



Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel AS Level Politics
(8PL01) Paper 01

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Summer 2022

Publications Code 8PL0_01_2206_ER

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Introduction

The summer of 2022 saw a welcome return for the AS Politics series after the disruption of the Covid pandemic and the cancellation of the normal sitting of both papers at the end of the academic year. It was clear that many Centres and their students were well prepared for the exam and displayed a good range of accurate information and insight into the UK's political system.

As with all examinations after the event, and with results published, we look back and appreciate both the success of learning and also areas where we can improve and develop.

Key findings

- The responses which provided accurate detail and information about the current political landscape in the UK attained higher levels of reward.
- There was an improved use and development of the source, which shows centres are getting better at identification of good technique, including approaches of how to deal with the selected Assessment Objectives on Question 2 and Question 3.
- Essay performance also indicated a better preparation, with the need for balance and consideration of competing viewpoints being seen on many responses.
- Areas to work on are providing precise details and getting information clear and correct, the questions where this arose will be detailed below.

Question 1a

A popular question and one upon which students were aware of a manifesto and could relate to how it functions. It was common to see comments about the Conservative manifesto pledge heralded by Boris Johnson to 'Get Brexit Done!'. Many made wider connections as they compared voters studying competing manifestoes as political parties attempted to entice wavering voters which party to choose in an election. A significant number were able to point out how a successful political party turned its winning manifesto into a mandate – which held them to account to carry out their electoral promises when in office. It was clear that Centres had prepared their students well for this topic

Script 1

A_0507000140519	Proposed	+	Anchor	10 Q01a	ePACK	L3
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Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . 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(a) Question 1(b)

SecA 10

One function of a manifesto is that it lists off the policies and objectives a political party plans to complete if they win the election and goes in power. It is one of the key factors that are looked at by voters when voting in a general election. This is because it shows the people what the party will do for them and the people can decide whether their manifesto suits or benefits them.

Political parties having a manifesto makes it easier for people to vote as they know what the party will do and what direction they will go in. Manifestos also provide ~~choice~~ choice and differentiation as they ~~and~~ represent the party + leader which will all be different from each other.

When a political party wins a general election, they gain a mandate, which ~~essentially~~ ^{essentially} means they have consent from the people to commit to their policies/manifesto as a government. This is a key feature within a representative democracy and the mandate serves as the people's permission for the government to do the actions they stated in their manifesto.

Another function of a manifesto is that it is used as a competitive edge for a political party during general elections. Parties will make their manifestos ~~around~~ around issues that the majority of people are concerned with and design policies that are appealing to the people in order to best their competing parties and win the election. For example, Jeremy Corbyn had taken some of the Green Party's environmental ideas for his Labour Party manifesto in order to succeed and appeal to environmentalists. Boris Johnson had also made ^{the main} ~~the main~~ part of his manifesto around Brexit as it was what the people cared about the most at the time. It is evident that his 'Get Brexit done' slogan within his manifesto is why he won the 2019 general election. Finally, manifestos are a key part in rational choice theory as ~~as~~ voting behaviours have changed over time, (class, age are less relevant now) people will look to vote for a party that benefits them. A party's manifesto is a key thing that is looked at when people vote using rational choice theory.

(Total for Question 1 = 10 marks) Total 10

Examiner Comment

An excellent response packed full of detail and showing substantial knowledge and understanding. It is not necessary to produce so much material on a 10-mark question – but this is packed with insight and very accurate. A top level 3 response

Script 2.

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . 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(a)** **Question 1(b)**

SecA 3

~~The functions of a Manifesto are goals that a political party tries to achieve.~~

~~The first ~~part~~ functions of a manifesto is that they are representative. Each party has a different manifesto meaning members of the public have different representatives to follow.~~

Another feature of a manifesto is that it helps choosing the right MP. With choosing the right MP it gives the country hope that they are being led by the right government. ~~Having~~ Having the right MP potentially helps with things like Human Rights and the Criminal Justice System.

~~The main~~ The main reason a party's manifesto has to be clear is that they know as soon as they become leading government, they can begin to make a change. Their manifesto could be anything including; tackling child poverty, ~~public~~ improving public services or just balancing the left and right wing just like Tony Blair did.

Examiner Comment

Moving now to the other end of the level spectrum this is a level 1 response. It lacks precise detail and is very generic and fails to convince the reader that there is a broad understanding of the functions of a manifesto.

Question 1b

Here many students had little difficulty in describing the outline of what a minority government was composed of – often raising the lack of reaching enough seats (the magic 326) to be able to form a government. The most common example cited was the May government after 2017 and its reliance on the DUP after the General election, a few did mention the Labour Minority government from February 1974, not that examples are essential but they can illustrate knowledge in responses which rely exclusively on AO1.

However, after a good start many students then veered off and confused a minority government with a coalition government and assumed that the two were the same. This then restricted their mark into level 2 at the most.

Script 1

V_0507000140523	Approved	+	Validity	5 Q01b	Good Example
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Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . 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(a) Question 1(b)

Sec A 4

~~Coalition is more~~
- Minority government often suggests that the government is not strong enough to make big decisions on daily basis.

People do not particularly prefer the minority government because it sometimes turn into a coalition or is like in 2010 when there was a coalition between the conservative party. The coalitions are considered weak because they often fail to ~~complete~~ ^{complete} the manifestos and there is a clash of ideologies between different parties.

- A minority government has ~~often~~ ^{to} make deals ~~several times~~ ^{with} other political parties e.g. Theresa May and her deal with DUP which costed the British government a lot of money.

- A minority government can also be easily overthrown. This was first time seen in UK's history in 1978 when Callaghan had a really small majority and this was one the factors that helped the Thatcher to win the vote of no-confidence.

They are often called weak as the mandate is hard to get through and there is a big possibility that promises promised in the manifestos might not be ~~completed~~ completed.

Examiner Comment

This is an example of a low level 2 response. It fails to fully galvanise a description of a minority government and some of its statements can be misleading and inaccurate.

Script 2

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . 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(a) Question 1(b)

SecA 9

A minority government B a government formed by a single party that, despite gaining the most seats in parliament, did not ~~gain~~ ^{reach} 326 or more, and thus do not have 50% or more of seats. This means that there will be more MPs in opposition than there are in government, which can lead to difficulty in governing.

A minority government may seek agreements with other parties in order to strengthen the number of MPs voting 'aye' on government legislation. This was done by Theresa May in 2017, who reached a confidence & supply agreement with Foster's Democratic Unionist Party, thus allowing legislation to pass as the DUPs number ~~was~~ ^{allowed} ^{aye} votes to surpass 326. Furthermore, a minority government can seek to form a coalition with another party and govern together. An example of this is the Cameron-Oleyn coalition after the 2010 general election.

If a minority government cannot reach or does not reach a deal ~~or~~ with another party and governs alone, it will struggle to pass legislation. This is because it is likely that all opposition MPs, who outnumber the ^{number of} government MPs, will vote 'no', thus stopping legislation from going any further. This ~~means~~ means it is incredibly difficult for a government to govern, given it cannot pass legislation to fulfil its policies. This would also likely mean a ~~change of~~ ^{change of} ~~the~~ ^{policy} ~~parties~~ would happen.

A minority ~~governor~~ government can easily find itself removed through a motion of no confidence. This would likely pass, given there are more opposition MPs to vote 'aye' than there are government MPs to vote 'no'. As such, minority ~~govern~~ ^{govern-}ments are very very vulnerable and can be destroyed fairly easily, as a successful motion of no confidence would trigger a general election.

(Total for Question 1 = 10 marks) Total 9

Examiner Comment

This is a much more precise response. It does mention coalitions, but this does not distract from the overall accuracy of the detail which is subsequently supplied.

Question 2

This source question revolved around the significance of the 1997 General Election, covering some reasons for how it occurred and then briefly looking to the long-term consequences for the Labour Party since 2010. Only the 1997 General Election is specifically mentioned on the specification – hence it is in scope to be examined given this inclusion. With the aid of the source many students could relate to the importance and ramifications of the election and knew that the Labour Party from that high in 1997 has failed to win the last four General Elections. The key to success on a Question 2 which has equal amounts of AO1 and AO2 is to select a point or issue in the source and add further detail (knowledge AO1) and then seek to analyse and exploit that knowledge (AO2)

Script 1

/ 0507000140280	Approved	+	Validity	10 Q02	Good Example
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Using the source, explain why Labour won a landslide in the 1997 general election and the long-term consequences for the party.

*In your response you must use knowledge and understanding to analyse points from the source **only**. You will **not** be rewarded for introducing any additional points that are not in the source.*

(10) Q02 9

Source 1 paints a clear picture as to why Labour won a landslide in 1997. Labour were 'revamped' and had restyled themselves as 'New Labour', by Tony Blair. This was seen as a change from previous years, where Labour had drifted too far left and alienated most of the public. The 'revamped' aspect was key as it allowed Blair to distance himself from previous Labour disasters, including 'the longest suicide note in history' - Labour's 1983 manifesto. In addition to this, there was a 'carefully-planned campaign', as Labour

targeted new voters in the middle class.* Because of embourgeoisment, the middle class had grown and so by carefully planning his campaign to win the voters of the middle class, Blair was able to increase the number of votes Labour received, leading to the landslide. It was not just Labour strength that won them the election, it was also the 'tired and weak' Conservatives that provided limited opposition, as the source describes. Major was seen as dull and mundane compared to the energetic, young Blair and so the Tories did look 'tired and weak', meaning the public did not vote for them. After almost 20 years in government, the Tories had 'no new ideas', whereas Labour had many proposals that Blair showed 'attention to detail' with when discussing them. Therefore, it is evident that the reasons for Labour's Landslide in 1997 were Labour's renewed strength, and the Conservatives' ineptitude.

* Blair conceptualised 'mondeo man' as the type of voter he wanted to appeal to.* The long term consequences for Labour were ostensibly positive. Primarily, they put the Conservatives 'into 13 years of opposition'. This shows their stability and popularity up until 2010. Blair carried out promises in 'introducing constitutional change' such as the Devolution of the Powers Act, and evoking the Jenkins Committee to discuss methods of voting. There was 'economic growth' and ~~for~~ in the 2000s, Labour had positive long term consequences. However, in the 2010s, the

weaknesses of New Labour showed, as the source describes. Many voters felt that the party was 'neither quick nor radical' and therefore felt alienated. New Labour's abandonment of 'Clause 4' rationalisation, as well as 'acceptance of economic liberalism' did deter key votes from 'trade union supporters'. Brown's failure to properly deal with the '2008 economic crash' was catastrophic for Labour and presented a party that was not economically sound, which led to defeat in '2010, 2015, 2017 and 2019'. Therefore, while the 2000s may have been a time of strength for Labour, the failure to appeal to key 'trade union supporters' by abandoning Labour traditions and the 'economic crisis' led to, ~~an~~ overall, negative long term consequence after 1997.

(Total for Question 2 = 10 marks) Total 9

Examiner Comment

This is a level 3 script. It probes and expands on the information in the source and digs behind this to provide accompanying knowledge then goes on to analyse this widened platform. Note that the focus is mainly on the reasons behind the 1997 victory – but it does have a brief mention of the fall from power of Labour since 2010.

Script 2

A_0507000140521	Proposed	+	Anchor	4 Q02	ePACK	
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Using the source, explain why Labour won a landslide in the 1997 general election and the long-term consequences for the party.

In your response you must use knowledge and understanding to analyse points from the source **only**. You will **not** be rewarded for introducing any additional points that are not in the source.

(10) Q02 4

The new Labour won a landslide a landslide mainly because their opposition government, the Conservative party was very weak which is the Conservative party, a party who had been in government for almost 18 years, the main reason for the Conservative party's loss was their not appealing to their already existing ^{old} middle class supporters, something Tony Blair did, therefore they lost support from their main source of voting.

Another reason for why the Labour Party won the general election was their leader Tony Blair himself.

He established new policies and more importantly he was seen as a charismatic leader by the general public, he was perceived as confident and as a leader that was able to make radical changes.

~~The~~ ~~the~~ the Labour party won a landslide especially because they changed from old Labour who was more financially funded by the trade union and targeted the working class areas to the "new Labour" ^{of Tony Blair} who was funded by "big businesses" and targeted ^{also} the middle class.

Examiner Comment

In contrast to the previous script this candidate has correct detail but fails to fully expand the AO1 and then underplays the potential for AO2. It is a level 2 response and clearly less detailed than the previous response.

Question 3

It is normal that question 3 with its demand for only AO2 and AO3 and its exclusion of AO1 provides a different challenge than question 2. It requires not only common synergy between the two extracts in the source – the similarities but then an evaluation and judgment on the areas where there is tension and disagreement in the extracts. It is normal that the remit of the disagreement furnishes more narrative and comment, and both aspects are not mandated to be of equal scope. Voting for prisoners is a topic well known to students. A small minority decided to largely ignore the source and discuss the pros and cons of prisoner voting on their terms. That is to be avoided as reward can only emanate from the source presented.

Script 1

V_0507000140520	Approved	+	Validity	9 Q03	Good Example
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Using **only** the sources, assess whether the UK Parliament is justified in denying the vote to UK prisoners for general elections.

(10) Q03 9

*In your response you must compare and contrast **similarities** and **differences** and consider competing points by analysing and evaluating them. **Only** analysis and evaluation based on knowledge from the sources will gain credit.*

Both sources 2 and 3 talk about how a criminal is someone unlike the rest of society, and so because of this they are treated differently. For example, source

2 states that a criminal is an 'outlaw, someone who puts themselves outside of the law', and because of this they shouldn't be allowed to do something that someone ~~has~~ who hasn't committed a crime can do. Source 3 backs this up by saying that when people are asked about prisoners they say they are 'dangerous' and that we shouldn't give them anything, which suggests that the UK parliament is in the right by denying prisoners the vote. Both sources also talk about how people reacted negatively to the reaction of the European Court's decision on how to run its political system which suggests that ~~voters should~~ prisoners shouldn't be given the vote.

However, there are also differences in the two sources. For example Source 2 suggests that society has the right to say that when you commit a crime serious enough to go to prison you lose the right to vote which means that ~~is~~ according to source 2 the UK parliament is justified in denying UK prisoners the vote. However Source 3 disagrees with this by saying that voting is not a privilege, but it's a right and civic responsibility too, which suggests that Source 3 argues that prisoners should be given the vote, and it's unfair that they're not because

it's their right to vote. Also, Source 2 states that voting would not ~~change~~ ^{be enough} to change a prisoners behaviour, so giving them the vote isn't justified. However, source 3 suggests that by giving prisoners the vote it encourages them to be responsible citizens and be rehabilitated into society, which means that prisoners should get the vote as a crime doesn't define a person.

Both sources are useful in determining whether the UK parliament is justified in ~~determining~~ ^{denying} the vote to prisoners, as both sources talk about how criminals are dangerous and that many people believe they shouldn't be given the right to vote as they've done something unlawful. But the sources also differ and suggest that prisoners should be given the vote as it helps to act as an incentive to change their behaviour and be rehabilitated. Overall, it could be concluded that source 2 is more useful as the points ~~are~~ made are more similar to the way majority of society things about prisoners.

(Total for Question 3 = 10 marks) Total 9

Examiner Comment

This is an excellent style in how to respond to a question 3 – though not a compulsory route – indeed there are many others. What the student here has done is to consider first the similarities and provided clear analysis and evaluation. A lengthier second section then does the same with the disagreements. Clearly a Level 3 response.

Script 2

A_0507000140512

Proposed

+

Anchor

5 | Q03

ePACK

Using **only** the sources, assess whether the UK Parliament is justified in denying the vote to UK prisoners for general elections.

(10) Q03 6

In your response you must compare and contrast **similarities** and **differences** and consider competing points by analysing and evaluating them. **Only** analysis and evaluation based on knowledge from the sources will gain credit.

Both sources agree that rehabilitation is important, but they disagree on whether voting plays a part in rehabilitation.

Source 2 claims that voting will not change the character or behaviour of a prisoner, while source 3 says that prisoners should be encouraged to be responsible citizens, and as voting is a civic responsibility, this means that prisoners must vote.

Another disagreement is that source 2 says voting is a privilege, while source 3 claims it is a human right.

Privileges afforded by society can be rescinded by that society if a person acts against its laws and interests, but human rights must always be upheld. As citizens of the UK, source 3 argues prisoners must be allowed their right to vote.

Source 2 also argues that once you have acted unlawfully, and placed yourself outside of the law, you must be removed from the law-making process, but source 3 argues that as a right, voting becomes even more important once freedom is lost.

Overall, the UK parliament is incorrect to deny the rights of its citizens to vote.

Examiner comment

By contrast this is a much weaker response than the earlier one. It is less detailed but the key mistake it makes is that it tends to replicate the source back to us (which is AO1 and not rewardable) and thus fails to fully embark on a wider engagement with AO2 and AO3. It is imperative to base the response on the source – but a narrative which repeats largely the source is flawed when the major drive should be on analysis and evaluation.

Question 4a

Questions which involve pressure groups are always a favourite of politics students. This continued to prove true this series as more students chose 4a in preference to 4b as their essay. Few students encountered any major difficulty in providing examples of pressure groups or parties. It must be noted that some pressure group examples tended to be dated and not fully reflective of the contemporary role which pressure groups play now in political life. Weaker responses tended to simply state firstly 'this is why pressure groups are more important' – then provide narrative and comment on pressure groups followed by the same (though more restricted view) of political parties. Better responses used their narrative in a more constructive way and drew up analysis (often comparisons) between pressure groups and parties then made mini conclusion AO3 in the body of the essay and set up a productive dialogue as a profitable outcome. They then delivered a fully considered view of the merits of the arguments which were set before them

Script 1

V_0507000153008	Approved	+	Validity	28 Q04a	Good Example
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Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 4(a) Question 4(b)

Q04a 24

Many would argue that pressure groups are more important to the voting public than political parties. This is because they allow people from ~~all~~ many backgrounds and sections within society to engage in politics, giving a public voice to influence lawmakers. They can also ~~en~~ scrutinise and influence government policy, as some pressure groups such as the BMA have professional insight into the effects of certain laws. However, there is scope to question this view, since pressure groups hold no real ability to implement laws, with that power being held by political parties. As such, it is arguable that parties hold the most power. Despite this, in this essay I will come to the conclusion that pressure groups hold the most importance due to the aforementioned reasons.

Pressure groups are arguably more significant to the voting public as they provide professional scrutiny and influence on policy making.

Government departments are often not run by experts in that field, for example David Javid being the Health Secretary despite being a politician. In this case, the British Medical Association (BMA) can help provide meaningful insight to actually protect the health of the public. When there are gaps in government ~~policy~~ policy, there is little that the electorate would be able to do until the next general election. However, the significance of pressure groups prevails in this situation. In 2011, the BMA began campaigning for a ban on smoking in cars with children present. As they ~~to~~ are an insider group with professional ~~to~~ insight consisting of doctors and medical professionals, this view was taken in, ~~and~~ and a law enacting this was passed in 2015. ~~Pressure groups~~ This shows the importance of pressure groups in influencing policy.

Pressure groups can also stand up for people's rights. In May ~~2020~~, 2022, Amnesty ~~International~~ International responded to the government pledge in the Queen's ~~Speech~~ ~~Speech~~ Speech to replace the Human Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights. They criticised the decision as it provides scope for the

removal of certain rights.

However, many would regard the influence of pressure groups as a negative. This is because pressure groups consist of unelected individuals. As such, these individuals exerting influence on democratically elected lawmakers undermines democracy and the sovereignty of Parliament.

Despite this, I believe that the ability of pressure groups to scrutinise and influence policy whilst holding the government to account increases their significance to the public who would not be able to do these things without them.

However, there is a scope to argue that political parties hold more significance than pressure groups, as they have the democratic ability to pass legislation.

Pressure groups, regardless of professional insight or size, cannot pass, amend or repeal legislation whilst elected parties, consisting of elected representatives, hold this ability. As such, the actions of many pressure groups can be made futile by the government who are the deciders of which groups are

are insider or outsider groups and who gets a say on policy making. The argument that parties are more significant is furthered by the fact that much of the electorate are uninterested and/or uninvolved in pressure group activity, with ~~ed~~ even the largest groups only attracting around 1.1 million members. In contrast, the 2019 general election took in the views of 67% of the electorate, numbering in the tens of millions of people. Due to the size of people the group interested in parties versus that of those in pressure groups, it can be argued that parties are more significant.

However, the viewpoint that parties are more significant due to their ability to pass legislation can be countered by the education that pressure groups provide. Pressure groups such as ~~pro~~ Greenpeace take an active role in informing the electorate on issues, making them more informed and inclined to vote in certain ways. This may result in the election of a different party in the following

election, since pressure groups provided the education to influence who wins the election, and so who secures a mandate. Overall, the fact that parties hold the power to pass laws certainly increases their importance in the ~~public's~~ public's eyes.

Finally, those who believe that pressure groups are more significant also raise the point that they allow people to engage themselves in politics. In a time where party membership is decreasing, widening the participation crisis and democratic deficit, this is certainly important. Pressure groups allow those from all backgrounds, with different interests to campaign to be heard by the government. For example, Insulate Britain's attempts to increase the insulation of homes, thus ~~protecting~~ protecting the environment has caused widespread media attention, undoubtedly drawing the attention of lawmakers. Additionally, pressure groups allow the voices of minority groups to be heard. A party seeking ~~that~~ election may not cater many ~~policies~~ policies to minority groups, so pressure groups such as the British Muslim Foundation can stand up for the interests and protection of these groups, showing the significance of pressure groups.

However, the argument that pressure ~~groups~~ groups are more important ~~of~~ than parties due to the engagement in politics they allow

can be countered by the fact that parties also offer many platforms for this. People can become members of a party, participate in campaigning or even run to be a local councillor. However, overall pressure groups offer a greater opportunities for many to ~~to~~ engage themselves in politics, as well as standing up for the interests of minorities, increasing their importance.

I agree that
In conclusion, pressure groups are more important than political parties to the voting public ~~to a large extent~~ to a fair extent. This is because they can use their professional insight and large platform to scrutinise ~~and~~ and influence government policy whilst educating the public on important ~~issues~~ issues. They also allow people to meaningfully engage in politics and get their voices heard on issues, with groups such as ~~Postcode Britain~~ Insulate Britain demonstrating this. ~~However~~ However, parties have the ability ~~to~~ to pass legislation, ~~unlike~~ unlike pressure groups, showing that they ~~are~~ are still very ~~as~~ significant. Despite this, for ~~the~~ the aforementioned (Total for Question 4 = 30 marks) Total 24

reasons I agree with the ~~the~~ statement in ~~the~~ question.

TOTAL FOR SECTION C = 30 MARKS
TOTAL FOR PAPER = 60 MARKS

Examiner Comment

This essay always has the focus of the question within its sights. It reflects and makes judgments (AO3) throughout the essay and contains many relevant examples and details. There is a clear sense of debate surrounding the question. It is a top-level response.

Script 2

V_0507000153002

Approved



Validity

15 | Q04a

Good

Example

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number:

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Q04a

16

This question is comparing whether pressure groups or political parties enhance our democracy better which appeals to the public.

This essay will be assessing this by measuring how far each one enhances participation, representation and accountability which are key functions of both political parties and pressure groups. Overall this essay will be favouring that pressure groups do not and political parties do enhance our democracy which is more important to the voting public and thus the view gives too much importance to pressure groups by comparing it to the relatively important political parties.

Opponents of this view may argue that pressure groups enhance our democracy by providing entry points to the public to engage and express their democratic concerns. They may point to the Stop The War Coalition which was in response to Tony Blair's invasion of Iraq and led to a march through Hyde Park which is considered one of the biggest demonstrations like this in British history. This shows how pressure groups can engage with the public to worry and express concern over political issues which could influence the government.

However this must be ~~dismissed~~ dismissed as it

does not consider the fact that the political party Labour was able to still pass the invasion of Iraq with Blair's majority of 129. This shows that pressure groups do not have comparable influence to political parties, neither power so they are not as important. Rather, it must ^{also} be argued that pressure groups do not always ~~engage~~ engage support and often can be deterring in their radical actions which can decrease participation. A prominent example of this would be the Pressure Group - Extinction Rebellion who have ~~spilled~~ ^{spilled} red paint on a civilian before yet still continue to use this tactic e.g., ~~the~~ throwing red paint on the Supreme Court in 2020 over the Heathrow Runway proposal. This shows how radical methods of pressure groups can deter the public and disengage the public because ~~of~~ pressure groups do not have the same standards as political parties to abide ^{by} ~~by~~. Who can raise ~~an~~ participation ~~as~~ in a healthy way. For example, Jeremy Corbyn's radical policies which appealed to the youth resulted in a 20% increase in participation for 18-21 year olds from 44% in 2010 general election to 2017 general election. Thus, political parties are more important as they enhance participation in a healthier way which appeals to the public.

Opponents of this view may argue that pressure groups enhance accountability and ensure efficiency of government. For example the pressure group NICE works with government to create policy for the NHS and health care and if it is not upheld they can lobby them as a tactic to ensure they are acting democratically. This shows how lobbying can be an effective tactic which pressure groups use to keep a check of balance on the government.

However this view must be dismissed as pressure groups are undemocratic and unaccountable, they are meant to lobby MPs not bribe them. Concern for this rose when MP Neil Hamilton was paid by Ian Greer Associate to ask questions in parliament. This is undemocratic as it gives power to pressure groups via monetary influence which undermines the very principles of a democracy. Rather it must be argued that political parties do a better job in holding the government to account. For example in the Conservative party, Theresa May has been a prominent figure in the backbenches holding her own party leader to account over her handling of breaking Covid guidelines (Partygate) she asked if he did not know he was breaking the rules or what the rules were. This shows better accountability because she was holding her own party leader to account.

Examiner Comment

This essay clearly lacks the depth and scope of the former essay. It fails to provide an in-depth insight into the contested debate. There are examples and these are correct – good use of Extinction Rebellion, for example - but this is a level 3 response, and a greater scope is required to extract all the marks for each of the Assessment Objectives.

Question 4b

On the current specification there is a need to know not only the mechanics of different electoral systems in use in the UK – such as FPTP, AMS and STV - but also their outcomes or the results which they deliver in both Westminster and the Devolved regions. With over 20 years of electoral outcomes in the devolved regions there is sufficient evidence of systems other than FPTP and their results, enough to draw comparisons and make a meaningful decision as to their impact. Hence this point seeks to stress the need-to-know results – not only in Westminster but elsewhere in the UK.

Script 1

V_0507000171803	Approved	+	Validity	10 Q04b	Good Example
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Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: **Question 4(a)** **Question 4(b)**

Q04a 10

Election results are quite significantly affected by the specific electoral system used and there is evidence of this.

When the Proportional Representation is used for an election it is a very representative way of voting. ~~The latter~~ The ~~amount~~ percentage of votes for a person will be the same percentage of seats in Parliament the candidate / party gets.

This is a good way of having fair, representative election results. Although ~~they~~ ^{this} mean the election results are representative, it comes with negatives too. For example, each constituency does not vote for their local MP so local issues get less attention.

Some people would argue that First Past The Post (FPTP) is not representative and therefore negatively affects the election results. The UK is split into 650 constituencies and ~~each~~ ~~person~~ every person votes for their preferred MP in their constituency. The MP

only needs more votes than any other party MP to win. The MP then gets a seat in Parliament. ~~This means that this way~~ Some constituencies are smaller than others, meaning more people could ~~vote the~~ overall vote. The party that didn't win because the party didn't get the most seats in Parliament although it got the most votes overall. This is unrepresentative and can mean that the election results are significantly affected by the electoral system used.

Some would say that Single Transferable Vote (STV) is unrepresentative and affect the election results. This is where people list the candidates in order of preference and a candidate wins when they reach the Quota. This can be ~~un~~ unrepresentative because people have to rank candidates even if they do not agree with their policies or want them to have their vote at all. This means a candidate could win an election from votes that candidates did not actually want to use on them because they did not like their policies.

Some people would agree that no matter what electoral system is used in the UK, the outcome remains broadly similar. Proof of this is in the 2019 Boris Johnson general election. Boris Johnson got 80% majority. Whatever voting system was used here, he most likely still would have won and beat Jeremy Corbyn so the electoral system FPTP that was used had no large affect.

Some people would say that the turnout is not low in some general elections anyway for example in 2010 election when it was 65.1%, so elections are not 100% fair and representative anyways if not all members of public are voting, so the electoral system will not make a massive significantly affect the results when their not 100% representative in most elections anyway.

In conclusion, election results can

definitely be affected by the electoral
system used because they all ^{would} give a
candidate different amount of seats in
parliament which is not fair or
representative and will affect the election
result ~~make~~ ^{make} different outcomes which is
unfair.

Examiner Comment

This script is an example of a level 2 response. It lacks detail and focus on the question. We see no results whatsoever from a field to compare results and outcomes. This lack of core 'results knowledge' thus undermines any developed and meaningful AO2 and AO3.

Script 2

Indicate which question you are answering by marking a cross in the box . If you change your mind, put a line through the box and then indicate your new question with a cross .

Chosen question number: Question 4(a) Question 4(b)

Q04a 24

To an extent it could be suggested that the electoral system used affects the outcomes of general elections. Various electoral systems are different in ~~ways~~ their representation, their voter choice and how strong the governments they produce are. They may be ~~some~~ similarities in some areas of their results, such as government strength, but mostly, they produce incredibly varied results and ~~so do~~ have a significant impact.

One way the electoral system used affects the outcome of general elections would be in its representation, in how accurately it transfers popular vote into seats. First Past the Post, (FPTP), Westminster conventional voting system, is highly unproportional. The ~~an~~ percentage of votes gained by a party can be widely different to the seats they gain, all because of FPTP. In 2019, the Lib Dem's gained 11% of the popular vote but only gained 11 seats. The same year, the SNP gained 4% of the popular vote and 46 seats. FPTP's lack of proportionality

mean that if another electoral system was used, the outcome would be invariably different. Should Single Transferable Vote (STV) be used, the result would vary massively as it is a highly proportional system. In the 2022 Northern Irish election, where STV was used, Sinn Féin won 27 seats and the DUP won 25. This is highly accurate to the percentages of the popular vote they gained. If STV ~~was~~ ^{were} used in Westminster the outcome of general elections would be massively different. There are, however, some voting systems, such as Supplementary Vote (SV), that would create a result more similar to that of FPTP. Despite this the outcome would still vary of most voting systems and would be so widely different to that of FPTP, that it has to be said election results are significantly affected by the electoral system used.

APZ - next page sorry

Another way electoral systems affect the outcome of general elections would be how strong and stable the government it produces it.

Because FPTP is a two-party system, it usually creates a government that has a clear majority and so, is quite stable. Moreover, FPTP does also have the ability to produce a government

that is less strong and less stable, seen in 2010 Conservative - Lib Dem coalition and the 2017 Conservative - DUP confidence and supply deal. FPTP can produce both strong and weak governments, similar to a ~~current~~ electoral system, so it could be said if another was used, there would be little difference in this regard. Additional Member System (AMS) for example, ^{usually} can produce coalitions and weaker, less stable governments, but since 2016 in ~~Scot~~ the Scottish Parliament, has presented a strong SNP government. ~~SNP can~~ AMS can also produce both strong and weak governments suggesting that the outcome would be similar to if different electoral systems were used, and so election results are not

* AMS ^{is} ~~does~~, however, more likely to create coalitions while FPTP is more likely to create majorities. ~~but overall, most electoral systems~~
Despite this *

significantly affected by the electoral system used.

* p2 - Another way electoral systems affect

the results of general elections is in the voter choice they offer. Because FPTP is a two-party system, Labour and Conservative are the only parties with a realistic chance of forming a government, meaning most people are forced to vote for one of the two. In 2019, 75% of people voted for either Labour or Conservative, allowing both of them to gain large amounts of seats compared to smaller parties. This ~~utter~~ ^{utter} lack of voter choice is why election results would vary hugely if a different electoral system was used. At AMS, for example, in the Welsh Parliament, has seen Labour coalition, Liberal coalitions and Plaid Cymru coalitions as in the last decade because people know that other parties have a chance of winning. If AMS were used for general Westminster elections, smaller parties would see large growth, changing the results entirely. While FPTP does allow a smaller, third party to gain some seats, the Lib Dems gained 57 seats in 2010 and the SNP gained 58 in 2015, if another electoral system was used, all smaller parties would see growth. This is why it has to be said election results are significantly affected by the electoral system.

used.

Ultimately, the electoral system used does have a significant effect on the outcome of the general election. While there are some areas where electoral systems mirror each other, such as their production of strong and stable governments. Generally, the outcome would vary quite largely based on how they transfer votes into seats and the vote-cast they offer. These factors have to be given more weight as they have a dramatic effect on the outcome, hence why it has to be said, mostly, election results are significantly affected by the electoral system used.

Examiner Comment

By contrast this level 4 script builds up a much more convincing and authoritative base. From this base we can see the development of AO2 and AO3. It is clear that this student can enter a dialogue and discuss the impact of different electoral systems on outcomes.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance in this paper, students and Centres are offered the following advice:

- Students need to remain focused on addressing the required Assessment Objectives, which is especially important on essays where there is parity between AOs.
- This is equally important on the other sections of the papers where distinct AOs are targeted.

- Always in a response keep a focus on the title and remit of the question.
- On source questions it is important to remember the need to stick rigidly to the source content and not to deviate and introduce additional facts.
- On essays note the rubric commands contained within the question and attempt to provide a balance – in short this means take a view on both sides of a contested issue. The balance does not need to be precise so long as other views are represented and discussed.
- It is important to know outcomes. Results not only for Westminster but also devolved bodies are crucial.