

General Certificate of Education
January 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 3 Features of a Representative Democracy

GOV3

Thursday 10 January 2008 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour

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 GOV3.
- 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 to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- 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.

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.

Policy making within the European Union

Many of the tensions within the EU stem from its very complex institutions and processes. From the start there was a tension between the interests of Europe as a whole and the interests of the separate member states, and this tension is fully reflected in EU institutions. For example, the Council of Ministers (also known as the Council of the European Union) is one of the most influential bodies within the EU. It consists of national politicians served by their civil servants. However, a national veto exists in some policy areas. Each member state is also currently entitled to appoint one *European Commissioner*. The power of the main European institutions, moreover, may vary over time. For example, the European Parliament originally had very few powers but has since gained some additional authority and legitimacy.

Source: adapted from R LEACH, B COXALL and L ROBINS, *British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006

- (a) Explain the term *European Commissioner* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'The Council of Ministers is the most influential policy-making body within the European Union.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

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

The Role of Parliament

There are different approaches to the issue of Parliament's main role. For some commentators it is there mainly to sustain the government in office and provide a forum through which it can mobilise public opinion. On the other hand, there are those who believe that Parliament should be a strong body, wielding real influence and power. Such observers often criticise the strength of party discipline and see MPs as 'lobby fodder'.

Strong party discipline seems to worry MPs much less than critics outside. While MPs like *free votes* when they are allowed, they accept that governments are entitled to push through their legislative programmes. This view accepts that, although governments are dependent on parliamentary support, in practice they usually dominate Parliament and control its business.

Source: adapted from D WATTS, *British Government and Politics: A Comparative Guide*,
Edinburgh University Press, 2006

- (a) Explain the term *free votes* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Although governments are dependent on parliamentary support, in practice they usually dominate Parliament and control its business.' Discuss. (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.

Resources of Civil Servants and Ministers	
Civil servants' resources	Ministers' resources
Anonymity	Access to Cabinet
Experience	Access to media
Expertise	Alternative sources of advice
Knowledge	Legitimacy
<i>Permanence</i>	Political support
Time	Prime ministerial backing

Source: adapted from P DOREY, *Policy making in Britain: An Introduction*, Sage, 2005

- (a) Explain the term *permanence* in the context of the civil service. (8 marks)
- (b) 'In disagreements over policy, ministers are always likely to win over their civil servants.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

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

The Cabinet

The Cabinet is at the centre of the British political system and is the supreme decision-making body in the government. Every Thursday when Parliament is sitting, Secretaries of State from departments as well as some other ministers meet in the Cabinet room to discuss the big issues of the day. Tony Blair's Cabinet in 2006 had 23 members, but a further three ministers also attended the meetings. The Cabinet Secretary is responsible for preparing records of its discussions and decisions. The Prime Minister chairs the meetings, selects its members, and also recommends their appointment as ministers by the Monarch. The Cabinet has no legal powers, they are held by Secretaries of State, but all its members share *collective responsibility*.

Source: adapted from The Cabinet, www.number-10.gov.uk, April 2007

- (a) Explain the term *collective responsibility* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss the view that the Cabinet is 'the supreme decision-making body in the government'. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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