

General Certificate of Education
June 2005
Advanced Level Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS **GOV8**
Unit 8 Government and Politics – Synoptic Module

Thursday 30 June 2005 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

In addition to this paper you will require:
a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 2 hours

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 GOV8.
- Answer **both** the questions in **either** Section A **or** Section B **or** Section C **or** Section D.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 80.
- Mark allocations are shown in brackets.
- You will be assessed on your ability to use an appropriate form and style of writing, to organise relevant information clearly and coherently, and to use specialist vocabulary, where appropriate. The degree of legibility of your handwriting and the level of accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar will also be taken into account.

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.

SECTION A: POWER

If you choose this Section, answer Question A1 and Question A2.

When answering the questions that follow, you may wish to refer to the passage below but you do not have to do so. However, your answers must present material drawn from the range of your studies in Government and Politics.

- A1** 'The power of governments can often be more limited than is popularly thought.' Discuss. (40 marks)
- A2** 'Modern democracy does not mean that all citizens have equal power.' Discuss. (40 marks)

Power and Political Equality

Most democratic political systems are, in principle, equalitarian. They are based on universal suffrage whereby each person has equal influence. In practice, it does not work that way. There is a wide variation in the political influence exercised by citizens. One reason for this is that most – probably all – modern democracies are neither in principle nor in practice equalitarian when it comes to social and economic matters. Wide differences exist among individuals in income, educational attainment and occupational status. Such differences mean that citizens are differentially endowed with resources that can be used for political activity and influence. As citizens convert such resources into political influence, political inequality appears. The political advantage of those citizens more advantaged in socio-economic terms is found in all nations.

The history of democracy is in large part the history of the development of regular and legal channels (such as voting, pressure group activity and redress of grievances) through which citizens can express their preferences and apply pressure on the government to comply with those preferences. The extent to which such channels are available and the extent to which they are used are crucial in understanding the effectiveness of democracy. The perceived inadequacy, or the unequal availability, of regular and legal channels can lead to the use of alternative means of political influence, such as direct action protests.

Source: adapted from SIDNEY VERBA, NORMAN NIE and JAE-ON KIM, *Participation and Political Equality* (Cambridge University Press) 1978

SECTION B: PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

If you choose this Section, answer Question B1 **and** Question B2.

When answering the questions that follow, you may wish to refer to the passage below but you do not have to do so. However, your answers must present material drawn from the range of your studies in Government and Politics.

- B1** 'Effective participation in modern politics remains the preserve of the few.' Discuss.
(40 marks)
- B2** 'Representative government today means a choice of leaders rather than a choice of policies.' Discuss.
(40 marks)

Text from DAVID BUTLER and DENNIS KAVANAGH, *The British General Election of 2001*, Palgrave, 2002, pp248-9. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

TURN OVER FOR THE NEXT SECTION

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SECTION C: POLITICAL CULTURE

If you choose this Section, answer Question C1 **and** Question C2.

When answering the questions that follow, you may wish to refer to the passage below but you do not have to do so. However, your answers must present material drawn from the range of your studies in Government and Politics.

- C1** 'There is no simple definition of the concept of political culture.' Discuss. (40 marks)
- C2** 'In modern democracies citizens are becoming increasingly unwilling to trust their governments.' Discuss. (40 marks)

Text from MICHAEL MORAN, *Politics and Society in Britain*, Macmillan, 1989, pp34-5.
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SECTION D: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

If you choose this Section, answer Question D1 **and** Question D2.

When answering the questions that follow, you may wish to refer to the passage below but you do not have to do so. However, your answers must present material drawn from the range of your studies in Government and Politics.

D1 'Oppositions promise change, governments preserve continuity.' Discuss. (40 marks)

D2 'Reforms of the institutions and processes of government are of less importance to citizens than changes in policy.' Discuss. (40 marks)

Text from TONY BLAIR, *New Britain*, Fourth Estate, 1996, pp205-6. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

END OF QUESTIONS

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