

Examiners' Report  
June 2013

GCE Government and Politics  
6GP03 3C

## Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications come from Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com) or [www.btec.co.uk](http://www.btec.co.uk).

Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at [www.edexcel.com/contactus](http://www.edexcel.com/contactus).



### Giving you insight to inform next steps

ResultsPlus is Pearson's free online service giving instant and detailed analysis of your students' exam results.

- See students' scores for every exam question.
- Understand how your students' performance compares with class and national averages.
- Identify potential topics, skills and types of question where students may need to develop their learning further.

For more information on ResultsPlus, or to log in, visit [www.edexcel.com/resultsplus](http://www.edexcel.com/resultsplus). Your exams officer will be able to set up your ResultsPlus account in minutes via Edexcel Online.

### Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: [www.pearson.com/uk](http://www.pearson.com/uk).

June 2013

Publications Code UA036089

All the material in this publication is copyright  
© Pearson Education Ltd 2013

## Introduction

This paper proved to make no special or unusual demands on candidates and it allowed candidates of all abilities to show what they are able to achieve.

There are a number of recurring themes in these reports which some readers may have come to recognise. For the reasons explained below, pressure group questions, despite their popularity with candidates, are often not well answered and candidates need to pay especial attention to what a pressure group question is asking, and how much usable material they have at their command.

An issue which has been commented on before, but which seemed more of an issue in this series, was candidates' use of statistics. In an examination, statistics are invariably used without attribution and usually without dates, and when examiners see a wide variety of figures for the same thing, it reinforces the impression that the figures are being plucked off the top of the candidate's head. Aside from the few figures which are well known and recognised eg 50,000 Latinos turning 18 every month in the US, candidates would be best advised to avoid using them.

The two key qualities of a good answer are knowledge and structure. Candidates have to show they know something and the answer has to be structured around the demands of the question. Knowledge needs to be up to date and derived from a variety of sources; obviously textbooks but as importantly media sources. The first sentence of each paragraph is critical in creating structure; it has to show the relationship of what is to come both to what has gone before and to the title. Recognition of these two basic requirements would go a long way to improve the quality of many candidates' work.

## Question 1

Candidates adopted a variety of approaches to this question. Some candidates concentrated on the social policies of the Democratic Party, for example, and made three separate points out of the party's positions on abortion, affirmative action and the death penalty. Other candidates grouped policies like these into one paragraph and then moved on to policies concerning the economy or foreign affairs. Both approaches could work, if the right level of detail and analysis was there. Some candidates based their answer around the different factions of the party and, although rewardable points could be made along the way, it was not as strong an approach as a direct answer to the question.

A feature of some answers was a comparison with Republican positions for every point made about the Democrats, which was unnecessary and unrewardable. Many of the best answers showed how closely candidates are following the news, referring for example to the recent failure of the Manchin-Toomey amendment as an example both of Democratic values and an indication of some of the factional, geographical and ideological divisions within the party.

A minority referred to the evolving nature of Democratic foreign policy, referring for example to recent debates over the use of drones and President Obama's commitment to withdrawing US troops from Afghanistan. Although a purely historical approach could only receive limited reward, it was certainly rewardable when candidates recognised that, even over the course of a few years, support for a policy within the party could rise or fall.

A few made the highly rewardable point that less than twenty years after President Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act, President Obama was expressing support for same-sex marriage.

The Democratic Party has established itself as a left-wing and liberal Party since the 1930s and Franklin D Roosevelt's New Deal Coalition. One policy area in which they have proved this is through the expansion of welfare, most recently with Obamacare, ~~cost~~ giving 30,000,000 more Americans healthcare. However, there has also been ~~costs~~ ~~welfare~~ ~~via~~ strides by the right of the Democratic Party, most significantly the Blue Dog Democrats to stop this for example in the 2010 Obamacare Bill no 'public option' was given as a part of the Bill.

Another way in which traditional Democrat

policies are presented in their policies is with their approach to abortion. In ~~2008~~ 2008 the Democrat Party firmly made a stance on

'supporting the decision made in Roe vs Wade', endorsed by Obama in order to appeal to the female electorate, which worked gaining over ~~50%~~ <sup>55%</sup> of the female vote. As well as this Obama has set aside federal funding in 2009 to give advice to those seeking abortion. However the right-wing influence of the Party through such Senators as Joe Webb forced the signing of the Stupak - Pitts Amendment which cut all federal spending on abortion except in cases of rape, incest or danger of life to the mother as a negotiation to sign Obamacare, thus suggesting deep divide within the Party in terms of ideology.

Another way in which Democrat values are presented through their policies is through their protection of minorities and civil liberties. This was shown by ~~their 2009~~ ~~2009~~ Obama's 2009 Defence Budget expanding Hate Crime Laws so that more convictions can take place upon the basis of racism. As well as this Bill Clinton's policies considered all minorities as his executive branch was a very balanced make-up which

he intended to 'look like America'. However Obama has failed to put a federal association with Affirmative Action, losing support and in some cases existence in States such as Michigan, California due to proposition 23, Kentucky due to Meredith vs Jefferson County Board of Education and perhaps soon to be Texas in the current Supreme Court dispute over Texas vs Fisher, whilst Obama has even revealed that he intends for his children not to be benefitted by Affirmative Action.

In conclusion therefore the Democrats have kept their traditional stances on welfare, abortion and the protection of minorities to be liberal and left-wing, but due to the rise of the right in the Party and the Blue Dog Democrats in order to modernise to a supposed right-wing America, these policies have also seen an emergence of conservative elements. However this <sup>right wing</sup> can be expected to deteriorate with the loss of over half Blue Dog Democrats in the 2010 mid-term election.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a good answer. Three areas of policy are identified and discussed: there is some brief recognition of the historical context, some good use of supporting contemporary evidence and there is a consistent attempt to assess the depth of support. On the debit side, some of the detail is a little vague and the points about state referendums and Supreme Court decisions on the third side need to be made more relevant. Nevertheless, it is a solid Level 3 answer which was awarded 12 marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

In terms of structure this is a model short answer - no introduction, and three detailed and clearly separated paragraphs. A conclusion rounds the answer off but, if time was tight, it could be omitted.

## Question 2

Some candidates were clearly well prepared for this question and knew the history from Nixon-Kennedy onwards. It was important here, as in all the short answers, to address the key terms of the question, and candidates needed to ensure they offered some assessment of the debates' significance. Some plausibly argued that the significance of the debates was ultimately impossible to quantify and that the identity of the winner of the debates was quite often the subject of debate itself. In this question more than most, it was difficult for candidates to answer convincingly without knowledge of the most recent events and the Obama-Romney debates did feature in many answers. A good number made the reasonable point that the debates cannot be that significant if, after his strong first debate performance, Romney still ended up losing. In a minority of cases, there was some confusion with the primary debates and Rick Perry was mentioned more than once. A less successful approach adopted by a minority of candidates was to devote a paragraph to the debates and the rest of their answer to other factors such as Romney's '47%' remark and 'hurricane' Sandy. The question was asking candidates to assess the significance of the debates and discussion of other factors was not required.

Presidential debates are often perceived as a test of the candidates ideas. ~~and a common~~  
In terms of outcomes, in four out of the seven recent debates, the winner of the debate has gone on to win the ~~Presid~~ Presidential election. For example, in 2012 a poll asked by CNN found that after the last of the three debates, 48% of people viewed Obama as the winner of the debates with 40% seeing Romney as the winner and 12% undecided. These figures seem to suggest that winning a debate can lead on to success in the ~~the~~ election.

Linked to this is the ability debates ~~can~~ have in boosting or damaging a candidates profile. It is often argued

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 6

that how a candidate lives up to expectations is often more significant than the content of the debate. For example in 1984 when 73 year old Reagan made a witty comment about ~~his~~ not wanting to expose his opponent's youth and inexperience. This significantly boosted his profile and he went on to win 49 states. Conversely, Al Gore's persona was damaged when he was seen to be rolling his eyes and sighing at Bush's remarks during their debate.

Profile is an element significantly effected by debates ~~but a arguably~~ but policies and messages portrayed in the debates do not seem to be as effected. Often, debates do little to change voters' mind but just confirm what they already think. This may be important in terms of outcome in swing states when keeping supporters is crucial but in states where voters often have the same voting habit like solidly Republican in

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 6

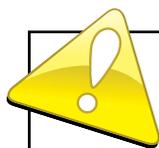
Texas, debates have very little effect, if they cannot change a voter's mind.

For the candidates they can help build on their policies & as it is a chance to hear the opposition's view in detail. For example, in 2012 the debates made Obama switch the direction of his campaign to look at economy. Although this is a subtle link to outcome, ~~the~~ getting the right issue prominent means you can empathise and connect with voters leading to a possible better outcome.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is a typical top Level 2 answer. There is an intelligent engagement with the question and some range of supporting evidence, but the analysis and detail are just a bit too vague and unconvincing to make it into Level 3. For example, it does not seem likely, as the candidate claims on the third side, that the nominees would need the debates to learn about their opponent's policies. The figures used on the first side show the limits of the usefulness of statistics. There was a CNN poll with the figures the candidate quotes (<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/10/22/politics/debate-mainbar>), so they at least were accurate, but they relate to the final debate and not the debates as a whole as the candidate states. More significantly, the poll has a margin of error of +/- 4.5%, and so as evidence, it is flimsy at best. The answer was awarded 10 marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Except when a figure is widely known and acknowledged, avoid using statistics. In an exam it is usually impossible to give accurate attributions and, as the example from this answer shows, they are only ever approximate anyway.

### Question 3

Centres have taken on the significance of Latino issues to the race section of this unit and examiners saw several answers from obviously well prepared candidates. Nearly all were aware of the trend of demographic projections for the Latino population and were able to draw out their implications for the parties' electoral fortunes, the Republican Party in particular. The concept of Latinos being a 'swing' constituency was also well explained. Better answers were able to refer to Romney's 'self-deportation' policy and contrasted it with the more Latino-friendly policies of the Democratic Party.

A small number of candidates also referred to the significance of Marco Rubio's membership of the 'Gang of Eight', who are working on immigration reform proposals. Other candidates found it difficult to include ways in which the Latino vote might be considered not to be significant. A plausible argument made by some was that a sizeable proportion of the Latino population in the US does not have legal status and, even if immigration reform is passed, it will be a number of years before they are able to vote. This was another answer where examiners saw a variety of figures, often wildly different, for the same thing, and the impression is created that these figures are being manufactured on the spot.

A small number of candidates devoted most of their answer to other significant Democratic constituencies, for example black Americans and women, and this was largely unrewardable.

Latino's are a significant voting group to a large extent as they hold a large share of the voting population today in America. They are recently on an increase and a 2010 census showed them to hold 13% of the population as a whole.

The recent increase in the population of Latino's has been in states like Arizona, Florida & New Mexico who hold quite a significant amount of electoral college votes. This means they will be largely targeted by presidential candidates & pushed to get on the side of the Latino's so this growing group votes for them. This was particularly seen in 2000 when George Bush, Republican candidate for the presidency attempted to target Latino's they would seemingly traditionally vote for Republicans as they have many policy similarities like family importance & religious importance. The newly found targeting of Republicans for Latino's clearly shows their prominence & significance as a growing voter group.

Moreover the significance of Latino's can be seen

In the fact that President Obama & the Democratic party started targeting them as early as the primaries in 2008. Latinos were always linked to voting Democrat as they hold a high importance of immigration reform in high importance of attempting to seek citizenship for the 12 million illegal immigrants in America today. Thus the fact that despite Democrats always gaining the majority of the Latino vote, shown in the 2012 election where they received 72%, the Obama still actively campaigns for their support proving they are an integral group.

Conversely though it can be argued that Latinos are not that significant of a voting group because they are ultimately a minority group. This may mean that they are overlooked as many minorities within America still struggle to figure out the complicated voting system of registration that ~~has been~~<sup>is</sup> installed in different states. This can be supported by Mitt Romney's recent lack of concentration on minorities as he believed they would vote Democrat anyway. Latinos have arguably become a safe group, like African Americans, holding their support constantly with the Democrats.

Ultimately though Latinos are a prominent & significant group as arguably their base of support allowed him to (lose 53) electoral votes over Gore in the 2000 elections. With immigration reform, the DREAM ACT & Border guidelines being

so significant in US politics today it would be  
juvenile to state the Latinos it strongly interests  
are an insignificant voter group.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an example of an answer that just gets into Level 3. There is a good range of knowledge, and it deals with the ways in which the significance of the Latino vote could be downplayed better than most. To go any higher, it would need more detail, for example, on the first side it could explain exactly how George Bush targeted Latinos in 2000. The clarity of expression eg the phrases 'family importance and religious importance' could be more precise. Nevertheless, a good answer and it was awarded 11 marks.

## Question 4

Pressure group questions often generate all-purpose answers, and some candidates tended to ignore the requirement of the question to look at election campaigns as well as pressure groups. Consequently the usual standards such as lobbying, iron triangles and revolving doors often appeared, but with little or no attempt to make them relevant. Even where candidates were well informed, many did not pay sufficient attention to the requirement to assess the role of pressure groups in elections and only described the different methods pressure groups typically use. Assessment requires some evaluation of the significance of these methods in election outcomes. Some better answers made the point, for example, that the Karl Rove group American Crossroads had spent several hundreds of millions of dollars in 2012 to little effect.

The notes of further guidance for this topic issued two years ago did say that campaign finance would no longer be the named topic of 45 mark questions, but it remains an important part of the elections section of the specification. It was certainly surprising how vague many candidates were about important detail. A good number wrote about soft money as if McCain-Feingold had never happened (the soft money provision of the act does still stand, *Citizens United* notwithstanding) and very few were aware that SuperPACs are unable (officially any way) to coordinate with candidates. Generally, the distinction between pressure groups donating to candidates and running their own independent campaigns was poorly understood. As is also often the case, many answers drew liberally from AS days, invariably to little effect.

Pressure groups are able exert much ~~pressure~~ influence within elections through educating citizens. For example, many groups issue report cards which can be influential in the selecting and defeat on candidates, e.g. In 2006, the NRA rated Mike DeWine a 'grade F' and this is thought to have contributed to his defeat as Ohio's senator. Furthermore, voter guides are issued by pressure groups such as the Christian Coalition on candidates' stances on certain moral issues such as gay rights marriage or abortion. The League of Conservative Voters also publishes their 'dirty dozen' every 2 years giving a list of politicians who have the worst record for voting against the protection of the environment. This educative function of pressure groups is effective for election campaigns because it lets citizens know the stance of various politicians on

particular issues.

Pressure groups can also be effective in 'getting out the vote'. For example, the NAACP campaigned heavily for the 'Motor Vote' Act of 1993 which increased the number of voters registered by approximately 9 million. Furthermore, the American Association of Retired Persons ~~is~~ helps to get elderly people out to the polls. This can help the Republican party as older people are more likely to vote for them.

The endorsement of ~~certain~~ candidates by certain pressure groups can also be effective. It is important in election campaigns that candidates are endorsed by AIPAC which is a very powerful pro-Israel group which ~~seeks~~ is supported by both parties.

Most importantly, linking to these endorsements is the role of money. In 2012, 261 congressional nominees were financially supported by the NRA and 236 won a seat in <sup>the 113th</sup> Congress. This shows the effect that money can have within

You should start the answer to your second question choice on page 6

election campaigns. Furthermore the ~~PAC~~ <sup>Super PAC</sup>  
'Restore Our Future' spent \$40 m ~~at~~ during  
the 2012 primaries against other GOP  
candidates running against Mitt Romney.  
~~Overall, it is clear that the~~

Overall it is clear that the educative function,  
endorsements of pressure groups are significant  
but the role of money is fundamental and  
of great importance in the influence of  
pressure groups on election campaigns. However  
this role of money can be unbridled and  
in many cases ~~the~~ pressure groups can  
exert undue and disproportional influence  
on election campaigns. Thus the influence  
of money makes the influence of pressure  
groups undemocratic.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is another solid Level 3 answer. There are four clearly explained points, a good range of relevant examples and, towards the end of the answer, an attempt to assess the effectiveness of the various methods pressure groups use. To move up within Level 3, the analysis of the examples would need to be more sustained and detailed, but as it stands it is worth 12 marks.

## Question 5

Affirmative action questions are always popular with candidates but they are often not successfully answered. There were two mistakes frequently made in answers to this question.

Firstly, many candidates spent much or sometimes all of their answer giving examples of the extent of inequality, often with the aid of unconvincing statistics, rather than explaining why affirmative action had failed to eliminate these inequalities. It is not hard to see that evidence of continuing inequality cannot be the *cause* of that inequality.

Secondly, the focus of the answer was often on criticisms of affirmative action without relating them to the question, which was asking about causes of failure. A scheme or policy could be criticised after all, for all sorts of reasons, but still be successful.

Many candidates argued, for example, that affirmative action was unfair because it punished those with no responsibility for slavery or segregation, but made no attempt to explain what effect this had had on achieving its goals. Where answers did attempt to engage with the question, a feature of some answers, which has been commented on before in these reports, was their anecdotal quality. Candidates would write, for example, that affirmative action had had the effect of making black students or workers lazy and consequently fail to reach their potential, with no more evidence apparently than the promptings of their own intuition. Better answers concentrated mainly or solely on the politics of affirmative action and there were three good paragraphs to be had from the effects of Supreme Court decisions such as *Bakke*, *Croson*, *Adarand* and *Gratz*, the attitudes of the two main political parties and the extent and effects of recent state referendums.

When initiated, in the mid 1960s, ~~to~~ President Johnson hoped that affirmative action would help to level the playing field, and create equality of opportunity, but also help to bring about equality of outcome. ~~yet~~ However racial equality is still a significant problem in the USA.

First of all, one of the reasons conservatives have put forward, as to why affirmative action has failed, is that ~~it~~ it does not promote a colour blind society. If one group is given preferential treatment, then many argue it is difficult for another group not to become bitter, ~~it~~ especially if the deciding factor is race. Therefore majority groups are going to feel resentment, and in some cases discriminate more against the minorities.

This is a view shared by Democrat Senator Jim Webb who believes affirmative action damages

'racial harmony'. Overall this viewpoint leads to the idea, that if there is resentment between the races, then equality and integration can never be reached.

Additional affirmative action has, many argue, created an environment where people become reliant on the state. Conservatives would argue this and go on to say that in such an environment minorities will become lazy. This can be shown by the fact that even though high school graduation has gone up considerably since the 1960s, it is now roughly 78.8% for African Americans. College dropout rates for minorities is also rocketing. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is African American, and he believes that if minorities are allowed to flourish on their own merit, they would be far more likely to benefit off their successes. Therefore one could argue that affirmative action only helps to entrench the viewpoint that members of ~~minorities~~ the African American community are naturally not equal. Therefore with the existence of affirmative action, they will never be seen as equal.

Finally there is ~~it~~ it seems, a lack of  
\* Government will to ensure that affirmative  
action succeeds. Barack Obama has remained  
silent on the issue, also since its installati-  
on the Supreme Court has limited it more  
and more. For example in 1978 when California  
Vs Bakke rendered the use of Quotas unconsti-  
tutional. \* Without support from the Government  
is is very difficult for affirmative action  
to end racial inequality.

Whilst equality has come away since  
when segregation was legal and encouraged.  
There is still a large equality gap, e.g. ~~there~~  
30% of African Americans in poverty as  
opposed to whites. To conclude, it seems  
that affirmative action has a long and  
hard time to go before supporters of  
such programs can say equality has  
been reached.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Comments

The strength of this answer is that it tries consistently to engage with the question. There are a couple of weaknesses; some of the analysis has the anecdotal quality referred to above, and the unattributed and undated figure of 86.8% quoted on the second side again illustrates the point about the usefulness of statistics. There are three clearly explained points though, and it just gets into the bottom of Level 3 at 11 marks.



### ResultsPlus

#### Examiner Tip

*Always answer the question* - it is the most basic and repeated advice, but it is also the most ignored. Look carefully at the wording of the question and make sure you keep using its key terms throughout your answer.

## Question 6

Pressure group questions are an attractive option to many candidates, but they are often not done particularly well. This question concerned the factors conducive to pressure group success. It is in the nature of a lot of pressure group activity, successful or otherwise, that it is often covert and not the subject of media coverage in the same way that the political parties or elections are. The consequence for candidates is they are more reliant on their textbooks than in any other area of the specification and pressure group answers very often lack the detail needed to move up the mark range beyond the middle of Level 2.

The example of the AARP illustrates the point. Many candidates referred to its size (again a variety of figures were offered) but most then found it difficult to show, except in very general terms, how the AARP's 35 million members either had or had not translated into success.

Many answers became a formulaic recital of the features mentioned in connection with question 4 ie lobbying, iron triangles and revolving doors. These tend to be reproduced in every pressure group answer, no matter what the question. There was little of the detail or feel for the subject that, for example, the best parties' answers convey. Many of the examples used had a rather tired feel about them and although there are contexts where *Brown v Topeka Board* is the best example available, this question is not one of them. The NRA is the exception and there is a lot of recent material for candidates to draw on. Better answers made extensive use of the recent defeat of the Manchin-Toomey amendment and earlier NRA successes. Incidentally, it is not the case that the NRA were instrumental in getting *DC v Heller* to the Supreme Court, as many candidates claimed, as they were too worried that the verdict would go against gun rights.

Some candidates had obviously done some research and referred to the success or otherwise of very local groups, but this was of limited value as the local context was unknown and the factors involved any way were too specific to have any broader application.

Pressure group success is determined by a number of factors - and one of these is membership size.

Groups like the AARP - who are one of the largest pressure groups in the US are arguably so successful due to their membership size. Nevertheless, there are other factors that are crucial to success such as the issue that they are campaigning for, relationship with the 3 branches of government and of course the funds available to them. Therefore, membership size may be a crucial factor for some pressure groups, but for others it is not - and it is necessarily 'the' crucial factor. //

A pressure group that shows the size of membership is crucial to success is the American Association

for Retired People' (AARP). They stand at an estimate of 40 million members, making them one of the largest ~~it~~ in ~~the~~ the United States. This is critical to their success, ~~because~~ as because they have such a large public voice behind them, congress and the Executive are forced to listen to them. This makes it

easier for the AARP to get things done, and since their campaigning, they have improved the lives of retired people significantly. In addition to this, it is not only the size of their membership which is critical to their success, but also the type of members they have.

The AARP represents the over 60s, who historically, are the largest group who turn up to vote. In the ~~2012~~ 2012 and 2008 election for example, they have been the largest group in terms of ages who have turned out to vote. This is critical to their success, because there is no point having 40 million ~~members~~ members, if none of them turn out to vote. It makes ~~it~~ the AARP goals much more achievable, because because they have a good chance of getting candidates elected / defeated in terms of representing their views. Therefore, membership size is a critical for a pressure group's success, but equally, the type of members are more important.

Another factor that determines the success of a pressure group is the issue they are campaigning and ~~the~~ how obsessed their members are with it. A good example of

this is the National Rifle Association (NRA). They only have 3-4 million members, but they are one of the most successful pressure groups out there,

showing that membership size is not critical to their success. What is critical, is how strongly their members feel towards ~~the~~ the possession of ~~guns~~ firearms and also effective campaigning. As their members have so entrenched in their mind that firearm possession is right, opponents of them find it very hard to defeat them. Most Recent Recently, a proposed law on gun control by ~~the~~ President Obama which would introduce universal background checks for gun purchases was defeated in the Senate, despite 95% of the people in US supporting it. One of the reasons why it was defeated was down to the work of the NRA. All but 3 senators who voted against the bill, had received funding from the NRA in the past. This clearly shows how their ~~own~~ campaigning has been effective and why membership size is not always critical to success. ~~Furthermore, another success of the NRA can be seen in the Supreme Court case of District of Columbia v~~

In addition this, factors like relationships with Congress and the Executive are crucial to the success of a pressure group. For example, at the pressure group AIPAC's party conference in 2012, who represent relations with Islam, Barack Obama, Mitt Romney, John Boehner and approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the

House and the Senate were all present at the conference. This is very impressive for ~~the AIPA~~ AIPAC. No doubt - members of the group had numerous conversations with Obama and members of Congress. AIPAC have been very successful in maintaining relationships with Islam and the US, and the key reason for this is their contacts in the executive and the legislature. Any pressure group who has President Obama at their policy conference is no doubt going to be successful and this is certainly the case with AIPAC. Therefore, relationships with the executive and the legislature, especially inside the White House are very critical to a pressure group's success, showing that membership size is not necessarily that critical.

- Nevertheless - there is no point having lots of memberships, relationships with Congress and the President if there are little funds available to the pressure group. In US politics nowadays, money is arguably very important to success. ~~For~~ For example, the NRA have spent \$200,000 more than they did last year, in relation to the gun control legislation which successfully got defeated.
- The US Chamber of Commerce have nearly spent \$1 billion in total on lobbying since 1998 and around \$17 million just this year. Once

of again, a very successful pressure group supporting the ~~issue~~ US businesses and trade. Pressure groups like these can easily ~~out~~ defeat environmental pressure groups for example. This is because they often have to very little funding, whereas pressure groups supporting US business are obviously supported by huge multinational US firms. Therefore, money is very significant ~~to~~ is determining the success of a pressure.

However, you may argue, that generally, money is determined by membership. ~~and~~ ~~if you put~~ The more members a pressure group will have, you would expect ~~to~~ that it would be able to raise more money. This is because even small donations amongst 40 million members for example do certainly add up. Therefore, money is certainly significant to determining the success of a pressure, but in many instances, the amount of money is determined by the amount of members you have got. ~~Therefore~~ this would support the case that membership size is critical in determining the success of pressure groups.

To conclude, membership size is critical for determining the success of pressure groups, but it is not necessarily 'the' critical factor.

Factors such as money, relationships within government and effective campaigning are arguably more critical.

For example, you could have a successful pressure group with a small membership, lots of money and relations in the White House, but probably not a successful pressure group with a lot of members, but little if money and no relations with inside government. Membership size is still critical, but as US politics is becoming more modernised, money and relationships with Congress and the Executive are arguably becoming more important.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

The strength of this answer is that it avoids the formulaic references to revolving doors and iron triangles found in many pressure group answers. It tries to give specific examples of influence and how it was achieved. The influence of the AARP is linked to the voting behaviour of the elderly; the defeat of Manchin-Toomey is connected to the depth of support for the NRA; and the influence of AIPAC is illustrated by the attendance of prominent politicians at its annual conference. Where it could be improved is in its discussion of the role of money and specifically campaign finance, and there was a lot of relevant material from 2012 relating to the role of Super PACs in particular waiting to be used. It was awarded 31 marks.

## Question 7

As usual, the parties essay question produced the best answers on the paper and the very best were of really outstanding quality. Anyone who believes that standards are falling or the standard of education has been reduced ought to spend some time reading these answers to see what today's 18 year olds are capable of achieving in 45 minutes in exam conditions. As well of course, they demonstrate how inspirational teaching is giving these candidates a genuine enthusiasm and engagement with the subject. The strongest answers were able to discuss with real authority the effects of the rise of the Tea Party, the significance of the result of last year's presidential primary and the extent to which traditional social conservative issues such as same sex marriage, have lost resonance, less than 10 years after the state referendums on the issue played a significant role in President Bush's re-election in 2004. It is of course the case that nearly all Republicans are both in varying degrees fiscal and social conservatives, and some Republican politicians were legitimately described as both. Only a few candidates were able to distinguish between the populist Tea Party variety of fiscal conservative, represented in the Senate by Rand Paul and Ted Cruz, and the more traditional big business Wall Street conservatism of Mitt Romney.

The rise of the tea-party has led many to feel that Fiscal Conservatism is now the dominant ideological faction within the Republican party. Though to what extent is this true.

The fiscal Conservatives have certainly gained prominence over the course of 2013, largely as a result of the IRS scandal. Holder and the IRS are currently undergoing questioning surrounding the denial of status to tea-party groups across America. This issue was compounded by Rubio and Bachmann, both of whom stood on Capitol Hill and angrily disputed the use of the IRS and has led many Conservatives to call for the President's impeachment. The Tea-party are certainly not strong enough to achieve such radical change, though this scandal is proof that the government feared the electoral impact of Fiscal Conservatism and that ideologically they are increasingly prominent both in the Republicans and also

at a national level.

Secondly, their Congressional impact must be considered. The exponential rise in both houses by Fiscal Conservatives has been evidenced by the prominence of the Congressional tea party caucus in both chambers and the 'tea party tidal-wave' headed by Rubio and Paul. This rise has come at a time when they were able to prevent the abolition of Bush's tax cuts and in fact extending them by \$38 billion in 2011. They also played a major role in the Fiscal cliff legislation of 2011, during which, government was faced with the threat of closure. This is major evidence not just of Congressional success but of the party's success at grassroots, as to be elected and to have this power depends upon a broad support base. This Congressional success is more important than the IRS scandal as it is a long-term base for strong Congressional Fiscal Conservatism, and their dominance in the Republican party.

Their electoral success is somewhat tempered by the fact that they have only seen minimal success in Presidential elections. Bachmann

did manage to win the Iowa straw poll after only 2 months of campaigning, though in the Iowa Caucus, she failed to keep pace with the more Social Conservative Romney and Santorum. This is not to say that in future <sup>they</sup> shall not progress to a Presidential faction, but currently they lack the 'restore our future' Romney Super Pac and the broad base of support needed to compete electorally. This shows how electoral prominence is highly ideological and financial, as extreme tea party candidates are weeded out by the primary system and they have not been able to take advantage of the Citizens United v. FEC (2010) case to fund their campaigns.

Social Conservatives have certainly gained prominence within the Republican party in recent years. Social Conservatives have been able to acquire key positions including John Boehner as the house majority speaker. This allowed Boehner to become a larger political force, campaigning for an order to stop all Federal funding for groups supporting for abortions, he succeeded. Rick Perry has also become a strong Social Conservative, evidenced by his passage through the Texas state legislature for the termination

of funding for all groups supporting abortions.

Social Conservative strength is once more evidenced by Perry's position as Governor of Texas. This shows that Social Conservatives have achieved electoral success at both Federal and State level, something the tea party have failed to do. Though Social Conservatives struggle Presidentially, as shown by Perry's lackluster debating in 2010, in which he could not recall the 3<sup>rd</sup> department he would close, it was energy. Though this slip shows how they have not yet managed Primary strength, though they are equally as strong as Fiscal Conservatives.

The strongest element currently operating in the Republican party are the Conservative Republicans.

Conservative Republicans are superior in that they are affecting Politics at state and federal level. Bush was the most prominent member as a former President, vetoing stem cell and abortion bills during his time in office. More forceful now however, is Chris Christie. Christie is the current ~~governor~~ governor of New Jersey and is widely seen as being the strongest Republican candidate for the 2016 Republican Presidential nomination. Christie has not only gained local prominence in New Jersey, he

has expanded his support base in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, which made both he and the President appear as a bipartisan force and also as two strong politicians. This coverage will undoubtedly help Christie to further his 2016 campaign as he has shown his nature as a strong politician and how he is exploiting the benefits of the 'new media'. It also stands to reason that Christie's economic success in New Jersey will make him a strong candidate for the Presidency. Within a party, there can be no greater success than the acquisition of the Presidency, something Conservative Republicans excel at.

Moderates have also gained some Republican strength. Dent and the Republican Tuesday group now host 49 members, whilst Snowe and Collins have both been strong advocates of gay rights, including voting for the repeal of the 'don't ask, don't tell' policy in the Senate. Though due to their lack of ideological cohesion with the rest of the party and their failure electorally, as with Snowe being unseated, they and the Maine Street partnership are not attracting the grassroots of Federal support needed for prominence.

In Conclusion, whilst Fiscal Conservatism is a dominant force in the party, as shown by the 'tea party tidal wave' and the IRS scandal, their support base is too small and ideologically narrow to flourish at a Presidential level. Therefore, the conclusion must be drawn that Conservative Republicans are ultimately ~~not~~ strongest within the Republican party as they have achieved Presidentially and there is little doubt that Christie will seek to further the Conservative Republicans within and outside the party.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Comments**

This is, in many ways, an impressive answer and by no means untypical of the higher level answers to this question. There are real touches of sophistication in the analysis and the way the candidate links different parts of the argument. The candidate shows a confident and detailed knowledge of contemporary politics, right up to the revelations this year surrounding the IRS and their treatment of the applications of Tea Party-affiliated groups for tax exempt status. One query concerns the use of the term 'conservative Republicans' on the fourth side. Initially it is linked to President George W. Bush, which suggests that 'compassionate conservative' is intended, but then Chris Christie is mentioned, to whom this label would not usually be applied. Nevertheless, a very good answer and it was awarded 37 marks.



**ResultsPlus**

**Examiner Tip**

Keep up to date with the news - one of the impressive features of this answer is its knowledge of recent developments in the Republican Party, most of which cannot be found in textbooks. Read the US papers online and watch US news channels like MSNBC and Fox.

## Question 8

An unfortunate aspect of this question, which was generally better than question 6, was that some candidates spent some or all of their answer discussing - unrewardably - the merits of the Electoral College. This was surprising as both the nomination process (June 2011) and the Electoral College (June 2012) have been the subject of recent questions, and the mark schemes for both make it clear what the relevant terms refer to. The vast majority of candidates, it would have to be said, did recognise that the question was asking about the primaries, caucuses and national conventions which select the major parties' presidential candidates. Examiners noted that criticisms of the process, in relation to cost, front loading, lack of peer review and the problems of voting in both primaries and caucuses were usually stronger than arguments supporting it. As with most topics, there are a number of recurring misconceptions attached to it, and only a few candidates seemed aware that super-delegates have not succeeded in reversing the popular vote since their introduction in the 1980s. Lack of knowledge of campaign finance regulations was referred to in connection with question 4 and very few candidates referred to the system of matching funds. Hardly any candidates seemed to know that it has been almost entirely superseded by self-financing.

While, in the past ~~candidate~~ presidential candidates tended to simply be selected by party 'bosses', today a series of primaries and caucuses across the country determine this decision. The process certainly seems more democratic, but as 2012's long harrowing process for Mitt Romney suggests, it is an expensive and demanding procedure. This essay will argue the system is in need of reform, although not a return to the 'smoke-filled-rooms' of the past.

Primaries are 'mini-elections' where a state votes for a candidate, whereas caucuses are a series of meetings across the state where groups of people collect in groups, slowly eliminating, until a candidate is chosen. Clearly the public get involved in this process. A series of expensive advertising campaigns in every state will be before voters, allowing them to get involved in politics. They could even volunteer to help themselves, handing out leaflets for example. In 2008 we saw 30% turnouts, which shows people turning up. Equally, you are then removing power from the small elite at the top of the party. For example in 1968 the Democrats had to rely on party 'bosses' to make

a decision. This feels undemocratic. Although some might argue that experienced members of the party should have influence,

the Democrats' 'super-delegates' do allow for this. In 2008, super-delegates made up for 20% of the delegate votes, so party leaders do have influence, just not total influence. For those who think that turnout is always too low (in 2012, less than 20%) it is worth considering that these will be knowledgeable and committed voters who do turn up. Particularly those who attend caucuses will likely have studied the campaign literature and know a lot about which candidate is best. Newcomers have more of a chance. While party leaders might stick to the people they know, these committed voters who turn up at primaries and caucuses will study newcomers as well. Barack Obama was able to get the 2008 nomination largely because of a string of caucus successes. Rick Santorum won in Iowa<sup>2012</sup> after being the first candidate to visit all 99 counties. Ron Paul also did well, as he had a strong, concentrated group of supporters. In the case of open primaries there are added benefits. Since anyone can vote in one open primary you are able to get an idea of the national view of a candidate, who then is likely to do well running for president. Of course critics would point out that open primaries are susceptible to 'raiding', where members of opposing parties deliberately 'vote' in an election, but this is not a problem in closed primaries or caucuses. Overall, it seems there are many good things about the current system for nominating presidential candidates.

On the other hand there are some clear problems. The turnout is seriously low sometimes, as already mentioned. In fact the people who do turn up tend to be the most extreme of the party supporters. Mitt Romney was required to stake

Some fairly radical right wing views, which he would later 'flip-flop' on when going for the nation vote, ~~on things like~~ abortion this '47%' comment which was secretly recorded would have been when he was under this guise. The lavish <sup>primary</sup> campaign ads in 2012 show the importance of money, for example Rick Perry's anti-Obama ad. which seemed to show America as a wasteland, with dramatic commentary. With 50 states to cover ~~and~~ and for example Iowa's 1800 caucuses, it is clearly a huge undertaking that can put off good potential candidates. Pressure groups get involved and the wealthy ones will have a lot of influence particularly since the Wisconsin Supreme Court decision effectively stopped the 30 day ban on ads before a primary. These ads can be dangerous as they divide a party. It was Rick Perry who accused Romney of 'vulture capitalism' at Bain Capital, a label that would stick. Clinton and Obama had a fierce fight in 2008 that would not be patched up till the convention. Pat Buchanan's strong challenge of incumbent H Bush in 1992, a ~~week~~ where H Bush famously came 2nd in New Hampshire seriously damaged his ability to beat Clinton. Caucuses can be messy as well. ~~last year~~ ~~in Iowa~~ Recently in Iowa there were misplaced votes from 8 precincts, it is clear

that things can potentially go wrong when you hold almost 2000 caucuses. The scale of the nomination process means that ~~created~~ candidates only really have time to 'stop and wave' before they have to move on. ~~The~~ <sup>The</sup> phenomenon ~~of~~ of front-loading has exaggerated this. 'Invisible primaries' start earlier and earlier. JFK in 1960 started campaigning 66 days before the first primary, Obama 332 days before the 2008 primary. There is no time to build up momentum in campaigns when this happens. You

are reliant on backing from prominent party figures and early funding. Admittedly this phenomenon was reduced in 2012. Tsunami Tuesday, on 5 Feb 2008 meant 55% of candidates were already chosen, whereas only around 10 states were on 2012's Super Tuesday. However, it is clear that the current process suffers serious problems.

People being involved in the selection process is important. However reforms are required to stop front-loading, make the process less cumbersome, perhaps by stopping caucuses and also there need to be more limits on funding primary campaigns. Many would argue though that the the end of the days of 'smoke-filled-rooms' is a very good thing. If the party's already taken some measures to stop front-loading this year, California didn't go till June. It will be interesting to see if this sort of reform continues.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

This is an example of a very good Level 3 answer to this question. Its strengths are its detailed knowledge of recent nomination campaigns and the 2012 Republican campaign in particular, and the intelligence with which this knowledge is used to support an argument. Only a very few answers referred, for example, to the lost results from eight Iowa precincts last year, though it is surprising that the candidate appears not to have heard of *Citizens United*. The answer was awarded 37 marks.



### ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Introductions are important and this answer provides a model which should be copied. It does the two things an introduction needs to do; setting the context for the debate over the nomination process and stating clearly the line of argument the essay is going to pursue.

## **Paper Summary**

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Make sure you answer the question and keep referring to its key terms in your answer.
- Avoid using statistics unless these are well known and recognised.
- Read widely and use media sources to supplement your textbooks.
- Remember the importance of introductions and conclusions in long answers.
- Make connections in the first sentence of each paragraph.

## **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>



Ofqual



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828  
with its registered office at Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE