will~~ ^{will} ~~at~~ ^{have} it removed completely. The government have argued that this is a fair policy as it will not be affecting those living

in relative poverty or those 'on the
breadline'. Statistics have
^{shown} suggested that ~~there is~~ already
20,000 parents have opted out
of child benefit which was
higher than expected which
suggests, ^{that there is} both a political
and social consent to the
childcare cuts. However, the
Labour party have suggested
that families will be £550
worse off a year and will have
a negative impact on single
parents.

Additionally, the government
has introduced a proposal
called 'welfare to work'
which encourages NEETs
(not in education, employment
or training) to find a job.
This is mainly aimed at
school leavers, those receiving
disability living allowance
and those who have been
claiming benefits over a
long period of time. ~~It is a~~ IE

aims to improve the lives of 20 000 ~~claiming benefits to find a career~~ ~~or~~ NEETS but comes with harsh consequences facing those who are reluctant to do it. Only 5% have opted out. Despite its harsh, Thatcherite nature, the Labour party's Ed Balls has introduced a Labour proposal of a similar nature which pledges to cut benefits to those who have been claiming for over two years and have been employed for that length of time. The Labour party have done this to appear electable. They recognise the need to introduce harsh consequences in order ~~for~~ to gain public votes. However this policy faces much criticism from various groups who claim that it reduces 'social mobility' and is 'completely unjust'. It is similar to the Coalition's 'Pay to Stay' Scheme which George ~~Os~~ Osborne proclaimed "How

can we justify giving homes to people who have no input in our society?' *

Overall it can be seen that there is some consensus on the limitation of welfare cuts when it comes to 'welfare to work' as all parties recognise the need to tackle the issue of benefit 'scroungers' and encourage those unemployed to start a career which ultimately is a harsh, but fair way to help and show support to families. However, some policies are politically ~~contested~~ contested such as the universal benefit scheme which completely demonizes the working class in the eyes of the Labour party and many sections of society.

* The Coalition Government claim that the Welfare to work scheme is a positive

because 34,000 households have never worked.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

This candidate shows an extensive knowledge of relevant policy and a willingness to engage with both sides of the fairness debate. Furthermore the points considered are specific to individual policies - such as the thresholds for the means testing of child benefit - and not simply general.

This candidate does not however engage specifically with the question of 'popularity' - they do so only implicitly, when considering criticisms of the means testing and the media portrayal of claimants.

Nevertheless the strength of the discussion on fairness is such that this implicit consideration of the popularity debate is enough to take the answer into Level 3.

Marks were awarded as follows:

AO1: 9

AO2: 9

Syn: 9

AO3: 7



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Always consider the requirements of the question very carefully, where it poses two assertions for you to discuss ensure that you do consider both of them, even if one is clearly the more critical.

Paper Summary

In order to improve performance, candidates should:

- Ensure they address the question as set, paying particular attention to the words 'to what extent', and noting where a question makes more than one demand (such as Question 8 setting two premises, but also where a short response might ask 'How and why?').
- Avoid the temptation to give the 'prepared response' particularly on law and order, bearing in mind that terrorism policy, policing policy, sentencing policy and penal policy are linked but are not the same.
- Avoid assertion or general debate in favour of specific argued points (for example the ways in which something will benefit the economy or harm the environment, not simply that it will).
- Continue to develop their use of synopticity, avoiding simplistic yes/no, agree/disagree approaches and making use of competing viewpoints between, within and outside of parties, where appropriate, to the demands of the question.
- On short responses in particular, aim to develop points with the use of evidence and examples, in preference to a list of brief or asserted points.
- Maintain a contemporary focus, and avoid overly historical content, particularly that which predates 1997. Embrace content post-2010, and in particular endeavour to link any relevant philosophical, theoretical or historical points to specific contemporary policy.

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