



General Certificate of Education  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination  
June 2015

## Government and Politics

## GOVP2

### Unit 2 Governing Modern Britain

Thursday 4 June 2015 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm

**For this paper you must have:**

- an AQA 12-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 **Paper Reference** is GOVP2.
- Choose **two** topics and answer **all** questions on each topic.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

#### Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- Questions **0 2** and **0 3**, **0 5** and **0 6**, **0 8** and **0 9**, **1 1** and **1 2** should be answered in continuous prose. For these 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 topic.

Choose **two** topics and answer **all** questions on each topic.

Each topic carries 40 marks.

### Topic 1 The British Constitution

Read the extract below and answer questions **0 1**, **0 2** and **0 3** which follow.

<b>Common Law and the Constitution</b>	
Common law, sometimes referred to as case law or judge-made law, is based on precedent. It is formed from a growing collection of court decisions in specific legal cases throughout history. Common law is particularly useful for resolving uncertainties in other constitutional sources. On the other hand, it can be very untidy, leaving judges to make sense of a confusing number of precedents. Examples from hundreds of important cases include Anderson v. Gorrie in 1895 (the immunity of judges) and Bradlaugh v. Gossett in 1884 (the supremacy of Parliament over its internal affairs). Common law has also developed many 'civil rights'.	5
Although important in developing the constitution, the common law is not confined to great cases of the past. As recently as 1999, in DPP v. Jones, the House of Lords reversed a conviction by the Salisbury magistrates made under recent public order legislation. The House of Lords found that a peaceful assembly on the grass verge beside the A344 at Stonehenge did not constitute trespass.	10
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Source: adapted from J Kingdom and P Fairclough, Government and Politics in Britain, Polity Press, 2014

- 0 1** Explain the term 'civil rights' used in the extract (line 9). **[5 marks]**
- 0 2** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** arguments for having common law as part of the constitution. **[10 marks]**
- 0 3** 'The increasing power of judges in Britain strengthens the principle of the separation of powers.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

**Topic 2 Parliament**

Read the extract below and answer questions **0 4**, **0 5** and **0 6** which follow.

**Labour and House of Lords Reform**

Extract from the diary of Tony Benn (Energy Secretary prior to 1979 General Election).

**The original extract cannot be reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.**

It explained how his draft of a Cabinet manifesto was rejected by the Cabinet as it included a policy for the abolition of the House of Lords, because (amongst other reasons) he believed patronage to be an abuse.

- 0 4** Explain the term 'patronage' as used in the extract (line 10). **[5 marks]**
- 0 5** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** arguments for keeping the House of Lords in its present form. **[10 marks]**
- 0 6** 'Various demands upon MPs can make it difficult for them to put the interests of their constituents first.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

**Turn over for the next topic**

**Turn over ►**

### Topic 3 The Core Executive

Read the extract below and answer questions **0 7**, **0 8** and **0 9** which follow.

#### The Prime Minister

The prime minister is the head of the government. He or she provides political leadership within the 'cabinet system' and the country, chairs the cabinet, appoints ministers and is leader of the largest party in the House of Commons. Certain requirements must be fulfilled for a person to become prime minister.

First, he or she must be a member of the Westminster Parliament. Until the late nineteenth century the prime minister was usually a member of the House of Lords. As the House of Commons emerged as the dominant chamber, it became a constitutional convention that the prime minister should be an MP in the Commons. 5

Secondly, he or she must be leader of a political party. The prime minister must have the support of his or her party. If they are forced to step down as party leader they also give up the office of prime minister, as happened when Margaret Thatcher failed to achieve victory in the Conservative Party leadership election in 1990. 10

Source: adapted from P Lynch and P Fairclough, AS UK Government & Politics, reproduced in adapted form by permission of Philip Allan (for Hodder Education), 2010

- 0 7** Explain the term 'cabinet system' as used in the extract (line 2). **[5 marks]**
- 0 8** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** reasons why it has become a constitutional convention that prime ministers should be members of the House of Commons. **[10 marks]**
- 0 9** 'Civil servants in Britain can no longer be described as politically neutral, anonymous or permanent.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

## Topic 4 Multi-level Governance

Read the extract below and answer questions **1 0**, **1 1** and **1 2** which follow.

### The Council of Ministers

It is important to remember that the Council of Ministers is the EU institution that belongs to the member governments. Regular contact and a pattern of socialisation mean that the Council, and especially its 'specialist formations', develop a spirit of good will. Sometimes 'clubs' of ministers (for example, those with an interest in agriculture, or dealing with the environment, etc) are able to use agreements in Brussels to force their own governments to make commitments that might not have been accepted at national level. However, the ministers and officials who meet in the Council are servants of their governments. Thus, their first priority is generally to pursue whatever seems to be the preferred objective of national policy.

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Much of the time, the Council is the forum for discussion on the member governments' responses to the European Commission's proposals. In practice it is generally considered desirable that unanimity is found. To achieve this, voting is characterised by complex bargaining and the making of compromises.

Source: adapted from H Wallace and W Wallace, *Policy-Making in the European Union*, by permission of Oxford University Press, 2000

- 1 0** Explain the term 'specialist formations' as used in the extract (line 3). **[5 marks]**
- 1 1** Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, identify **and** explain **two** reasons why the first priority of ministers in the Council of Ministers 'is generally to pursue whatever seems to be the preferred objective of national policy'. **[10 marks]**
- 1 2** 'Local government in England is dominated by Westminster and Whitehall.' Discuss. **[25 marks]**

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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