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## Examiners' Report January 2010

### GCE Government and Politics 6GP01

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## **New GCE 6GPO1 - People & Politics**

### **General Comments:**

The standard of the candidates showed improvement from the previous January series. As is ever the pattern, question 2 on pressure groups solicited the highest response as in the previous series, but this was only a marginal lead. Political parties gaining slightly in candidate choice, however it was noticeable that here we saw many top grade answers: proof that if prepared, candidates can really develop this area and score highly. The second most popular question was the last one on democracy. A majority of students chose question one and question four combinations.

### Question 1

(a) Define proportional representation

As a key term and as a vital ingredient in the section on elections all candidates will have at some point covered proportional representation. However despite this supposed familiarity many failed to get over 3 marks. The most common mistake was asserting that proportional representation is an electoral system and not as was required, outlining the fact that it is a generic term and covers a vast range of electoral systems. A significant number were happier providing examples than giving a precise definition of the principle.

(a) Proportional representation is the result of the use of more proportional electoral systems, in that the proportion of votes a candidate or party receives is directly converted into seats and <sup>fairly</sup> proportionally. Henceforth, if a party receives 35% of the votes in an election, they will receive roughly 35% of the seats, in contrast to the majoritarian system First Past the Post in which a party may gain 35% of the vote and yet 55% of the seats, as the Labour Party did in the 2005 election. The main proportional electoral systems used within the UK are the Additional Member System (within Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly); Single Transferable Vote (Northern Ireland); Supplementary Vote (London Mayoral elections); and the Regional Party List (used for elections to the European Parliament).



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Examiner Comments

This response scored full marks; admittedly more can be developed surrounding PR but it collects 5 marks. Three for the detail given on PR, then a further two for the system exposition. Proof that it is precision and accuracy - not volume which can earn high rewards.

(a) Proportional representation is when people vote for a party and the number of votes determine if a candidate wins. The alternative electoral system has proportional representation because you vote and whoever you vote for the candidate wins. Unlike FPTP votes are not wasted because votes are not linked to seats.

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Examiner Comments

By contrast there is no correct detail here which can be rewarded and the score is zero.

(b) Explain why proportional electoral systems have been used more widely used in the UK since 1997?

A huge number of candidates gave responses which dealt with **where** proportional systems had been introduced but failed to say **why**. For reference a comprehensive but not exhaustive list is in the mark scheme; obviously not all these need to be developed, however in reality so few were. For instance, one reason which was often cited by some (but incidentally not one cited in the mark scheme) was that STV appeared in local government in Scotland as a result of the coalition government in Holroyd. This lack of informed knowledge acted as a huge constraint on the marks awarded, with few being able to get over 50%. Many factual errors permeated responses with the most common being that the Labour Party wished to help the smaller parties wherever they could, political altruism which is not a political reality.

in place. Conservatives commonly disagree with the idea of proportional representation, claiming that the First Past The Post system (FPTP) works well. ~~because it~~ has the 19 year period that Labour had been in opposition for had shown the party that FPTP was an unfair system, and made some within the party call for a change.

1997 was the year that devolution began. Almost all devolved bodies used some kind of proportional system in their electoral methods.

The reason that proportional representation has been more widely used since 1997 is a combination of calls for electoral ~~reform~~ reform within the Labour party and an increase in the amount of elections held through the creation of devolved



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Examiner Comments

All too often the responses here were not developed and showed little appreciation of why PR was introduced in any location. This response is searching for marks but cannot attain many.

The main reason this transition occurred is because the Labour government wanted these new ~~electoral~~ elected bodies to be more representative. In Northern Ireland in particular, STV is good because it means that both Catholic Republicans and Protestant ~~the~~ Loyalists are represented in the assembly. Otherwise, the Catholic vote could have ~~gone underrepresented~~ been underrepresented, fostering poor relations. The STV system has created a union between the DUP and Sinn Féin and resulted in more consensus politics, which has probably helped to reduce the conflict.

AMS was used for a similar reason in Scotland and Wales, to produce a representative government, although there is not quite the same antipathy between Labour and SNP voters as there is between Catholics and Protestants! In Wales, a Lib-Lab coalition was in power and in Scotland the SNP run a minority government. Both situations force the government to consult more widely and ~~can~~ produce consensus policies. AMS is

((b) continued) a particularly good PR system because it manages to retain the MP-Constituency link, which is probably the main reason why it was chosen as the PR system to use.

The list system used for MEP elections also

helps smaller parties get fair representation and has allowed parties like UKIP and the Greens representation in Europe. However, it has also allowed the BNPT to gain seats, ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ ~~of~~ ~~allowing~~ extremist parties a say is a popular criticism of PR.

All of these systems have been used primarily to make elections fairer ~~was~~, especially to small parties, as well as to generate consensus politics and policies.

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Examiner Comments

This response does venture to link systems to the key question command of 'why'. Admittedly more could be said and there are still marks above this for reward.

(c) Assess the criticisms of the various electoral systems used in the UK

Many candidates who had underperformed on (a) & (b) did recover ground and marks here. It was noted that the criticism of FPTP was often done much better than other systems in use in the UK. In other systems candidates all too often misplaced their correct name and location. Some just limited their response to blanket PR without venturing to discuss each system in detail. What must be garnered from this is that centres need to develop the criticism they have implanted for FPTP into the new electoral systems in use in the UK. We have now had over a decade of their use. It is also important to mention here that candidates need to take heed of the key command words, here the term 'Assess' which demands evaluation in the response to weigh up and consider the alleged criticism: this covers vital AO2 marks.

(c) There are currently five electoral systems used in the UK - FPTP, AMS, STV, SV and Regional Party List. FPTP is used to elect representatives to the House of Commons and there is a huge debate as to whether it is effective and suitable enough to be used in our General Elections. Yet there is also a debate ~~FPTP (first past the post)~~ as to whether the other, proportional systems would be effective enough to use for General Elections.

Systems such as STV are said to be too confusing and difficult for non-politically educated members of society to understand, because of the use of quotas and numerous votes.

Whereas FPTP gives the electorate a clear choice. Offering voters choices of different parties with different ideological agendas - as well as voters only having to <sup>put a</sup> cross in one box on the ballot sheet.

It is also said that systems such as STV and AMS 'lack transparency' which

means they are ~~not~~ <sup>unnecessarily</sup> complicated along with confusing - this could be unfair to the electorate if they don't understand what they are doing or voting for.

((c) continued) However FPTP could be seen as less confusing to the electorate because it always comes out with an overwhelming result and a majority government - therefore people know which party is representing them. Therefore <sup>it could be argued that</sup> coalition governments in contrast ~~could be~~ are confusing because it is difficult to distinguish between which party is accountable to the electorate and people in society.

Whereas FPTP provides a strong, stable and effective government because one party has a clear majority control over the Commons, alongside its Prime Minister / party leader.

Proportional systems such as AMS, STV or Regional Party List could also be said to not provide a mandate democracy because single party government is required to do so.

The doctrine of the mandate clearly implies party unity and the authority of one party carrying out its own manifesto promises it fought the election on.

Whereas FPTP does always provide our society with a mandate democracy because

the result (since 1945 - excluding 1974) has been one of a single party government.

((c) continued) Also <sup>some</sup> ~~the~~ proportional systems ~~do~~ ~~not~~ provide us with a direct and reliable link between representatives and their constituencies - this could be the result of multimember constituencies demonstrated in STV and Regional Party list.

However this constituency representation is clearly demonstrated in FPTP through the use of single member constituencies.

To conclude, there are many disadvantages to the currently used proportional systems in the UK, which can be outweighed by our FPTP plurality system. Therefore we should keep on demonstrating the use of FPTP for our General Elections and use the proportional systems for less important elections e.g. Devoluted Assemblies and local elections.

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Examiner Comments

The answer is slightly tangential to the question here. It is too heavily built on comparing FPTP for general elections, a broader approach is required.

(c) In the UK today, there are ~~various~~ a large number of electoral systems used for different ~~governments~~ ~~systems~~. On one hand, FPTP, a majoritarian system is used for general elections; on the other, PR systems such as AMS, SV and the Regional Party list are used in Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, London Assembly and the European Parliament. There are both criticisms and benefits of all these systems which ~~are~~ make up today's debate on electoral reform.

Many PR advocates the FPTP provides us with a number of distinct disadvantages. Firstly, FPTP fails to find a strong relationship between the ~~number~~ % seats and % votes a party gains. In the 2005 General Election, Labour won a 55% seat majority from only a minority of votes, 35%. FPTP has bolstered the position of mainly the Conservatives and Labour at the expense of other parties.

Secondly, FPTP also results in a vast number of votes being wasted: because of marginal ~~and~~ safe seats, not all votes are equal value. Votes in constituencies like Leamington and Warwick, where James Plaskitt only ~~has~~ has a 266 vote majority, are more important. This puts an emphasis on gaining seats rather than votes. In 1992, Major won a ~~21~~ ~~times~~ 21 seat majority from 42% of the vote. ~~However~~ However, because

((c) continued) at which votes were cast, Tony Blair gained a 179 seat majority from 43% of the vote in 1997. This is highly unappealing.

However, in addition to criticisms, there are also some advantages of the FPTP system. ~~Because it~~ ~~imitates~~ the two-party system, it ensures that we avoid coalitions, which have shown to often be weak. Italy has had 38 prime ministers after WWII and all 3 of the coalitions in ~~the~~ ~~the~~ Weimarer have been weak and short lived. Thus FPTP helps to avoid these and creates strong majority governments who can tackle ~~any~~ big issues, such as the Trade Union by Margaret Thatcher. In today's economic climate, the best thing we need is a weak government incapable of action.

FPTP also provides a local link. The constituency link provides constituents with ~~as~~ a simple access to government through their MP. It also allows independents, such as Richard Taylor, who was elected in Wye Forest in 2005 on a pledge to save the local hospital. Thus true local interests are preserved under FPTP, but they wouldn't under any PR system.

However, there are also distinct ~~other~~ criticisms and advantages to ~~the~~ PR ~~systems~~ systems which are currently being used in the UK today.

The AMS system, currently used in Scotland's

((c) continued) and Wales' governments, has the problems of promoting coalitions. ~~Some~~ From 1997-2007, Scotland saw only Labour-Lib Dem coalitions in government. The problem with these ~~was~~ was that ~~the~~ none of the public voted for a coalition; the Lib Dems actually came 4<sup>th</sup>, but were still allowed to become government because deals were done in "smoke-filled rooms."

The Regional Party List, used for elections to the European Parliament, ~~was~~ because of its strong proportionality using the D'Hondt formula, is likely to facilitate extremism, especially in these times of economic turmoil. The BNP have gained 2 seats in the European Parliament in 2009 after gaining 1% of the vote.

SV also, because of its two-vote system, often means that people allocate their second vote to a candidate with celebrity status or just someone they 'have heard of'. This means that ~~occasionally~~ London Mayors can be elected not on political merit, but because of ~~his~~ a high-profile personality, which some argue is the case with Boris Johnson.

However, PR systems have also shown a distinct number of advantages. The AMS system attempts to preserve the constituency link by incorporating FPTP with the Regional list. Thus in ~~Scotland~~ Wales

((c) continued) ~~40~~ 40 of the 60 seats are elected by a constituency. This means they are still accountable and provide a local link to government.

The Regional Party List, because of its strong proportionality, also allows voters to vote for who they want knowing their vote will count. In 2009, the UKIP came 2<sup>nd</sup> to the Tories with 13 seats, even though they have never ~~one~~ won one under FPTP.

Finally STV has the advantage of ensuring the elected candidate has >50% of the vote. In France especially, since once all but the top two candidates are elected, there is another election between the top two, one must win with a majority of support. Thus this ensures a strong mandate from the people and legitimately elected officials.

In conclusion, there are criticisms and advantages for all electoral systems in the UK. Support for each one depends on priorities. Those who like PD prioritise good proportional democracy and a variety of ~~and diverse~~ political ~~parties~~ <sup>parties</sup> being represented. Those who support FPTP prefer strong or stable governments at the expense of proportionality. Regarding electoral reform, Tony Benn has suggested an interesting concept - the STV voting system ~~with~~ ~~from~~ combined with constituencies. This would preserve

((c) continued) the vital constituency link while moving away from majoritarian systems and removing party complicity and 'elective dictatorship,' which can sometimes arise with massive majorities such as when Tony Blair went to war in Iraq <sup>undetected</sup> despite prominent opposition and one million people marching against it in London.

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Examiner Comments

This response clearly moves up a gear. There is good detail, clear exposition of various systems and considered analysis.

## Question 2

- (a) Using examples distinguish between insider and outsider pressure groups.

This presented no difficulty to the vast majority of candidates who provided a clear definition and supported these with appropriate examples. It was a minority, who did not provide both elements, mistakes arose with inaccurate examples of each category. A minority still persist in using terrorists groups such as Al Qaeda as a classic outsider pressure group and Greenpeace as an insider; however this now thankfully is a declining trend.

(a) A pressure group can be defined as an organisation working to further either the interests of a particular group in society or a particular issue. Wyn Grant further categorised Pressure Groups into 'Insider' and 'Outsider' groups.

The Insider group is one that has direct links with government and that the government regularly consults when making decisions. Other Insider groups will provide the government with specialist information. Examples of insider groups are the RSPB and the BMA, however groups can also be ultra insider as in the case of the NFU and the Commission for racial equality - these groups almost form a part of the government itself.

Outsider groups do not have any special links with government and instead seek to influence the decision making process by mobilising public opinion. Groups like Greenpeace and the Animal Liberation Front are outsider from choice as they perform acts of civil disobedience and it suits their cause to remain distant from the government, however some groups are outside simply through lack of access points or opportunities, like the ~~the~~ Rammers Association.



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Examiner Comments

This is a really excellent answer; the detail is precise and sharply focused.

(a) A pressure group can be defined as an organisation working to further either the interests of a particular group in society or a particular issue. Wynn Grant further categorised Pressure Groups into 'Insider' and 'Outside' groups.

The Insider group is one that has direct links with government and that the government regularly consults when making decisions. Other Insider groups will provide the government with specialist information. Examples of insider groups are the RSPB and the BMA, however groups can also be ultra insider as in the case of the NFU and the Commission for racial equality - these groups almost form a part of the government itself.

Outside groups do not have any special links with government and instead seek to influence the decision making process by mobilising public opinion. Groups like Greenpeace and the Animal Liberation Front are outside from choice as they perform acts of civil disobedience and it suits their cause to remain distant from the government, however some groups are outside simply through lack of access paid or opportunity, like the Gay Bombers Association.



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Examiner Comments

In contrast here precision is lacking. There is some ambiguity and the definition is weak.

(b) Explain the factors which limit the success of pressure groups.

Here many candidates failed to come to terms with the remit of this question. It was obvious that they were happier to describe the factors which underpin success than those which restrict it. Hence in pragmatic terms many attempted (with some degree of success) to turn the question around and describe the success factors and then imply that if these are not present then success is limited. This invariably lost marks. Again major lessons are that candidates must know and be able to evidence pressure group failures with equal clarity and ease as they obviously can do with success routes.

(b) There are several reasons why the success of pressure groups may be limited. The popularity of a pressure group within the public is a key factor. If the pressure group does not have many supporters it will find it hard to have any weight when fighting for a cause against or with the government. The finance behind a ~~charity~~ pressure group plays a huge part in putting pressure on the government, as it will pay for advertising which will gain supporters as the more people who support the group the more pressure they will have.

The main ~~cause~~ factor of success lands on the cause of the pressure group. ~~A racist~~ A racist pressure group will not carry as much popularity compared to a group such as green peace. This is a result of people's morals; people would not want to be seen as being openly racist whereas they would want to be seen as ~~carrying~~ ~~also~~ caring about the

environment. If a large company supports a pressure group, the group will have a higher chance of success

((b) continued) as it will have finance and will have the support of the employees to make up the numbers.

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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate provides a mixture of erroneous and correct statements. Overall the response is restricted and the AO2 marks are especially weak.

(b) The success of pressure groups can be limited by a number of factors. Firstly, the success of a pressure group is largely dependent on what type of pressure group they are, i.e. insider, outsider etc. Insider pressure groups are more likely to be successful in influencing government because they are respected and listened to by the government. If the government supports their interests, they are likely to gain more support as people see them as good because the government do also.

~~Another factor which~~ If the pressure group ~~has~~ has little contact "inside" then they are likely to be less successful through lack of respected support.

Another factor which limits their success is finances. Many pressure groups such as the Countryside Alliance charge a membership fee in order to raise funds. As a result, ~~people~~ the pressure group can spend more on advertising and are likely to be more successful. Whereas, if the pressure group has little money, then this is not possible. Because they charge a membership fee, it leads to the members being more passive because they feel that they have "done their bit" by paying which limits the success of the group.

The membership size also limits its success; if there are many members then the pressure group can raise more awareness as there are so many members around. These members are beneficial as they are likely to donate to the

((b) continued) pressure group they are also likely to wish to participate in events, particularly if they have donated, because they often feel that they ought to show all the possible support. If there are few members then it is difficult to raise awareness ~~because~~.

If the pressure group has a charismatic leader then the members are likely to be inspired, if not, then the opposite happens.

A pressure group is unlikely to be successful if they support an irrelevant issue. The public will just dismiss the idea, whereas, if the issue is something of importance and something that has an effect on many then the membership numbers are likely to increase, along with their success.

Lastly, government support is very important also. If they are an insider pressure group and they have the support of the government then they are likely to be successful because the government will aid them. If not, then they have more work to do.

There are many limiting factors on pressure groups but I believe funds and membership size to be paramount because they are vital in aiding their success. Money means that they can raise awareness publicly and people help to raise awareness in other ways.

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Examiner Comments

This is a good response it combines clear understanding with effective examples high AO1 marks are awarded.

(c) To what extent do pressure groups promote political participation in the UK?

A balanced answer here was a vital ingredient and in the main it was provided. It was common to see the case for participation being developed and evidenced far better than its counterpoint. Many assistant examiners commented that the better responses always backed up their arguments with examples and this is a sure route to gain marks across all assessment objectives.

(c) In the UK we have a particular brand of representative democracy called Pluralist democracy. A Pluralist democracy is one in which a large variety of beliefs, ideologies and ideas are tolerated and encouraged by the government, and where a multitude of different parties and groups are able to flourish. In theory therefore, the presence of pressure groups in the UK should encourage participation as they increase the strength of pluralism and thereby democracy. But is this the case?

For me in many ways pressure groups do seem to promote participation in our system. In a time where other forms of more conventional participation are declining (only 59.4% of people voted in the 2001 election, and party membership is at its lowest ever) pressure groups represent an alternative form of participation. It seems like many people are experiencing increasing political apathy - they feel the majoritarian system we have in place is undemocratic and that there is in fact 'Tyranny of the majority'. This means that to have an outlet for participation that is not an official representative body is increasingly important - people that have lost faith in the political system may still believe they can make a difference through joining a pressure group. Another reason that pressure groups encourage participation is that people can see they can be very effective, (for example the Anti-Poll Tax Federation succeeded in getting rid of the mildly unpopular Poll Tax in 1990, even though it was popular with the government). Pressure groups represent

democracy, and allow participation on a variety of levels, which may encourage people who do not have the time or inclination to

((c) continued) either vote or join a party. Participation in a pressure group could involve as little as making a donation (for example many millions of people donate to the NSPCC) or as much as going on an active demonstration, as in the case of the 2003 Peace March against the War in Iraq. Pressure groups are also seen to protect minorities, and therefore may also encourage participation in groups traditionally ~~miss~~ underrepresented by political parties, such as women.

However, some people see that pressure groups in fact deter participation in the UK. Because ~~on their own~~, a pressure group actually has no real decision making power, and this may deter people from joining them as they feel there is no point (the government can simply ignore pressure groups if it chooses).

The existence of pressure groups is seen by some to discredit conventional and elected representative bodies like parliament and therefore may deter people from participation in important aspects of our democratic system like voting and joining political parties. Other people criticise the internally undemocratic nature of some pressure groups, and the disproportionate level of influence some have due to money (eg Bernie Ecclestone achieved an extension in cigarette advertising by paying the Labour Party £100,000), and say that this essentially corrupt nature deters people from participation.

Overall it seems that, to a large extent, pressure groups do promote participation in the UK. Even considering the criticisms,

pressure groups provide a choice of methods of participation,

((c) continued) something that seems increasingly important as we experience partisan dealignment and voter apathy. They also may appeal to people who are ignored or misrepresented in our ~~our~~ majoritarian system, and therefore encourage participation from groups that would otherwise show little or no interest.



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Examiner Comments

Clearly a level three for all the assessment objectives. The response uses examples and displays a considerable breadth of knowledge. There is impressive analysis and the communication skills are excellent.

(c) Pressure groups promote political participation by as people join them, this is known as active citizenship. Pressure groups membership have increased over the years and this is good as people are getting involved in process, petitions, letter writing and many more activities, they are getting their voices heard and can influence the government in policy/ decision making. An example would be the BMA.

But some groups may be funded better than others resulting in some groups making demands above their station. This can be seen as undemocratic and participation in such groups is not always a good thing. Green Peace has made some big demand to Gordon Brown lately.

Groups represent a minority within society, active membership can help these minorities get voices heard, ~~if~~ ~~was~~ pressure groups balance out democracy as ~~the~~ minority groups may not have a say in anything but with pressure groups the majority and the minority start to level out.

However some groups may be operating illegally and participation in such groups are detrimental as it is undermining the government's ability to govern.

((c) continued)

Another downside to participation within groups is the fact that the pressure groups may not be democratic internally. This means that the ~~leader~~ leader of a group may ignore its members opinion, so the leader can then put forward their own opinion then act on them.

In conclusion to this I strongly believe that Pressure Groups do promote political participation as more and more people have joined them due to ~~the~~ a less materialistic view that there are cultural issues that need to be addressed e.g. environment / human rights. Although party participation has declined in recent years pressure group membership has drastically increased. Pressure groups do encourage political participation.



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Examiner Comments

By contrast to the above this response is brief and lacks depth. It may have some precision but the lack of content denies an excess of reward

## Question 3

- (a) Using an example, define consensus politics.

This was well answered. Definitions were provided with clarity and ease by candidates. Equally well documented were examples either the post-Thatcherite or the post-war (Butskellite) consensus.

(a) Consensus politics is when the main parties in government agree on most of the aspects of policy making. During the 1950s and 1960s there was a general consensus on how this would be exercised. The parties of Labour and Conservative both agreed to an extensive level of public services and also on a Keynesian approach <sup>to</sup> economy meaning that they believe in government intervention to create a balanced economy, high employment and social justice.



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Examiner Comments

Brief but does cover three points; the detail is narrow and requires fuller development.

(a) Consensus Politics is basically people having a choice whether to take part or not. The United Kingdom uses consensus politics, because it is not illegal ~~not~~ <sup>to not</sup> to take part like it is in other places around the world such as Australia. It promotes freedom to choose what you do in our society and prevents one country being ran like a dictatorship.



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Examiner Comments

Here the candidate has simply no idea of what is meant by consensus politics and earns no marks.

- (b) Explain the ideas and policies which link the Labour Party to socialism.

Getting into level three for many proved difficult. This is a little odd given that we have now had a Labour government for 13 years there should have been quite a lot to document and to construct an answer around. It was common to see policy and ideas but these were not always connected to socialism. At the same time we were presented with socialist ideas but these were not referenced to policy; getting the combination was the problem for many.

(b) The idea of universal benefits available to all is a socialist ideal. This is because it is broadly associated with the idea of a welfare state (created by the Old Labour in the 1930's). The New Labour party has increased the 'welfare state' gradually with such introductions as universal Education Maintenance Allowance (for 16-17 yr olds). This was a part of the socialist ideal of the Old Labour that benefits for more aged 16-17 should be maximised in order to achieve a better quality of education for that age group.

Taxation - High taxation is one area where socialist ideals dominate. High taxation has remained at the heart of the Labour party, however the accumulation of wealth

is not discouraged. As Peter Mander  
 has claimed in Nov 2006 "we [Labour]  
 are intensely relaxed about people

((b) continued) becoming filthy rich". What  
 this signifies is that New  
 Labour are satisfied with the  
 growth of individual wealth as  
 long as it benefits the dispersal  
 of income - another socialist  
 principle. Inheritance tax is one  
 recent example of New Labour  
 tax plans. After <sup>in Nov 2009</sup> ~~over~~ from the  
 Conservatives! George Osborne to  
 increase the threshold to £7 million  
 Alister Darling [Labour] froze the  
 threshold at £350,000.

<sup>Government</sup>  
 An increase in spending under  
 New Labour, ~~is~~ is reminiscent  
 of ~~for~~ Socialism. High spending  
 is said to improve the quality &  
 availability of public services to  
 those most disadvantaged. For  
 example, in the year 1991-  
 2009 Labour has increased  
 spending on state education.

' from £30 million to £70 million, thus creating many specialise state schools that improved the opportunities

((b) continued) of many disadvantaged children in the UK. Spending on the NHS (National Health Service) has also increased under New Labour by about almost 70%. The socialist ideal of high public spending has remained at the centre of the modern Labour parties policies.

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Here we are presented with a good range of policies and ideas of the current Labour Party with a sound connection to the principles of socialism

~~(b) <sup>welfare</sup> nationalisation  
 Economic Keynesian  
 law and order  
 society  
 Trade unions  
 welfare~~

The Labour party has links with socialism in a number of different ~~ways~~ policies and ideas.

The Labour party believes in helping the poor by giving benefits through the welfare system. They have made it harder to get benefits ~~that~~ so not everyone is receiving benefits. Socialism believed in helping the poor if they are not in work. For example, working tax credits. This shows they are still giving out benefits.

Socialism believed in nationalisation so the state can help failing businesses. The Labour party has abandoned that and gone for privatisation. They have continued <sup>with</sup> Thatcherism. For example, they privatised the post office and traffic control. This shows a move away from socialism.

((b) continued) socialism believed in trade unions to be in the decision making process. Labour party has distanced itself from the trade unions and ~~and~~ stopped from having such a big say. For example, Labour doesn't support any of the strikes. This shows a move away from socialism.

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Examiner Comments

By contrast here we are presented with very little in terms of AO1 content and the AO2 is non-existent.

(c) To what extent is the current Conservative Party influenced by 'One Nation' principles?

Surprisingly if candidates did struggle with (b) above they were more prepared for this (c) question. The major weakness covered a lack of balance with some asserting that the moves of David Cameron were to deliver the Conservative party back to One Nation roots and then failing to describe what aspects of Thatcherism the party was abandoning. A few responses dwelt too long on accounts of Benjamin Disraeli to the exclusion of more contemporary detail.

(c) The modern conservative party is led by David Cameron a man who says that he is a traditional conservative, the extent to his belonging to this traditional conservative belief can be found in assessing his policies and their roots. His approach to society, the economy, ~~and~~ social inclusion, <sup>law and order</sup> ~~trade unions~~ as well as the environment will provide us with the knowledge as to why type of conservative party is in power. Firstly, Cameron is a firm believer that there should be no form of discrimination within society whatsoever. His policy of social inclusion supports this. The policy supports civil partnerships, a union banned by Thatcher during her reign as well as this her belief in the traditional

Victorian Family is knocked ~~by~~ with the belief that they are old beliefs and that Cameron's

((c) continued) acceptance of any type of family is the way a modern day party should operate.

Both of these disagreements with new-right Thatcherism show how he believes in one nation conservatism where everyone is respected and equal.

Secondly, Cameron's Conservatives are strong believers of the preservation of the environment.

Although this has never been a <sup>previous</sup> policy addressed by a conservative government, his belief is the fact that the economy can suffer if it means sustaining the environment with him to

the pragmatic nature of the one nation conservatives. Making policy that is necessary for that moment. ~~to~~ The Conservatives

have gone further than ~~ever~~ any other party by suggesting that big business should be taxed if

they are following needlessly,  
another pragmatic decision

((c) continued) that although you would agree  
with one-nation conservatives  
wouldn't with Thatcher's  
belief in low taxation.

Cameron and the Conservatives  
view of society also could be  
said to have ~~to~~ similarities to  
Thatcherism because of the  
fact he wishes to cut public  
services by 10%. However, it is  
more likely to be a pragmatic  
and <sup>therefore</sup> one-nation approach because  
of the current recession. This is  
more likely as he believes that  
the NHS should take priority  
and that there is such thing  
as a society ~~and~~ as well as  
his belief that it is the best well  
off who depend on public  
services. This going against  
Thatcherism's quote of there not  
being such thing as a society  
as well as agreeing with the  
one-nation conservative belief of  
an organic society where

everyone works together to

((c) continued) maintain the nation and  
of the belief of basic welfare for  
all.

The economy in Cameron's view  
should remain a free market  
and as well as this he believes  
in tax cuts both of these going  
against the one nation of a  
mixed economy where the state  
intervenes in the economy as  
well as agreeing Thatcher's  
belief in low taxation. However,  
post-2008 and the recession  
Cameron stated that there would  
be no tax cuts not be promised because  
of the current economic  
climate as well as the fact  
that he would not cut taxes  
if it put the public services  
in jeopardy. These can refer  
back to his one nation beliefs  
of acting pragmatically as well  
as favouring the public services.

Finally, Cameron's approach  
to law and order neither agrees  
with one nation or new right

((c) continued) Thatcherism, instead of a hard-line authoritarian approach of punishing offenders and making examples of them he instead wishes to find out what is at the core of crime and what causes people to commit crime. His 'Hug a Hoody' scheme supports this showing how he wants to rehabilitate and help offenders.

I believe that there is still Cameron's belief of him being a one nation conservative is true. Although in a central area like the economy he follows Thatcher's policies he is willing to always act pragmatically in order for the benefit of society in every area of policy a one nation belief. As well as this his belief in society and supporting welfare are examples of how he has distanced himself from Thatcher in Thatcher in the 1980's and now in all his policies has one nation at the core of all of them. (25)

(Total for Question = 40 marks)



The response here enters level 3 for the AO1 but the communications skills are lacking and it attains only 5 marks for the AO3

(c) The modern Conservative has been greatly influenced by the one nation principles of Benjamin Disraeli and Harold Macmillan.

The Conservatives have gone for a more softer view on dealing with criminals and youth offenders. They believe it is the causes of crime that should be dealt with. For example, David Cameron said his main concern was 'education, education, education'. This shows that David Cameron is keeping with one nation Conservatism view on education being the way of stopping criminals committing crimes.

The Conservatives have kept with the one nation approach to traditional values. They believe in marriage and a traditional family. David Cameron has also endorsed gay marriage which is completely different to one-nation Conservative. For example, David Cameron has ~~offered~~ said the conservative party will give money to couples that decide to marry. This shows the one nation approach to traditional values and how important it is.

((c) continued) The conservatives view on the ~~economy~~ economy is that they must lower taxes in order for people to go to work. This is different to one-nation conservatives because they believe in raising taxes. ~~At~~ Before 2008, David Cameron pledged to lower taxes but after 2008, he has said that is not possible because of the 'credit crunch' and needs to raise taxes. This is a return to one-nation conservatives. He didn't say ~~whether~~ ~~to~~ he would ~~lower~~ <sup>raise</sup> inheritance tax for the richest in society. This ~~is~~ is a one-nation conservative policy.

The conservatives don't believe in spending much money on public services. They believe in spending on the NHS and the welfare system. The conservatives believe in privatisation of major industries in order for them to run properly. For example, they would privatise any thing that is ~~not~~ ~~not~~ owned by the government. This shows one-nation conservatism.

((c) continued) conservatives believe in improving the environment by releasing less green house gases. This is not a nation-nation policy. For example, they want more energy efficient trains. This shows a move away from one-nation conservatives.

I conclude that the conservatives have kept some of one-nation policies but have also abandoned <sup>one-nation</sup> in other aspects like the environment and Europe.

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Examiner Comments

This is a typical level 1 response. It lacks knowledge and understanding and fails to really deliver any substantial evaluation and insight.

**Question 4**

(a) Define direct democracy

There were some exceptionally good responses here. The main weakness exposed were a significant majority who tried to describe the concept by the use of examples alone without any supporting references to the key principles involved. Again several assistant examiners commented that a minority described direct democracy solely in terms of its appearance in a representative system with the use of referendums, again this approach did limit marks.

(a) Direct democracy is where society and state become one and society is politicised, there are no elected representatives because there is no difference between the government and the governed. Direct democracy takes place through popular self government where the people shape the outcome of policies through direct, unmediated continuous popular participation. Direct democracy was most famously used in Ancient Athens through mass meetings with the whole 10,000 population. Direct Democracy however is now more commonly seen in the form of referenda, for example the 1998 vote on a London Mayor with a 72% Yes vote or alternatively through citizen juries.

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Examiner Comments

Packed full of precise detail and supportive examples

(a) Direct democracy is where the general public are directly involved in the process of making and passing laws. Although this system seems good and would attract more people to get involved in politics it is not practical and is open to bribery.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Only one point to credit here. The latter part of the response is evaluative and this does not fall within the mark scheme for all (a) questions.

(b) Explain three forms of democratic participation.

Here assistant examiners noted an abundance of candidates attaining level three marks. Problems here were indeed a rarity. What gained these high marks were the examples which in so many senses were built into the response.

(b) One form of democratic participation is referenda, these are a single vote on a particular issue of constitutional importance with YES/NO answers. They are called by the government with the authority of parliament and are thus only advisory. Referenda are often associated with dictatorships. Margaret Thatcher notoriously called them 'these instruments of demagogues and dictators.' They are a form of direct democracy and gauge public opinion. In 1998 the citizens of Northern Ireland were asked in a referendum whether they supported the peace agreement. 81% voted YES and the turnout was 71%, a turnout of over 70% had been essential to guarantee stability after some of the worst violence witnessed in decades in the Irish bombings.

Another form of democratic participation is through citizen juries, these in previous years could be witnessed in America and Switzerland, but when Gordon Brown came to power he introduced them into the UK. They are a direct form of deliberative democracy where educated members of the population with special interest or knowledge can meet with a minister and discuss issues of public policy. Neutral advisors are present and the group can debate and scrutinise legislation together. The first

((b) continued) one was held by Gordon Brown himself in 6/9/2007 about children's education and welfare.

A third form of democratic participation is through general elections. This is where the electorate are invited to vote a decision on the present government and elect a new one if a different party has a plurality of seats.

The previous general election was held in 2005 in the UK and was won by the Labour party with 355 seats and 35.2% of the vote. In total there are 646 seats to win. General Elections gauge public opinion and keep the government accountable. The levels of participation in the 2005 election were 61.5% of the population that were eligible to vote meaning that in reality only 22% of the population voted for Labour and Tony Blair.

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Examiner Comments

Full marks here. There is more that could be said, but this candidate is operating at the top level

(b) Three types of democratic participation includes voting, joining a political party, or joining a pressure group. Firstly voting which is the most common form of democratic participation. This is where ~~the people~~ vote for either a representative or a political party to represent them. In the UK, the voting is done under the ideology of 'One person, One vote', it is done by simply putting an 'X' by the ~~person's~~ name of the person / party you wish to vote for. Secondly joining a political party, this is where you pay a fee to join a political party. However over time this has decreased in popularity. This is true from the declining memberships of the two biggest parties the Conservatives and the Labour party. Finally is joining a pressure group. This has become more popular over recent years, as people are more likely to belong to a pressure group than a political party. This not only is because they are popular, but you may have joined one without realising. Such as joining the AA for breakdown cover, you are joining the AA pressure group for defending motorists rights and interest. ~~But the~~



Gains 5 marks, three types of participation are noted but not in depth, the AO2 is at the lowest level as the explanation provided is weak.

(c) Assess the arguments in favour of the greater use of direct democracy in the UK

The best responses here were well balanced and drew on a range of features associated with direct democracy. These features were assessed and considered with reference to the UK. A considerable minority took this as an opportunity to devote entirely to the considered greater use of referendums. This was only a part of the wider picture required. This question does call for political speculation and as such the more able candidate drew on several features of direct democracy such as citizen juries and e-democracy. It was not unusual for some weaker candidates to confuse the question with general democratic participation or occasionally direct action and pressure group activity, these thankfully were a minority.

(c)

## Plan

### In favour of Direct democracy.

- Direct democracy is the purest form of democracy
- It gives the people, the power to make policy rather than just vote for people to make policy on their behalf.
- People have the authority in decision making
- It will lead to more political participation
- Solve the problems caused from partisan/participation dealignment
- It is the first form of democracy Athens.
- It doesn't have the disadvantage of two class system of expert politicians and the people
- People more likely to respect and abide by the decisions they made themselves.
- Everyone has equal say, as in everyone's views are taken into account.

((c) continued)

Direct democracy is the purest form of democracy. It dates back to origin of politics in Athens where a group of influential individuals ~~met~~ <sup>met</sup> and discussed topics and issues regarding Athens. They then voted on the topics and issues, the decision was deciding by ~~which~~ the side with the most votes. Furthermore unlike representative democracy where individuals simply vote for representatives to decide and make policy on their behalf (in their best interests); direct democracy is a government whereby the people are the government. The people make the policies and decide themselves.

This brings me onto my first point, which is a argument for direct democracy, which is that it gives the ultimate decision-making ~~into~~ <sup>into</sup> authority to ~~the~~ people. This makes it democratic in that people are making the decisions, rather than representatives making the decisions for them. This is true as people will be more likely to respect and abide by the decisions in which they as the people have decided. This is because even if a decision goes against them, it is due to the fact that the majority of people wanted ~~that~~ it. So they most likely going to respect the decision as they took ~~the~~ part in the decision making.

((c) continued)

process. Unlike in a representative democracy, whereby only around 460 MP's make the decision for around 65 million of the population in the UK.

Furthermore in direct democracy everyone has an equal say, in that if you wish to share your view/enforce a policy, you attend a meeting and express it. Then if you gain the support of enough people it will then be voted on, if then the majority of the people vote in favour of the policy, it then becomes a public policy. This happens in California, where by citizens can put forward proposals (if they gain enough public support) which are then voted on, if the majority are in favour of it, ~~be~~ it becomes a policy/law of the state. This means everyone's opinions/views are taken into account as everyone is entitled to a say in the decision-making process and the policy making process. Also that no person's view is of higher value than anyone else. This then enforces the idea of political equality as ~~system~~ 'one person, one vote' is enforced.

This in turn will lead to more political participation, as people now have the policy-making power and can attend this meetings where they can discuss and debate matters. This is a major advantage as one of the biggest problems of a representative democracy, which

((c) continued) is current with the lowest ~~turnouts~~ <sup>since 1918</sup> turnouts being seen in the two general elections, (65.9% in 2001, 65% in 2005) which is showing a lack of political participation. This is because since the 1945 post war period turnouts tend to be over 75%. This shows a lack of interest in participating. Also direct democracy will ~~lead~~ diminish the problem of partisan dealignment, because political participation has been argued to have fallen due to people having a lack of faith in parties and a lack of choice. In a direct democracy there are no parties or representatives, so this problem doesn't exist. ~~Participation~~ Participation will increase as people's votes will ~~be~~ make a difference. This is because the decision is binding. Unlike in a representative democracy where referendums tend to ~~be~~ not to be binding, and the topics put to the public are decided by the government. Meaning ~~if~~ even if the people want it to be put to vote (such as in 2001 when the Labour party went to war in Iraq and people wanted a referendum), the government doesn't have to consult the people.

In conclusion, direct democracy is the best form of democracy as it eradicates the problems associated with

((c) continued) representative democracy. Also that the people have equal say and that they have the policy-making and decision-making power unlike in a representative democracy.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

The answer here is a little one sided and thus inhibits all the assessment objectives

(c) Direct democracy is a form of democracy that gives the people themselves unmediated control over policy formulation and implementation. Declining election turnout and the increase in pressure group membership has seen the wider use of direct democracy in the UK.

Direct democracy promotes political participation and ~~the~~ combats voter apathy. Citizens juries and referendums make the public more actively involved - increasing political awareness and education. Increase in pressure group membership indicates the electorate's need to influence government policy and, <sup>the</sup> wider ~~use~~ use of direct democracy could do so.

Direct democracy is representative feature also saves the electorate from a tyrannical government would could become unaccountable and receive little checks and balances other than in the form of elections. The greater use of

((c) continued) referendums limit government power as they have little control over its outcome. Pressure group activity and public support also restrain the government as they fear to lose electoral support if they do not adhere to the aims of a pressure group. Citizens' juries ~~form panels~~ create a listening government, criticised and scrutinised by the people - having to amend policy in fear of electoral damage.

However, the greater use of direct democracy could also cause concerns. The wider use of referendums mean a politically unaware electorate may make constitutional changes with long term and far reaching effects. Referendums also undermine Parliament and the accountability of the government to make informed decisions on the behalf of the people. Government's control over when and on what issues referendums are to be held, as well as influencing

((c) continued) Campaigns limit its effectiveness. Pressure groups increase political inequality as already powerful sections of society gain influence to government, ~~is a case~~ and are unaccountable to do so as they are unelected. The consultation of ~~the~~ pressure groups with government also undermine Parliament as the deliberative chamber, not serving its responsibility and representative features.

Citizens joined only represent a small section of society and are ineffective as governments are able to portray the ~~the~~ idea of a 'listening government' without having to share policy making power.

In conclusion, the wider use of direct democracy should be implemented to give the electorate more power between elections and limit that of the government, but not to the detriment of parliament <sup>and sovereignty of</sup> and parliament.

((c) continued) \* Pressure groups may cause the tyranny of the minority and increasing power may make catering to the majority more difficult.

democracy.

**ResultsPlus**

Examiner Comments

Here we have a really top rated answer. It is full of really good examples and accurate references and speculative comments.

## Statistics

### *Overall Subject Grade Boundaries*

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Overall subject grade boundaries	47	42	37	32	27
Uniform Mark	80	70	60	50	40



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