

General Certificate of Education
June 2006
Advanced Level Examination



**GENERAL STUDIES (SPECIFICATION B)
Unit 5 Power-Regulation**

GSB5

Wednesday 14 June 2006 1.30 pm to 2.45 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is GSB5.
- Answer **all** questions.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

2 How far do you believe that the UK tax system is fair?

(12 marks)

The source, which cannot be reproduced here for copyright reasons, commented on the sliding scale system tax system which operates in the UK and most Western Countries. The percentage tax paid on income is calculated using a banded system where the higher the amount earned, the higher the tax band, and the larger the percentage of income is paid in tax. Although income tax is lower in the UK, compared to other countries, consumption tax, e.g. VAT, is higher which means the amount of overall tax paid by individuals from country to country is generally the same.

Turn over for the next question

Turn over ▶

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- 3 To what extent do pressure groups add to or detract from democracy in the UK? (12 marks)

Do pressure groups add to democracy?

For some, pressure groups are a fundamental part of democracy. To others, pressure groups undermine the whole principle of democracy. Democracy is a system of government where decisions are arrived at by majority principles with representatives elected at periodic elections where political equality and political freedom allow the voter an effective choice between competing candidates in a secret ballot.

Source: www.historylearningsite.co.uk, 2005

- 4 The use of credit, debit and store cards encourages people to become large-scale debtors.
How valid an assertion is this? *(12 marks)*

The source, which cannot be reproduced here for copyright reasons, showed a stack of credit cards with two comments - the first pointing out the change in linguistic usage - borrowed money used to be referred to as debt, whereas now it is referred to as credit, the second pointing to the reduction in minimum credit card payments, in some cases by up to 2 per cent.

Turn over for the next question

Turn over ▶

- 5 To what extent do you think that television companies should take notice of complaints about programmes from the public? (12 marks)

BBC goes ahead with Springer opera

Stephen Bates, religious affairs correspondent

The BBC yesterday promised to press ahead with plans to transmit the award-winning West End show *Jerry Springer – The Opera* this Saturday in the face of concerted complaints by outraged Christians led by the Bishop of Manchester.

The Rt Rev Nigel McCulloch, who speaks about broadcasting on behalf of the Church of England, complained that the BBC had refused to show him a tape of the show.

He said: "Freedom of expression is not at issue here. My worry is that this programme is a major departure from the current high expectations of viewers regarding offensive material on a publicly funded channel.

"I remain hopeful that the programme is not as described and the BBC will be mindful not only of its duties and responsibilities, but also to its repeated commitments on taste, decency, harm and offence in the past."

The complaints follow the success of a recent Catholic campaign which helped to persuade the BBC to drop plans for the satirical cartoon *Popetown*, and Sikh demonstrations which caused the Birmingham Rep to abandon its production of the play *Behzti* on safety grounds.

In a statement, the corporation said: 'BBC2 has a long tradition of presenting challenging work from the worlds of art and culture. [This] is a serious work that explores difficult ideas with a strong underlying moral purpose. It is a groundbreaking piece of musical theatre which has won many awards.'

Source: adapted from STEPHEN BATES, *The Guardian*, 6 January 2005

END OF QUESTIONS

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