



GCE A level

1403/01

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – GP3α
UNIT 3α
THE POLITICS OF THE USA

A.M. MONDAY, 11 June 2012

1½ hours

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to this examination paper, you will need a 12 page answer book.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Use black ink or black ball-point pen.

Answer any **TWO** questions.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The maximum mark for this paper is 80.

The number of marks is given in brackets at the end of each question or part-question.

The time you spend on a question should be in proportion to the marks available.

You are reminded that assessment will take into account the quality of written communication used in answers that involve extended writing (part *(b)* questions).

Answer two questions.

Each question is worth 40 marks.

Choose TWO of the questions that follow, and answer both parts, (a) and (b), for both the questions that you choose.

1. The Electoral Process and Direct Democracy

- (a) Explain the roles of the national party conventions. [10]
- (b) ‘Elections in the USA are as democratic as they can be.’ Discuss. [30]

2. Political Parties

- (a) Explain the emergence of ‘Compassionate Conservatism’ in the Republican Party. [10]
- (b) Discuss the view that American political parties lack ideology. [30]

3. Voting Behaviour

- (a) Explain why there seems to be a gender gap in support for the Democrats and the Republicans. [10]
- (b) ‘The rise of independent and swing voters is the most significant factor explaining voting behaviour in the USA.’ Discuss. [30]

4. Pressure Groups

- (a) Explain why the gun lobby is so powerful in the USA. [10]
- (b) Critically evaluate whether pressure groups in the USA undermine democracy and the national interest. [30]