

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 3 Features of a Representative Democracy

GOV3

Friday 23 May 2008 9.00 am to 10.00 am

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.

The Reform of Parliament

The case against the reform of Parliament is a strong one. The House of Commons does not need reforming. The methods of scrutiny and the *legislative process* have stood the test of time. Reform would be tampering with parliamentary procedures for the sake of change rather than for any practical reason. When people vote for an MP, they are also voting for a government and recognise the need for a strong executive that can push its legislation through. However, within Parliament there are opportunities for all MPs and political parties to influence legislation – for example, through debates and divisions. The case against reform also applies to the House of Lords. The second chamber works well as it is and needs no reform. Parliament as a whole still works effectively in influencing the government and holding it to account.

Source: adapted from P COCKER & A JONES, *Essential Topics in Modern British Politics and Government*,
Liverpool Academic Press, 2005

- (a) Briefly explain the term *legislative process* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Parliament as a whole still works effectively in influencing the government and holding it to account.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

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

The European Union (EU)

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The extract relates to the organisation of the EU and the differing interests of institutions within it.

It briefly explains the roles of:

- the Commission;
- the Council of Ministers;
- the European Parliament;
- the European Council.

Source: adapted from R LEACH, B COXALL & L ROBINS, *British Politics*, Palgrave, 2006 and T WRIGHT (ed.), *The British Political Process*, Routledge, 2000

- (a) Explain the term *member state* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss the extent to which the policy-making procedures of the European Union are democratic. (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 Civil Service and Ministers

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The extract introduces the theory of civil service neutrality, mentioning the role of civil servants, special advisers and task forces.

Source: adapted from M COLE, *Democracy in Britain: Theory and Practice*,
Politics Association/Sheffield Hallam University Press, 2000

- (a) Explain the term *civil service neutrality* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Ministers still decide policy mainly on the basis of the advice they are given by their civil servants.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

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

The Cabinet

Although the Cabinet is the formal policy-making body for the government, much of its work takes place within the large number of *cabinet committees*. It may be argued that the Cabinet has assumed the role of a ratifying body to which ministers may take appeals, but which for the most part no longer takes decisions. It informs members of the government about policies and progress outside of their own departments. However, the real work of making policy now takes place mainly in departments and cabinet committees together with the Cabinet Office. The Prime Minister's Office, which has been significantly strengthened in recent years, now gives strategic direction to departments on the basis of the Prime Minister's views. It also manages the presentation of government policy. Even so, 'prime ministerial government' is no more of a reality than cabinet government.

Source: adapted from A MASSEY, *The State of Britain: A Guide to the UK Public Sector*,
Public Management and Policy Association, 2005

- (a) Explain the term *cabinet committees* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Prime ministerial government is a myth.' Discuss. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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Question 2: Reproduced with permission of Palgrave Macmillan and Routledge. The British Political Process - pages 298 and 326.

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