



Practice Exam Papers

for A Level AQA Politics: Paper 1:
Government and Politics of the UK

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Teacher's Introduction

Welcome to your pack of practice exam papers for the AQA Paper 1 – Government and Politics of the UK of the specification.

This pack contains four practice exam papers, all of which cover the specification range for Government and Politics of the UK. They follow a very similar style to that of the actual exam paper. This means there is a total of three questions that must be covered, split into three sections. Students will answer nine-mark questions in Section A, assessing the AO1 (recall) and AO2 (analysis) skills. The next two sections will involve AO3 (evaluation). Section B will involve a 25-mark essay question with an unseen source, while Section C will contain a choice of two 25-mark essay questions without sources.

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A comprehensive teacher's section is included, providing answers to the exam questions and mark schemes. These mark schemes contain a level mark scheme to determine what level of response is required, along with the specific AO1, AO2 and AO3 learning skills that should be present and used in answering each question.

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ZigZag Practice Exam

Supporting A Level

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Politics Paper 1

Government and Politics of the UK

Exam Paper A

Name	
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Time allowed:

2 hours

INSTRUCTIONS

- Use a black pen.
- Answer all questions from Section A.
- Answer the question from Section B.
- Answer **either** question 5 or question 6 from Section C.

INFORMATION

- Marks are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for the paper is 77.

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Section A: Short Questions

Answer question 1, question 2 and question 3.

- 1) Explain and analyse three functions of Parliament.
- 2) Explain and analyse three significant consequences of devolution for the UK.
- 3) Explain and analyse three aspects of the 2017 referendums and their impact on the UK.



Section B: Source Question

Answer question 4 after reading the extract below.

The right to vote will be extended to people aged 16 and 17 in some Welsh constituencies, proposals to be announced this week. The move would bring the country in line with Scotland, where 16-year-olds can already vote in Scottish elections. Despite cross-party support, a Labour member's bill introduced in November failed to gather enough parliamentary votes to become government policy on general elections, where voters must be 18. We received a lot of feedback on what they thought of the idea of reducing the voting age. Here is what some young people had to say.

When we turn 16 we are trusted with responsibilities such as consenting to medical treatment, buying lottery tickets, marrying or registering a civil partnership. It is absolutely absurd to give us these responsibilities without letting them have a say on their own future. The government will often affect younger generations far more than the older ones. The fact that the baby boomers in voting means that the policies they support get looked at more than ours. If the government had to be held to account by a larger age demographic, it might be more likely to cut the education budget, for example. It is our future and we should have a say on it. We are denied the right to have a say on policies that affect us, such as on the minimum wage and zero-hours contracts. We are the ones who have to pay rising university fees, yet we have to sit and watch an older generation, many of whom are getting university for free, make that decision for us.

(<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/jan/29/have-faith-in-our-future>)

- 4) Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the above article over the right to vote for 16 and 17-year-olds.

Section C: Essay Question

Answer **either** question 5 **or** question 6. Include relevant content from your own knowledge of UK politics.

Either

- 5) 'Constitutional reforms since 1997 have helped modernise British politics.' Analyse this statement.

Or

- 6) 'The introduction of the UK Supreme Court has had no effect on democracy.' Analyse this statement.

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Preview of Questions Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of questions ends here to avoid students previewing questions before they are set. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.

Exam Paper B

Section A: Short Questions

- 1) Explain and analyse three factors that favour the major political parties in the UK.
- 2) Explain and analyse three areas of UK law in which the EU has had an impact.
- 3) Explain and analyse three functions of the prime minister in the UK.

AO1 = 6 marks, AO2 = 3 marks.

Level	Mark	Description
3	7-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 (<i>knowledge</i>) Demonstrates in-depth knowledge of political ideas, institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with careful choice of knowledge and comprehensive reasoning and appropriate examples, where necessary. • AO2 (<i>analysis</i>) Well-structured and organised answer on three clearly focused on the question at hand and is authoritatively and relevant to the question.
2	4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 (<i>knowledge</i>) Demonstrates sound knowledge of political ideas, institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with careful choice of knowledge and comprehensive reasoning and appropriate examples, where necessary, that support knowledge of political ideas, institutions and systems. Further detail may be required. • AO2 (<i>analysis</i>) Mostly well-structured and organised answer on three clearly focused on the question at hand. Answer is coherent and relevant to the question, though may at times be too descriptive.
1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1 (<i>knowledge</i>) Demonstrates a limited range of knowledge of political ideas, institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge and some reasoning and examples to support knowledge of political ideas, institutions and systems. • AO2 (<i>analysis</i>) Analysis rarely stretches beyond description and does not fully address the question. Structure and organisation are weak.
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No content worthy of marking.

Question 1: Explain and analyse three factors that favour the major political parties in the UK.

Indicative content

In explaining and analysing, students should attempt to outline some of the following:

- Explanation and analysis of the first-past-the-post electoral system and how it favours the major parties to achieve representation, such as UKIP's success in gaining votes in 2015 but not winning seats.
- Explanation and analysis of the historical development of the Conservatives as the most established than minor parties, such as the Greens, who only have short bursts of success.
- Explanation and analysis of the ideological spectrum and how the two main parties have moved towards the centre.
- Explanation and analysis of the funding system and how most money for parties comes from donors, such as the Conservatives and unions for Labour. Funding advantages the major parties.
- Explanation and analysis of the media and the increased representation that the major parties receive in relation to the others.
- Explanation and analysis of the fact that the structure of Parliament is organised to favour the major parties, in that it is separated into government, usually made up of one party, and government-in-waiting.

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Students should demonstrate that they understand any three factors that favour more than three should not result in a better mark, but select the best-explained three. Any relevant and accurate should be rewarded. For each point explained, award a maximum of 3 marks. For example, if only two points are mentioned, award a maximum of 6 marks.

Question 2: Explain and analyse three areas of UK law in which the EU has had an influence.

Indicative content

In explaining and analysing, students should attempt to outline some of the following:

- Explanation and analysis of the free movement of people and how this has affected the number of EU citizens coming in.
- Explanation and analysis of European courts and how they uphold EU treaties.
- Explanation and analysis of agriculture and fisheries, where the EU has authority. Reference to the 1990 case.
- Explanation and analysis of the social policy of the EU which all member states specifically refers to workers' rights.
- Explanation and analysis of the role of Brexit. The Great Repeal Act, for example, which has been introduced into UK law.

Students should demonstrate that they understand any three areas of EU influence. More than three should not result in a better mark, but select the best-explained three. Any relevant and accurate should be rewarded. For each point explained, award a maximum of 3 marks. For example, if only two points are mentioned, award a maximum of 6 marks.

Question 3: Explain and analyse three functions of the prime minister in the UK.

Indicative content

In explaining and analysing, students should attempt to outline some of the following:

- Explanation and analysis of political leadership, which includes shaping the overall direction of the government.
- Explanation and analysis of national leadership, where in times of national emergency the prime minister represents the public.
- Explanation and analysis of appointing government ministers which may take the form of individual appointments or an entire reshuffle.
- Explanation and analysis of chairing the cabinet, deciding which ministers will be responsible for which concerns addressed.
- Explanation and analysis of managing the executive branch, including the civil service and the general organisation.
- Explanation and analysis of prerogative powers, which include the deployment of the armed forces.
- Explanation and analysis of representing the UK internationally. The prime minister is the UK diplomat for the UK when dealing with international allies, as Theresa May has done in Brexit negotiations, for example.
- Explanation and analysis of the prime ministerial function of legislation. This includes the prime minister as the head of the majority party in Parliament.

Students should demonstrate that they understand any three functions of the prime minister. More than three should not result in a better mark, but select the best-explained three. Any relevant and accurate should be rewarded. For each point explained, award a maximum of 3 marks. For example, if only two points are mentioned, award a maximum of 6 marks.

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Section B: Source Question

4) Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the above article as to whether the legislature on the executive has increased in recent times.

AO1 = 5 marks, AO2 = 10 marks, AO3 = 10 marks.

Level	Mark	Description
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AO1 (knowledge) Demonstrates in-depth and extensive knowledge and ideas in political and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge. Points in the source are developed. AO2 (analysis) Well-structured and organised answer, consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly presented. Comparisons between key points are clear and well-supported based on well-chosen and clearly presented examples. AO3 (evaluation) Sound evaluation leads to well-supported conclusions and analysis. Pertinent points of view, which may include the source, are considered and evaluated in order to form logical judgements.
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AO1 (knowledge) Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the issues and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge, though some could be developed further. AO2 (analysis) Clear answer, containing logical points consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly presented. Comparisons between key points are clear and supported by pertinent examples, incorporating the source. AO3 (evaluation) Clear evaluation relates conclusions to the facts and analysis, which contain logical flaws. Pertinent points of view, which may include the source, are considered and evaluated in order to form logical judgements.
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AO1 (knowledge) Demonstrates a range of knowledge and understanding of the issues and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge present. Points in the source are developed with some descriptive. AO2 (analysis) Structured answer, consistently focused on answering the question with limited analysis. Analysis is present, and not entirely descriptive. Knowledge is substituted for analysis. Comparisons between key points with limited evidence. Judgements may incorporate the source. AO3 (evaluation) Evaluation related to the facts and analysis is present, though logical flaws. Pertinent points of view, which may include the source, are presented, although their use and logical links are limited.

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Level	Mark	Description
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates limited range of knowledge and understanding of political ideas, institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge, but factual errors and extraneous points are present. Points in the source are developed with some balance, but are mainly descriptive and lack support. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer somewhat structured, with limited focus on tackling the question. Analytical points are not entirely absent or one-sided, though tend to be unclear and often unsubstantiated. Comparison between key points is largely unclear. Analysis of the source is mainly descriptive. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions not entirely absent, but generally unrelated to the facts presented. Pertinent points of view, such as those in the source, are mentioned although without expanding or using them to support arguments.
1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political ideas and systems. However, much of what is presented is inaccurate, especially to support analysis. Points in the source are developed descriptively with little attempt at balance. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer is generally disorganised, failing to tackle the question. Attempts at analysis are descriptive, unsubstantiated and imbalanced. Links between points are unclear. Analysis of the source is imbalanced and rare. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions, where included, are unrelated to facts and analysis. Pertinent points of view, including those in the source, are largely absent.
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No content worthy of marking.

Question 4: Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the above article as to whether the power of the legislature on the executive has increased in recent times.

Indicative content

In the analysis, evaluation and comparison of arguments, students should outline some of the following:

- Analysis and evaluation of the development of elective dictatorship and the current debate on whether Parliament can effectively check the executive.
- Analysis and evaluation of the significance of the election of select committee chairs on the floor of Parliament.
- Analysis and evaluation of the significance of the backbench Business Committee on the scrutiny of Parliament.
- Analysis and evaluation of the significance of ‘government time’ and how this affects the ability of Parliament to check the power of the executive.
- Analysis and evaluation of the significance of an increased number of minority governments.
- Analysis and evaluation of the fact that there is still work to be done, exemplified by the recommendations outlined by Bercow.
- Evaluation and comparison of the source and whether it supports the view that parliamentary power has increased recently.
- Evaluation and comparison of the arguments made in the source and outside the source for parliament preventing elective dictatorship more effectively.
- Analysis, evaluation and comparison of the source, in the context of:
 - the author(s) of the source
 - the type of source it is
 - the identifiable purpose of the source
 - the relevance of the source to the question and broader issue and how well it represents all sides of the argument.

- Students should identify some of these points for this question.

In the case of this question, it is a written extract from Speaker John Bercow in 2017, which is politically neutral. It is principally designed to inform and persuade. Reference made to Bercow has been more proactive in increasing the power of backbenchers than speaking in a

Students should analyse by deciding which views expressed in the source support the debate (AO2). Evaluation should involve a judgement on the effectiveness of the arguments and alternative arguments (AO3). The analysis and evaluation should be closely related, although further relevant arguments can be borrowed from outside the source and used to support the analysis.

The introduction should clearly signpost, just as the conclusion should clearly relate to the question. Students can engage with the arguments in the source they cannot achieve above level 4.

Section C: Essay Question

- 5) 'Representative democracy in the UK has significant weaknesses and should be replaced by a different form of democracy.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.
- 6) 'Pressure groups contribute to less pluralist political participation in the UK.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

AO1 = 5 marks, AO2 = 10 marks, AO3 = 10 marks.

Level	Mark	Description
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates in-depth and extensive knowledge and understanding of the institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Well-structured and organised answer, consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly expressed. Links between key points are clear and well-structured. Pertinent and clearly presented examples. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Sound evaluation leads to well-supported conclusions. Pertinent points of view are considered and evaluated logically.
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge, though not be comprehensive. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Clear answer, containing analytical points and consistently focused on the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly expressed. Links between key points are clear and relevant. Pertinent examples. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Clear evaluation relating conclusions to the facts and arguments. Pertinent points of view are considered and evaluated logically, although the evaluation may be limited.

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Level	Mark	Description
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates a range of knowledge and understanding of institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Structured answer, consistently based on answering the question. Limited analysis. Analysis is relevant, and not entirely one-sided. Knowledge is used to support analysis. Links between key points are limited. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions related to the facts and analysis are presented. Flaws are identified. Pertinent points of view are presented, although limited.
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates limited range of knowledge and understanding of institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with some factual errors and extraneous points. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer somewhat structured, with limited focus on tackling the question. Points are not entirely absent or one-sided, though tend to be unsubstantiated. Links between key points are largely missing. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions not entirely absent, but generally unrelated to the facts and analysis presented. Pertinent points of view are mentioned, although using them to support arguments.
1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of institutions and systems. However, much of what is presented is inaccurate and does not support analysis. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer largely disorganised, failing to tackle the question. Analysis tends to be descriptive, unsubstantiated and imbalanced. Links between key points are unclear. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions, where included, are unrelated to facts and analysis. Points of view are largely absent.
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No content worthy of marking.

Question 5: ‘Representative democracy in the UK has significant weaknesses and a direct form of democracy.’ Analyse and evaluate this statement.

Indicative content

In analysing and evaluating, students should mention some of the following points:

- Analysis and evaluation of the role of representatives, which has been compared to the will of the people. The scandal of MPs’ expenses is a good example. The move away from a public agenda, citizens have the ultimate authority to recall representatives.
- Analysis and evaluation of low turnout as a result of a lack of political participation. Recent elections have been the lowest turnouts in post-war history, indicating apathy. Referendums have shown that representative democracy can remove tyranny of the majority, giving more of a voice to the minority.
- Analysis and evaluation of the fact that competition politically is a consequence of a free market. Competition between parties and is healthy. It means that there is a platform for all voices. If competition is close, parties will appeal to the middle ground and marginal groups.

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- Analysis and evaluation of not being able to guarantee the will of politicians not solely give their energy to representing constituents.
- Analysis and evaluation of a tendency of representative democracies to allow Leaving the decision-making to others can result in a lack of political interest on the other hand, leaving the decisions to those who are more informed can be beneficial to the most people.

There are areas of the specification more broadly which may relate to the question include the first-past-the-post electoral system, the party system and the functions. Do not award students above a level unless they have included synoptic links.

Students should be able to introduce the topic in a satisfying way, signposting the conclusion and conclude effectively with concise attention to the question. Any evaluation should



Question 6: 'Pressure groups contribute to less pluralist political participation in the UK' – evaluate this statement.

Indicative content

In analysing and evaluating, students should identify some of the following points:

- Analysis and evaluation of how insider status is significant in how much influence is achieved politically. This can only be achieved with close links to government officials. However, some groups have still been successful by using different methods.
- Analysis and evaluation of why wealth and the availability of financial resources are important to exert political influence, an example being the methods used by the Conservative Party. On the other hand, some methods used by pressure groups, such as civil disobedience, do not require a large amount of funding.
- Analysis and evaluation of moral authority and how pressure groups with a large moral authority, such as Greenpeace, are the ones most likely to be able to instigate genuine change, but it is often easier for a small group to be heard. This includes, but is not restricted to, online petitions.
- Analysis and evaluation of the role of celebrities and their significance in the success of pressure groups. However, there are several more significant factors that are likely to determine the success of a group. For instance, the fact that they usually require public support cannot be considered a significant factor in pluralism.
- Analysis and evaluation of the fact that pressure groups can offer representation to groups, such as the Howard League for Penal Reform which represents prisoners. This may be seen as contributing to a more pluralist political system in the UK.
- Analysis and evaluation of pressure groups contributing to the 'marketplace of ideas' in the UK, where there is a platform for a range of different views and opinions to be heard. This is often done through institutions. When these pressure groups influence and work with political parties, pluralism can take place in UK politics.

There are areas of the specification more broadly which may relate to the question include direct versus representative democracy or the role of the media. Do not award students above a level unless they have included synoptic links.

Students should be able to introduce the topic in a satisfying way, signposting the conclusion and conclude effectively with concise attention to the question. Any evaluation should



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Preview of Answers Ends Here

This is a limited inspection copy. Sample of answers ends here to stop students looking up answers to their assessments. See contents page for details of the rest of the resource.