

General Certificate of Education
January 2006
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 1 Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour

GOV1

Wednesday 11 January 2006 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or 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 GOV1.
- Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
In Section A, answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
In Section B, answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

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 **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

SECTION A

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

- 1** Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Class-based Politics

Britain is a particularly class-conscious society. The class divisions created by the Industrial Revolution remained almost unchanged until the 1940s, although they have been very much modified by economic and industrial changes since. The working class relied on collective action to improve their situation while the middle class relied on individualistic solutions. A consequence of this was that the working class increasingly supported Labour, with its message that state intervention could help them, while the 'solid' middle class increasingly turned to the Conservative Party.

Source: adapted from I BUDGE *et al.*, *The New British Politics*, Pearson Longman, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *class-based politics* used as the heading of the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Analyse the principal characteristics of Britain's contemporary political culture. (22 marks)

OR

- 2 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Voting Behaviour

Tactical voting increased generally in the 1980s and 1990s, boosting the strength of non-Conservative parties. In the case of the Liberal Democrats it was particularly important, helping to double their tally of seats from 20 to 46 in 1997, despite a small decline in their share of the vote. Some tactical voting continued in 2001, particularly between Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters. Studies suggest that the amount of tactical voting has risen slightly in recent years to about 10% of all votes cast. However, the degree of tactical voting should not be exaggerated.

Source: adapted from I BUDGE *et al.*, *The New British Politics*, Pearson Longman, 2004
and G PEELE, *Governing the UK*, Blackwell, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *tactical voting* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Volatile and often unpredictable.' To what extent is this an accurate description of contemporary voting behaviour? (22 marks)

Turn over for the next Section

SECTION B

Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

- 3 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

The Additional Member System (AMS)

The additional member system (AMS) has been created in order to combine the advantages of local constituency links with greater *proportionality*. Each voter has two votes – one for the constituency MP and the other for a party list. The constituency MP is voted in under either the alternative vote system or the first-past-the-post system, with other MPs elected from either a regional or national list. The list seats are allocated to help compensate, or act as a corrective, for the disproportionality of the constituency vote.

Source: adapted from B COXALL *et al.*, *Contemporary British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *proportionality* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Assess the disadvantages of the additional member system (AMS). (22 marks)

OR

- 4** Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Referendums

Referendums have, quite suddenly, become an accepted part of the political scene. For a long time British politicians would have nothing to do with them. After all, referendums were difficult to square with the sovereignty of Parliament, disciplined and programmatic parties, and ideas of strong government. Since then, and particularly since the election of a Labour Government in 1997, referendums have become commonplace; indeed, in 1999 some commentators wondered whether they might be leading to *voter fatigue*.

Source: B JONES *et al.*, *Politics UK*, Pearson Longman, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *voter fatigue* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Assess the effectiveness of the measures designed to increase participation, such as electoral reform and greater use of referendums. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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