

**GCE**  
AS and A Level

## **Government and Politics**

AS exams 2009 onwards  
A2 exams 2010 onwards

### **Unit 2:** **Specimen question paper**

**Version 1.1**



General Certificate of Education  
Specimen Question Paper  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination

**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**  
**Unit 2 Governing Modern Britain**

**GOVP2**



Specimen Question Paper

**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 GOVP2.
- Answer any **two** questions.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

**Information**

- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- 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, to organise information clearly and to 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.

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Answer **two** questions.

Each question carries 40 marks.

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

**Prime Ministerial or Cabinet Government?**

**Prime Ministerial Government**

- The powers of the Prime Minister are considerable.
- There are no constitutional limits to the power of the Prime Minister.
- The Prime Minister is at the centre of mass media attention.

**Cabinet Government**

- Modern government is now so complicated that one person cannot possibly control all key decisions.
- Important party factions need to be represented in *the Cabinet*.
- The Prime Minister has powerful and ambitious rivals for office.

Source: adapted from I BUDGE *et al*, *The New British Politics*, Pearson Longman, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *the Cabinet* used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, examine **two** arguments supporting the view that the UK has Cabinet government. (10 marks)
- (c) ‘The powers of the Prime Minister are considerable.’ Discuss. (25 marks)

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

**The British Constitution**

It is customary to classify constitutions according to whether they are written or unwritten; *flexible* or inflexible; unitary or federal. Britain's constitution is widely described as unwritten in the sense that it is not contained in a single authoritative document, although substantial parts of it are in fact written. However, some constitutional reformers have argued the need for a written constitution, and it is possible that some of the constitutional reforms now in progress may eventually require codification of Britain's rules of government. It is also sometimes argued that a 'separation of powers' in Britain would help to define and check the powers of government.

Source: adapted from B COXALL, L ROBINS and R LEACH, *Contemporary British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

- (a) Briefly explain the term *flexible* as used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain how a separation of powers in Britain might help to check the powers of government. (10 marks)
- (c) 'There is no convincing case for a written constitution in Britain.' Discuss. (25 marks)

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

**The Roles of Parliament**

Parliamentary sovereignty is a long established principle in Britain, although today it exists more in theory than in practice. However, Parliament has many roles. An important one is the *redress of citizens' grievances*. The most traditional route for citizens seeking redress of grievance is through their elected representatives. For example, MPs may be able to secure satisfaction for constituents by pursuing the matter in Parliament, such as asking a parliamentary question or having the matter debated in the House of Commons. In such cases the 'responsible' minister comes before Parliament and must answer for the government's actions.

- (a) Briefly explain the term *redress of citizens' grievances* used in the passage. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, examine the importance of **two** of Parliament's major roles. (10 marks)
- (c) Discuss the view that today parliamentary sovereignty 'exists more in theory than in practice'. (25 marks)

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

**Multi-level governance**

Due to copyright reason, we have been unable to publish this extract on our website. The extract is from pages 186 and 191 of the book detailed below.

The extract discussed the widening of multi-level governance beyond Whitehall, Westminster and *elected local councils* to the European Union and devolved government .

The extract also discusses the relative weakness of the European Parliament, with limited powers to check the Commission and the Council of Ministers and asks whether the Council of Ministers is the real decision-making body of the EU.

Source: adapted from J GREENWOOD, R PYPER and D WILSON, *New Public Administration in Britain*, Routledge, 2002

- (a) Briefly explain the term *elected local councils* used in the extract. (5 marks)
- (b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the statement that ‘in the UK today multi-level governance is a reality’. (10 marks)
- (c) ‘The European Council of Ministers is the real decision-making body of the EU.’ Discuss. (25 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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