



Practice Exam Papers

For A Level AQA Politics: Paper 2:
Government and Politics of the
USA and Comparative Politics

zigzageducation.co.uk

POD
9262

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...
Register at publishmenow.co.uk

Contents

Thank You for Choosing ZigZag Education.....

Teacher Feedback Opportunity.....

Terms and Conditions of Use

Teacher’s Introduction.....

Practice Papers

 Exam Paper A

 Exam Paper B

 Exam Paper C

 Exam Paper D

Mark Schemes

 Exam Paper A

 Exam Paper B

 Exam Paper C

 Exam Paper D

INSPECTION COPY



INSPECTION COPY



INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Teacher's Introduction

This pack contains four practice exam papers, all of which cover the specification range for Government and Politics in the USA and Comparative Politics. They follow a very similar style to that of the AQA sample assessment materials. This means there is a total of 120 questions that must be answered, split into three sections. Students will answer three 9-mark questions in section A, testing the AO1 (knowledge) and AO2 (analysis) skills. The next two sections will bring in AO3 (evaluation). Section B will have a 25-mark essay question with an unseen source. Section C will have a 25-mark essay question without sources.

Always
we
inclu
spec
ass

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 is required for each mark along with the specific AO1, AO2 and AO3 learning skills that should be present and used in answering each question.



INSPECTION COPY

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Free Updates!

Provide your email address to receive any future free updates made to this resource or other politics resources you have purchased, and details of any promotions for you.

* resulting from minor specification changes, suggestions from teachers and peer reviews, or occasional errors reported by customers

Go to zzed.uk/freeupdates



ZigZag Practice Exam
Supporting A Level

INSPECTION COPY

Politics Paper 2

Government and Politics of the USA and Comparison
Exam Paper B

Name	
------	--

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.

COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED



Section A – Short questions

Answer question 1, question 2 and question 3

- 1) Explain and analyse three features of the electoral college voting system.
- 2) Explain and analyse three methods used by interest groups and the media to influence government.
- 3) Explain and analyse three ways in which the cultural approach can be used to explain similarities and differences between the prime minister and the president.



Section B – Source question

Answer question 4 after reading the extract below

Louis Michael Seidman wants us to “kick our constitutional-law addiction.” Why? He says the system “dysfunctional” and our government “broken” but makes no convincing case to blame for our recurring political breakdowns or that giving up on it would reduce the risk. Though it is, the rickety old structure has served us well over the centuries.

Mr. Seidman offers nothing to suggest how we might go about governing ourselves without the Constitution, the skeletal structure that frames a living conversation about our relationship with the world. It is a blind worship of “a poetic piece of parchment.”

He confidently predicts that his proposal wouldn't yield to a tyranny. But he doesn't even mention the “political stability” he values while treating the Constitution's provisions as if they were accepted or rejected through processes very different from the constitution-free structure he never mentions.

He tells us that he would like to see free speech and religion, equal protection and due process, but never explains why he thinks those values over others or how his maddeningly vague proposal would protect freedom and not risk tyranny.



Adapted from

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/04/opinion/is-it-time-to-kick-our-constitutional-law-addiction.html>)

- 4) Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the source for and against the claim that the Constitution can serve the US well.

Section C - Essay question

Answer **either** question 5 **or** question 6.

Include relevant content from everything you know about the topic.

Either

- 5) ‘The Supreme Court in the US is not politically independent and needs to be reformed.’ Analyse and evaluate this statement.

Or

- 6) ‘In the US, interest groups have significantly more political control than in the UK.’ Analyse and evaluate this statement.



**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



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.

Mark Schemes

Exam Paper A

Section A – Short Questions

AO1 = 6 marks, AO2 = 3 marks.

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

Question 1: Explain and analyse three functions of Congress in the US.

Indicative content

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

- Explanation and analysis of the representative function, including demographic representation as well as the ability to use public opinion as a determiner for voting.
- Explanation and analysis of the legislative function, which may explain the rigorous process of passing bills, as well as some checks and balances, such as partisanship.
- Explanation and analysis of oversight, its role in checks and balances and the power of the president and the judiciary.
- Explanation and analysis of governing in everyday political life.
- Explanation and analysis of the confirmation of executive appointments and the power of the executive to make sure appointments aren't underqualified.
- Explanation and analysis of the role of Congress in setting the budget as another of their legislative agenda.

Students should demonstrate that they understand any three functions of Congress. Students should not result in a better mark, but select the best-explained three. Any relevant and accurate should be rewarded. For every point explained, award a maximum of 3 marks. If two points are mentioned, award a maximum of 6 marks.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



Question 2: Explain and analyse three Supreme Court cases related to civil liberties

Indicative content

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

- Explanation and analysis of *Roe v Wade* 1973, which determined that any real abortion is unconstitutional. It is referred to whenever this topic is brought for
- Explanation and analysis of *Brown v Board of Education* 1954 and its ruling that educational institutions based on race is unconstitutional.
- Explanation and analysis of *District of Columbia v Heller* 2008, in which bans on handguns in the
- Explanation and analysis of *Fisher v University of Texas* 2013, which overturned a ruling used by the university which had used race over merit in the selection process
- Explanation and analysis of *Obergefell v Hodges* 2015, which guaranteed the right for same-sex couples.

Students should demonstrate that they understand any three functions of three Supreme Court rights. Explaining more than three should not result in a better mark, but select the relevant points that are appropriate and accurate should be rewarded. For every point a maximum of 3 marks each; for example, if only two points are mentioned, award 6 marks.

Question 3: Explain and analyse three ways that the structural approach can be used to explain constitutional differences between the UK and the US.

Indicative content

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

- A definition of what structural theory is, that it focuses on the institutions within a country and how their processes work.
- Explanation and analysis of structural theory and how it applies to the constitutional framework of each country, the UK, and the implications of this.
- Explanation and analysis of the separation of powers and the difference of the two countries, mainly characterised by no single individual being a member of more than one branch of government.
- Explanation and analysis of codification and the potential for the constitution to be amended.
- Explanation and analysis of structural theory and the amendment process and how amendments have been made to the flexible UK constitution, whereas the US constitution has been amended 27 times because of the rigid process.
- Explanation and analysis of structures and processes that surround devolution in the UK and the US. The fact that the US Constitution grants more power to the states through the powers that are 'shared' in devolution agreements in the UK.
- Application of structural theory to relevant areas of constitutional difference between the UK and the US.

Students should demonstrate that they understand any three types of structural theory and the constitutional framework of each country. Explaining more than three should not result in a better mark, but the best-explained three. Any relevant points that are appropriate and accurate should be rewarded. For every point explained, award a maximum of 3 marks each; for example, if only two points are mentioned, award a maximum of 6 marks.

Students that mention points that do not relate to structural theory should not be rewarded.

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



Section B – Source Question

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

Level	Mark	Description
5	21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates in-depth and extensive knowledge and understanding of political institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge. Points in the source are developed with sophisticated analysis. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Well-structured and organised answer, consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and authoritative. Comparisons between key points are clear and well-structured. Judgements and clearly presented examples, incorporating the source. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Sound evaluation leads to well-supported conclusions with analysis. Pertinent points of view, which may include those from the source, are considered and evaluated in order to form logical arguments.
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge. Points in the source are developed with some balance, but could be developed further. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Clear answer, containing analytical points consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly expressed, but may be substituted for analysis. Comparisons between key points are clear and relevant. Judgements and pertinent examples, incorporating the source. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Clear evaluation relates conclusions to the facts and analysis. Pertinent points of view, which may include those from the source, are considered and evaluated in order to form logical arguments to be developed further.
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates a range of knowledge and understanding of political institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge, but points in the source are developed with some balance, but are mainly descriptive. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Structured answer, consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is present, and not entirely one-sided, but is substituted for analysis. Comparisons between key points are clear and relevant. Judgements may incorporate the source. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions related to the facts and analysis are presented. Pertinent points of view, which may include those from the source, are considered although their use and logical links are limited.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



Level	Mark	Description
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 but errors and extraneous points are present. Points in the source are at balance, but are mainly descriptive and lack support. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer somewhat structured, with limited focus on tackling the question. Points are largely absent or one-sided, though tend to be somewhat substantiated. Comparison between key points is largely absent. Source is mainly descriptive. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions not entirely absent, but generally unrelated to the question. Pertinent points of view, such as those in the source, are presented 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 institutions and systems. However, much of what is presented is inaccurate and lacks support analysis. Points in the source are developed descriptively but at balance. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Answer largely disorganised, failing to tackle the question properly. Analysis is descriptive, unsubstantiated and imbalanced. Links between points are rare. Analysis of the source is imbalanced and rare. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions, where included, are unrelated to facts and arguments. Conclusions including those in the source, are largely absent.
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No content for awarding marks.

Question Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the above article for and against whether a restriction on campaign finance is necessary for democracy to function properly.

Indicative content

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

- Analysis and evaluation of the current debates surrounding campaign finance in the US.
 - Analysis and evaluation of whether ‘there are signs of the old order reasserting itself’ in these elections.
 - Analysis and evaluation of *Citizens United v FEC 2010* and its significance to the current debate.
 - Analysis and evaluation of the role of super PACs and the extent to which they have changed campaign finance.
 - Analysis and evaluation of whether unrestricted finance has ‘handed millions of dollars of influence in our elections’.
 - Evaluation and comparison of the source and whether the present argument for and against finance restriction is democratic.
 - Evaluation and comparison of the arguments within the source for and against the present argument.
 - Analysis, evaluation and comparison of the source, in the context of:
 - the nature of the source.
 - the nature of source it is.
 - the identifiable purpose of the source.
 - the relevance of the source to the question and broader issue and how it relates to the question.
- Students should identify some of these points for this question.

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



In the case of this question, it is a question from the *Guardian*, a left-leaning newspaper, about a presidential candidate's speech. The document is intended both to inform readers and persuade the reader that having little regulation on election finance is a bad idea.

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

The introduction should clearly state the issue, just as the conclusion should clearly relate to the question. Students cannot engage with the arguments in the source they cannot achieve above.

Section C Essay Question



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 political 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 authoritative. Key points are clear and well-structured. Judgements are supported by clearly presented examples. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Sound evaluation leads to well-supported conclusions with analysis. Pertinent points of view are considered and evaluated in logical arguments, although the evaluation may be limited.
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with accurate knowledge, although not comprehensive. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Clear answer, containing analytical points and consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is evenly weighed and clearly expressed. Key points are developed. Links between key points are clear and relevant. Pertinent examples are used. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Clear evaluation relates conclusions to the facts and analysis. Logical flaws are identified. Pertinent points of view are considered and evaluated in logical arguments, although the evaluation may be limited.
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>AO1 (knowledge)</i> Demonstrates a range of knowledge and understanding of political institutions and systems. Supports analysis of the issues with knowledge, although not comprehensive. • <i>AO2 (analysis)</i> Structured answer, consistently focused on answering the question. Analysis is present, and not entirely one-sided. Key points are explained. Links between key points are present, although not fully explained. • <i>AO3 (evaluation)</i> Conclusions related to the facts and analysis are presented. Pertinent points of view are presented, although their use is not fully explained.



**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



There are areas of the specification more broadly which may relate to the question include accountability to the judiciary, the nature of the constitution in both countries and Parliament respectively. Do not award students above a level 4 mark unless the

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

Question 6: 'Third parties have more influence in the UK than they do in the US.' Analyse

Indicative content

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

- Analysis and evaluation of the voting systems in both countries, and how the first-past-the-post system have historically produced a party system with two major parties that can form a majority government. In the UK, the winner-takes-all system means that minor parties can have a much bigger impact on results.
- Analysis and evaluation of the fact that minor parties have had a much bigger impact in recent times. This is characterised by the Liberal Democrats forming a minority government in 2010.
- Analysis and evaluation of there being more third parties in the UK that are able to win seats. Numerous examples of this which should be rewarded.
- Analysis and evaluation of the power that third party candidates have in both countries. In times when they are gaining momentum, candidates of mainstream parties elected will adjust their policy strategy to counter this momentum.
- Analysis and evaluation of representation in government, and how Democrats have a single electable seat in office across the three branches of government. In the UK, this is not the case in the legislative branch.
- Analysis and evaluation of regional parties having influence in both countries. In the UK, Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh parties have frequently held subnational government.
- Analysis and evaluation of the power of third parties in the US to have a big impact on the election. This happened in 2000 when Ralph Nader took votes away from George W. Bush. This can't happen in the UK as the executive is not directly elected and instead is appointed by the monarch and the House of Commons.

There are areas of the specification more broadly which may relate to the question include devolution in the UK versus federalism, the roles of the legislatures and parties in the UK and the US. Do not award students above a level 4 mark unless the

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

**COPYRIGHT
PROTECTED**



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.