

General Certificate of Education  
January 2008  
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



**GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**  
**Unit 2 Parties and Pressure Groups**

**GOV2**

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 GOV2.
- 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 relevant 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 **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

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**SECTION A**

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

Each question carries 30 marks.

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**EITHER**

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

**The Liberal Democrats**

One of the political problems of the Liberal Democrats is how to differentiate themselves in the party system. The party was long seen as a centre party – midway between Labour and the Conservatives. Increasingly, however, it moved closer to the Labour Party. The party stressed its commitment to constitutional reform, to high-quality public services, to internationalism and to environmentalism. Indeed, the party's emphasis on civil liberties and public spending puts the Liberal Democrats in some ways to the left of *New Labour*. The limited co-operation that took place between the Liberal Democrats and New Labour in the 1990s was not generally popular with the Liberal Democrat rank and file. In 2003, the Liberal Democrats opposed the Iraq war. Despite adverse publicity about their leadership, the Liberal Democrats made significant advances in challenging the other major parties at European, national and local levels as well as in the devolved institutions.

Source: adapted from G PEELE, *Governing the UK: British Politics in the 21st Century*, Blackwell Publishing, 2004

- (a) Explain the term *New Labour* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'There is no space for the policies and ideas of third parties in British politics.' Discuss. (22 marks)

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**OR**

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

**Modernising the Conservative Party**

Conservative leader David Cameron published more details of his party's core values in August 2006. The document 'Built to Last' contained fifty policy proposals concentrated in eight areas (economy, social injustice, the environment, welfare, ending global poverty, parliamentary reform and a new bill of rights, abolishing unelected regional assemblies and ensuring that more Conservative candidates were women and from ethnic minorities). Members of the *Conservative right wing* were deeply disappointed with 'Built to Last' since it did not promise big tax cuts, stricter limits on immigration or stiffer opposition to the policies of the European Union. Newspaper commentators noted that Cameron's new policies signalled a clear break with the party's Thatcherite past. They compared his action with that of Tony Blair when the original Clause IV was replaced by a modern statement of values.

- (a) Explain the term *Conservative right wing* used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Parties have to change their political images from time to time.' Discuss. (22 marks)

**Turn over for the next section**

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**SECTION B**

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

Each question carries 30 marks.

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**EITHER**

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

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Source: adapted from R BAGGOTT, *Pressure Groups Today*, Manchester University Press, 1995

- (a) Explain the term *interest group* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'To be successful a pressure group needs to be united.' Discuss. (22 marks)

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OR

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

**The Power and Influence of Pressure Groups in the Political System**

Pluralists argue that power is dispersed throughout a modern society such as Britain, in large part through the activities of numerous freely-competing pressure groups. They claim that groups promoting one interest or cause can stimulate the growth of rival groups to counter their arguments. These rival groups, through their activities, promote democratic debate, help educate the public on the issues and lead to better-informed decisions by government.

In contrast, elitists argue that power remains concentrated in the hands of the few. The contest between groups, they claim, remains profoundly unequal because of the massive differences in resources. Some have abundant finance, effective leadership and communication skills, but above all *access to decision makers*, whilst others do not. The result is that government listens to some interests and ignores or rejects others.

Source: adapted from R LEACH *et al.*, *British Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2006

- (a) Explain the term *access to decision makers* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Pressure group politics favours those with superior resources.' Discuss. (22 marks)

**END OF QUESTIONS**

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