



**GCE AS/A level**

1401/01

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

A.M. TUESDAY, 20 May 2014

1 hour 30 minutes

1401  
010001

**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.

### The political culture of the UK

5 It is common to refer to the political culture in the UK as being one of pluralism. This means that we expect a wide range of groups, interests, beliefs and ideologies to flourish together, all competing for attention and influence. The UK is fundamentally a free society, tolerant of different cultures, ideas and demands. As long as a group does not break the law, threaten the security of the state or incite others to commit crime or adopt racist ideas, it will be tolerated and protected from discrimination.

This does not mean that prejudice and inequality have been eliminated: indeed, some critics claim the UK is more an *elite* political culture than a pluralist one.

*Government and Politics for AS*, Neil McNaughton, Hodder

- (a) What is meant by *elite* (line 8)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the features of politics in the UK that can be considered democratic. [10]
- (c) Assess whether ethnicity is more important than other factors in explaining voting behaviour in the UK. [25]

## 2. Electoral Systems

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

### Which Electoral Systems are best for Westminster?

5 In any design process, form should follow function, and this principle should apply to the UK's choice of electoral system. But the UK does not have a written constitution, and change has been piecemeal, with no strong desire to fundamentally change the way we elect our MPs. At most UK general elections recently, the winning party has gained a larger share of the seats than votes. The Labour Party has benefited more from this than the other parties. However, clear-cut results are now increasingly unlikely. Unless one of the two largest parties has either close to 40% of the votes, and/or a substantial lead over its main opponent, *majority government* is unlikely.

*Which Electoral Systems are best for Westminster?*, Ron Johnston,  
Politics Review November 2011

- (a) What is meant by *majority government* (line 8)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the main disadvantages of the First Past the Post electoral system. [10]
- (c) Discuss whether the Additional Member System has more advantages than other electoral systems used in the UK. [25]

### 3. Political Parties

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

#### Do parties matter any more?

Some writers point to a crisis in party politics, suggesting that parties are in long-term decline. The suggestion has been made that perhaps they were merely a stage that democracy passed through in the modern era.

5 Perhaps they are now in danger of becoming what Tim Bale (2005) calls, 'hollow hulks or dinosaurs destined to extinction, as the citizens of post-modern, post-industrial Europe turn to other more direct or more digital ways of doing politics – or simply turn away from politics altogether.'

Those who share this view note the decline in mainstream party membership, and the rise of *extremist parties*.

*AQA Government and Politics, Duncan Watts, Nelson Thornes*

- (a) What is meant by *extremist parties* (line 9)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain why membership of the main political parties in the UK is declining. [10]
- (c) 'There is a lack of competition and difference between the main political parties in the UK.' Discuss. [25]

#### 4. Pressure Groups

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

##### Pressure Groups in the UK

Elections are held every 4 years or so. They represent the expression of a general preference, because a voter is unlikely to agree with all of a party's policies. Depth of feeling on a particular issue cannot be captured by voting. Pressure groups are able to represent more fine-grained views than political parties, and are able to make use of multiple *access points*.

- 5 People join pressure groups either to obtain selective incentives, such as reduced insurance available only to members of the group, or because they feel a broad identification with the causes the group is advancing.

*Pressure Groups in the UK*, Wyn Grant, Political Review, September 2009

- (a) What is meant by *access points* (line 4)? [5]
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain why membership of pressure groups is popular in contemporary Britain. [10]
- (c) Assess whether pressure groups are more of a threat than a help to democratically elected governments in the UK. [25]

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