



**GCE AS/A level**

1401/01

**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS – GP1**  
**People, Politics and Participation**

A.M. FRIDAY, 17 May 2013

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 credit will be given for reference to concepts and examples, where relevant, from the politics and government of Wales.

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

*Answer two questions.*

Each question is worth 40 marks.

## 1. Participation and Voting Behaviour

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

### **Newspapers' support for parties at elections**

Over the last 60 years, Britain's national newspapers have been unashamedly partisan. They did not wait until just before an election to tell their readers how they should vote: their daily political agenda was patently obvious.

5 The Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mail have always been on the Tories' side. On the other side, the Daily Mirror has been the most loyal to Labour; at one election (1983) it was the only newspaper backing Labour. The Guardian has lent its support to the Liberal Democrats as most likely to bring about progressive change, particularly voting reform.

10 Most elections are decided by relatively small numbers of voters. That's why floating voters are so important to the outcome and why the Sun, which is read by the greatest number of floating voters, is often regarded as the most valuable catch by the main parties. Even if one takes that infamous 1992 boast about 'the Sun having won it' with a pinch of salt, it is possible that a relatively small swing among Sun-reading voters can be crucial if they live in *marginal seats*.

- (a) What is meant by '*marginal seats*' (line 14)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the influence of the media during elections. [10]
- (c) 'Partisan identification amongst voters is still an important factor in election outcomes.' Discuss. [25]

## 2. Electoral Systems

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

### The UK coalition government 2010

Critics of coalition governments commonly argue that they lack legitimacy as a result of the deals and compromises that must inevitably follow on from an inconclusive election and '*hung parliament*'. This results in strange unions between parties forced to sacrifice ideology and principle in order to make government work.

- 5 So it was that the Liberal Democrats were cast in the role of 'Kingmakers' after the 2010 general election. They had to choose between returning Labour to office for a fourth term, or supporting the Conservatives.

The fact that the Conservatives were able to reach an agreement with the Liberal Democrats, forming a coalition that few on the left would previously have thought  
10 likely, suggests that we might need to start thinking about the whole concept of party politics in an entirely different way.

- (a) What is meant by '*hung parliament*' (line 3)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the weaknesses of coalition governments. [10]
- (c) 'Electoral systems in the UK are in urgent need of reform.' Discuss. [25]

### 3. Political Parties

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

#### The growing appeal of minority parties

5 It is significant that membership of many nationalist and single-issue parties has risen at the same time as mainstream parties are losing members. Single-issue parties often present a range of policies rooted in a particular ideological perspective, e.g. *the Green Party*. Recent elections have seen the rise of local single-issue parties such as the Independent Kidderminster Hospital and Health Concern Party, whose candidate Dr Richard Taylor won the Wyre Forest constituency in the 2001 and 2005 general elections.

- (a) What is meant by '*the Green Party*' (lines 3-4)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the main roles of minor parties. [10]
- (c) Assess whether the structures and internal processes of UK political parties are democratic. [25]

#### 4. Pressure Groups

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

##### The tyranny of the minority

Pressure groups, by their very nature, represent minorities rather than majorities. For pluralists, of course, this is one of their strengths.

5 However, pressure groups may create the opposite problem. Minority views or 'special interests' may prevail at the expense of the interests of the majority or the larger public. As pressure groups become more powerful, the government may find it more difficult to serve the public interest and to do what is best for society as a whole.

10 This problem of 'the tyranny of the minority' is most extreme when pressure groups use direct action to achieve their objectives, and in effect 'hold the country to ransom'. Once pressure groups start to operate outside the law they are arguably operating against the democratic process.

- (a) What is meant by 'special interests' (line 4)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain how pressure groups weaken democracy. [10]
- (c) 'Use of the media is more significant than any other factor in enabling pressure groups to be successful.' Discuss. [25]

**END OF PAPER**

**Extracts adapted from**

1. [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) 3 May 2010
2. *UK Update, Politics Review*, September 2010.
3. *UK Government and Politics*, Lynch and Fairclough
4. *Essentials of UK Politics*, Andrew Heywood, 2008

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