



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination  
January 2010

## Government and Politics

## GOVP1

### Unit 1 People, Politics and Participation

Thursday 14 January 2010 9.00 am to 10.30 am

**For this paper you must have:**

- an 8-page answer book.

**Time allowed**

- 1 hour 30 minutes

**Instructions**

- Use black ink or black 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 GOVP1.
- Answer **two** questions from a choice of four.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work that you do not want to be marked.

**Information**

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- Part (b) and part (c) questions should be answered in continuous prose. For these part questions you will be marked on your ability to:
  - use good English
  - organise information clearly
  - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

**Advice**

- You are advised to read through the examination paper before you attempt the questions.
- You are advised to spend the same amount of time on each question.

---

Answer **two** questions.

Each question carries 40 marks.

---

## 1 Participation and Voting Behaviour

Read the extract below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

### Opinion Polls

*Opinion polls* were first used in Britain in 1938 and have been carried out on a regular basis since the 1950s. In the 1950s and 1960s, pollsters were remarkably successful in predicting the outcome of elections. Since the 1970s, in an age of greater volatility, it has proved less easy to work out the true intentions of voters and to be sure that those who say they are going to vote for a party actually turn out and cast a ballot at the election. Some commentators also argue that opinion polls can sometimes end up shaping, rather than simply reflecting, public opinion.

The performance of pollsters in the 1992 General Election was the worst on record – with an 8.9% error. Since then, poll accuracy has improved markedly. In 2005, the five major polling companies were able to predict support for each of the big three UK parties to within 2% of their actual results.

Source: adapted from D WATTS, *AQA Government and Politics AS*, Nelson Thornes, 2008  
Reproduced with the permission of Nelson Thornes Ltd from *AQA Government and Politics*  
by DUNCAN WATTS, ISBN 978-0-7487-9821-6, first published in 2008

- (a) Explain the term *opinion polls* used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain why it is often difficult to predict the outcome of elections. (10 marks)
- (c) ‘Social class is still the main determinant of voting behaviour.’ Discuss. (25 marks)

---

## 2 Electoral Systems

Read the extract below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

**The Single Transferable Vote (STV) in Northern Ireland**

Permission for web publication denied by copyright holder. The extract refers to the elections held in 2007 for the Northern Ireland Assembly. It includes a table showing the percentage of votes and seats won by the parties.

- (a) Explain the term *quota* as used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** likely consequences of adopting the single transferable vote (STV) system for use in Westminster elections. (10 marks)
- (c) Assess the impact of the electoral systems introduced in elections outside Westminster since 1997. (25 marks)

**Turn over ▶**

### 3 Political Parties

Read the passage below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

#### Minority Parties

Though *nationalist parties* such as the Scottish National Party and Plaid Cymru have always performed well in their respective nations, recent elections have seen a number of smaller, single-issue parties achieving some electoral success.

- UKIP came third in the popular vote in the 2004 European Elections, winning 12 seats.
- Parties such as the Greens and the BNP have made progress in local elections.
- A small number of ‘independent’ MPs have been elected to the House of Commons.

Some commentators argue that this rise in support for minority parties is a result of the major UK parties moving towards the centre of the political spectrum. Others see increasing support for such parties as a kind of ‘protest vote’; a desire to send a message to those parties in government, rather than an attempt to remove them. This would explain why such parties perform better in elections other than UK general elections.

- (a) Explain the term *nationalist parties* used in the passage. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the passage, consider the roles that minority parties perform within the UK system. (10 marks)
- (c) ‘The major UK parties have moved towards the centre of the political spectrum.’  
Discuss. (25 marks)

---

#### 4 Pressure Groups and Protest Movements

Read the extract below and answer parts (a) to (c) which follow.

**Pressure Group Methods**

Permission for web publication denied by copyright holder. The extract describes how pressure groups exert influence via the Civil Service, Parliament and the European Union.

- (a) Explain the term *lobbying* used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** ways in which pressure group activity has changed in recent years. (10 marks)
- (c) ‘Only wealthy insider groups can ever hope to achieve their main aims and objectives.’  
Assess this view. (25 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

**There are no questions printed on this page**

**There are no questions printed on this page**

**There are no questions printed on this page**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COPYRIGHT-HOLDERS AND PUBLISHERS

Permission to reproduce all copyright material has been applied for. In some cases efforts to contact copyright-holders have been unsuccessful and AQA will be happy to rectify any omissions of acknowledgements if notified.

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.