



# **Examiners' Report June 2023**

**GCE Politics 9PL0 01**

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## **Introduction**

The summer series of 2023 saw a second year of examinations returning to their normal format and the third full running of a summer series since the new specification was first examined in 2019. There was much to praise in how centres had prepared their candidates and the progress made since 2019.

It is also evident that exam technique and timing are crucial to success, and centres should encourage candidates to practice both these things. Examiners also commented on the relatively low standard of handwriting which was a major issue and appear to have been a consequence of lack of practice, especially in timed conditions, during covid.

## **Source Questions**

Source questions showed a significant improvement on approach since last year with the need to construct responses based on the framework and content of the source rather than treating the response as a freestyle essay question. This produced dividends for many.

## **Essay Questions**

Essay questions were generally structured well, but we are still seeing AO3 as the weakest AO across the board. Centres need to work with candidates to help them improve this aspect of their essays.

## **Ideas Questions**

The standard of political ideas answers on this paper had declined since last year and also in comparison with 2019. Candidates were frequently not including any areas of agreement in their answers, and we also saw a return of discussing each strand in separate paragraphs. AO3 was almost non-existent in many core political ideas answers.

## Question 1 (a)

This question was the least popular of the two source questions, but it was well-answered. Candidates were able to understand the source and were able to make good use of the main issues raised by the source on both sides. The vast majority of candidates understood what the question was asking and accurately discussed the nuances of the incumbent government losing as opposed to the opposition winning an election.

There was a good knowledge and understanding shown by the majority of candidates around Labour's victory and the Conservatives loss. However, candidates did seem stronger on providing good levels of evidence on Labour as opposed to the Conservatives. There was a particularly good level of understanding shown in relation to Blair moving the party away from its Old Labour past and candidates were able to discuss Labour's strengths in good detail, with reference to their relationship with the media, as well as a wide range of policies and constitutional changes.

However, candidates were less confident when discussing Conservative weaknesses, with many struggling to give examples of sleaze and scandals. As a result, many candidate's answers lacked balance. Surprisingly, a noticeable minority of answers referred only to Thatcher in context of Conservative party leadership and did not reference Major at all. Another issue was responses that moved their focus away from 1997 and tried to use the answer to talk about other elections such as 2010 and 2019.

Candidates were able to use the arguments in the source well and these were generally well paired which aided analysis. The stronger responses contextualised the source well and had good own knowledge to support the points made in both extracts.

Regularly these arguments were well-paired, for example candidates would talk about the role of the media in both the government losing and the opposition winning. The most common themes that emerged were the media, unity/division, policies, in touch/out of touch. Pairing points enhances AO2 and makes it easier to come to substantiated judgements (AO3)

However, the question did highlight some issues around candidate understanding of how to answer source questions. In relation to the source, there were examples of candidates who provided very little additional knowledge and simply went through a series of statements from the source demonstrating the two different sides of the argument, using the source more as a comprehension than as a springboard for discussion. The task is to enhance the AO1 and displaying this will gain credit.

The weakest Assessment Objection was AO3, evaluation – often candidates just left it as “and therefore this means Labour did more to win than the Conservatives did to lose” without developing or explaining why. Some candidates argued that it was both reasons and did not come down on one side or another. A few still argued one side then the other without coming to any view at all, which limited their evaluation marks. Very few candidates were convincing in their AO3 judgements; using the points on one side of the argument to critique the other side showing through their argument, that one side was stronger.

A solid L5 answer.

P1 - Media Perception

Plan

Lost by governing - Steaze - Mellor, Matrix Churchill

vs

Won by Labour - Spin doctors, The Sun ✓

P2 - Policy

Lost by governing - ERM

vs

Won Labour - Spledges

P3 - Division

Lost by governing - Europe, 1995 leadership - "Buck me or sack me"

vs

Labour - Brown + Blair,

The 1997 election saw the Labour party win a landslide 179 seat majority. The source presents two opinions of the cause for this. When reflecting <sup>the source</sup> on this, the view that the 1997 election was lost by the Conservatives rather than won by Labour is not entirely convincing. The source presents strong arguments regarding Labour's positive media perception, strong policy and unity to suggest it was them, the opposition, that caused their landslide victory as opposed to the view that the Conservatives were the cause for their own loss.

One must consider the negative media perception the Conservatives had in the lead up to the 1997 election. The source states that the parties image was "damaged by sleaze". This is a fair assessment when considering the ~~numerous~~ "series of scandals" the party faced. The ~~David~~ David Mellor sex scandal made the parties sentiment on ~~getting~~ getting 'Back to Basics' and maintaining 'old Victorian values' seem hypocritical. As an electorate must believe in a parties' competence, <sup>\*</sup> one could argue that the scandals that the Conservatives were embroiled in lost the party the 1997 election because the electorate questioned their competence and values.

However, the more ~~important~~ prevalent cause for the Labour success in 1997 was their positive media perception. The source references Labour "getting the media on side", likely alluding to Blair's attempts to win over the Sun. The headline "The Sun Backs Blair" is significant in displaying how Labour positive image and support from the media won them the election. As political <sup>\*</sup>to elect it to govern

parties rely on the support of influential media sources, which the Sun was at the time, it was vital it got the support of the Sun which had high readership and a history of supporting the winning candidate. Labour's image to the media, especially through Blair, meant the electorate believed "New Labour" were ~~at least~~ ~~not~~ in refreshing. ~~The~~ ~~A~~ ~~political~~ ~~party~~ ~~that~~ ~~evoked~~ ~~belief~~ ~~that~~ ~~Erin~~, Labour won the electorate over through tactics like TV appearances, <sup>and</sup> using spin doctors like Peter Mandelson ~~and~~ to win the 1997 election.

When considering both arguments, the second ~~appears~~ is much stronger. The source gives arguments that the Labour party's "rebrand" and attempts to gain media support proved vital and this is substantiated in the argument. The fact that the Conservatives had been in power for 14 years ~~with~~ and had been ~~seen through~~ portrayed by the media as being having a "negative image" was not enough to lose them the election. Instead it was the "well-managed" campaigning ~~and~~ ~~clear~~ through media to portray Labour ~~to~~ as refreshing that made voters switch from Conservative to Labour in 1997.

Secondly, the source presents the argument that Conservative's failures in policy caused their large defeat. The source <sup>suggests</sup> ~~shows~~ that the party's "failure on economic issues" caused the electorate to doubt the party's competence. This seems a reasonable argument as it corroborate the poor response to leaving the ERM that the Conservatives

had in 1992. When a party is given a mandate by the electorate, like the Conservatives that same year, it is the manifestation of the electorate's trust in the government to pass its political agenda. However, when a ~~party~~<sup>government</sup> uses its power over the legislature, with a Parliamentary majority, to pass unpopular legislation, this causes distrust in the electorate. And so when the source points out that the electorate "looked back and saw a series of mistakes" and decided to punish the Tories for them, it may be referring to Black Wednesday and the ERM. And so many, as a result, argue that the electorate punished the Conservatives for using their electoral mandate to pass bad policy, losing them the election.

However, on the other hand, one only must point to the successful policy that Labour drafted into their manifesto, as the source does, to suggest Labour were the cause for their own success. The source states that the Labour campaign "focused on the core issues that mattered to the electorate" to win the election. This likely refers to the 5 Labour Pledges and promises of Constitutional Reform that Labour campaigned on. The promises to increase spending on education and the NHS without raising income tax ~~and~~ meant the electorate were "looking forward" to a Labour government. When a manifesto captures the electorate's imagination, it shows that the party, in this case New Labour, that drafted it analysed the views of the electorate, whether through opinion polls or think

rank reports, which give parties insight into ~~elect~~ <sup>Public</sup> opinion on key issues. This gave Labour a large advantage through their own doing as it meant specific ~~of~~ voter groups felt that their policies would benefit them, such as the 82% of black voters who voted Labour in 1997, feeling the party focused on core issues that "mattered to ~~them~~ the electorate" such as child care for the youth, ~~but~~ beneficial to the growing African population at the time.

We can therefore see that Labour's initiative in finding the policies that "mattered to the electorate" whilst making voters have "economic faith in" Labour proved successful as Labour's 5 pledges seemed a better alternative to the Conservative policy. One only must look at 2017 and 1992 elections to see that ~~an~~ opposition's ~~most present~~ policies must be a better alternative to the incumbents to win, ~~which Labour~~ otherwise the incumbent can still win. Labour did appear a better alternative and, by their own doing, won the election off of their refreshing policies to reform the House of Lords and entrench the ECHR. This appears to be the most important factor presented by the source to ~~show how~~ ~~Finally~~ oppose the view that the Conservatives lost the election to their own doing.

Finally, the source presents the argument that the Conservatives were a divided party, proving costly for ~~them~~ the source

them in the 1997 election. The source states that the party was "divided over the issue of Europe". This is true as Europhiles and Eurosceptics fought over the direction of the party after the Maastricht Treaty. ~~Parties function~~  
A political party's function is to provide the electorate a clear idea of the policy direction it wants to go in, however this did not happen due to divisions between the Party, causing the electorate to see the governing party as "split" and not vote for it as a <sup>party</sup> ~~vote~~ of confidence.

However the more ~~important~~ significant factor is presented earlier in the source, which states Labour appeared "united". This is because of the ground work it did to unite over class TV and Trade Union policies. When a party appears united, it becomes more electable and this is necessary as the opposition is in opposition to provide a clear alternative party direction, which Labour did, not being split by "major issues" as the source argues.

To conclude then, the Labour party's unity, clear policy and positive image in the media caused it to succeed in the 1997 election, more so than the Conservatives ~~it~~ doing poorly to lose.



An excellent response which uses the source throughout, pairs arguments very effectively and maintains a clear line of argument throughout, also using interim judgements.

This received low L3.

The 1997 election was a landslide victory for Tony Blair, after 18 years of Conservative rule with Prime Ministers such as Margaret Thatcher and John Major. In this essay I intend to argue that although it is plausible to propose that the Conservatives lost and that is why Labour became the governing party, that the Labour opposition did in fact campaign and win that election due to their increased popularity under Tony Blair.

As stated in the source from The Guardian, the party had re-branded itself as New Labour. Also known as the Third Way, New Labour accepted the economic policy of the free market from the Conservatives whilst retaining all of its social parties. This was a significant change in anything the Conservatives or even the Labour party had been proposing in the previous two decades, which made it a very attractive option to the electorate.

Essentially, this reform of the party was what helped Labour finally win an election, specifically by a landslide. However, as stated in the source from Mark Pack, 'The Conservatives failed to inspire the electorate'. It could be argued that Labour gained office merely because the UK was sick of the Conservatives, not because they were

the popular option. Voting for Tony Blair's Labour was implied to be a tactical move in this source, to punish the Conservatives. This implies that the Labour party didn't win, the Conservatives just lost.

Secondly, the organisation of Labour in 1997 is complimented by the source. The unification of the party and the slick, well-managed campaign helped lead them to victory, as divisions in a political party can be detrimental to it's success. It's also beneficial that this slick campaign focused on key issues that mattered to the electorate as winning them over to your policies is imperative in gaining their vote. Despite this, the Mark Pack source details scandals within the Conservatives and reports of sleaze. This is all further evidence for tactical voting as the electorate wouldn't have wanted scandalous politicians ~~to be~~ governing the country.

The media has become a stronger and stronger influence in politics since the 70's, and it can be ruthless. However, Tony Blair, being the youngest PM ever~~s~~, is described as very charming and the Guardian source says that New Labour had got the media on it's side. Positive media coverage is likely to be another factor in raising the popularity of the Labour Party. ~~Even~~ Even with all this considered, New Labour accepted Thatcherite legacy and continued economic plans

that the Conservatives set. This is an argument that could suggest Labour only won because they shifted so much to the right.

To summarise, the Labour party won the 1997 election due to multiple factors. Most importantly, the huge re-brand and stance shift coined 'New Labour'. Secondly their unification and thirdly media support. Whilst there is justification for Labour not winning, the Conservatives just lost, I personally don't think that's a fair statement to agree with. Without the rebrand, Blair's Labour would have been nothing successful.



This answer includes an introduction which appears to have a view and a conclusion with the same view, however there is no line of argument throughout the answer. The answer itself uses the source, but it is not developed and is also unbalanced in places.

## Question 1 (b)

This was by far the most popular source question, and was, on the whole, very well answered. Candidates understood the term 'democratic deficit' and used the wide array of points from the source to set up an effective debate. Candidates' knowledge was excellent, on the whole, with some very impressive and up to date own knowledge on display.

The source gave candidates a wide range of references to develop their own knowledge and the overwhelming majority of candidates used the source in their answer, and many did this explicitly. Centres should remind candidates that explicit use of the source is required. Most candidates used their own knowledge to support the views in the source, for example using the 2011 AV Referendum to support the argument put forward by Chloe Smith regarding 'no demand for change'. A number of stronger responses used very contemporary examples, such as the 2023 Public Order Act and 2022 Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act.

Some candidates appeared to use pre-prepared answers – usually including a paragraph on the House of Lords – it was difficult to give this much credit as there is no reference in either source – there were also discussions of referendums and devolution which were potentially rewardable if linked to involving people more in decisions, but they rarely were. There were only limited number of responses that 'hijacked' the source into a question about 'First Past the Post' or rights development in the UK.

The reference to "minority votes" in the source sometimes caused confusion and some candidates took it to mean a minority government. Some additionally thought that because constituency candidates only need a plurality of votes, a party only needs a plurality of seats to form a government.

Many candidates were able to use the source to pair arguments and discuss the strengths and limitations of different features present in the source. In stronger answers they were able to offer a clearer explanation to the debate to why the UK does/ does not have a deficit by offering perceptive analysis, for example explaining that rights are protected by statute law but governments with large overall majorities turn into an elective dictatorship and can pass and amend laws to suit their needs despite the HRA, the Illegal Immigration Bill was identified by many candidates as an example of this.

Weaker candidates often made minimal effort to evaluate the relative strengths of the paired debate e.g. candidates would explain the merits of the HRA in a first paragraph and then in the second cite apparent breaches of rights – the Public Order Act and the arrest of protestors at the coronation were popular – without linking back to the HRA at all, and what these examples might show about its weakness.

Most candidates were aware of the effectiveness of structuring their answers in a series of paired arguments, however, there were still some answers which didn't. Really strong responses outlined clear themes for example, Legitimacy, Accountability, Rights, Elections etc. Weaker answers did not pair their points, for example comparing elections with rights protection. It is hard to develop effective analysis when this is done.

As with source 1a, AO3 is the Assessment Objective that still needs to be significantly improved. A considerable majority of candidates now state their view in the introduction, however, there are still some introductions that argue that both sides are true. Also, there are still some very lengthy introductions which paraphrase both sides of the source, this should be avoided. Many candidates found it difficult to maintain a consistent line of argument throughout their answer – they would announce in their introduction that “this essay will argue that the UK doesn't suffer from a democratic deficit” but then at the end of a subsequent paragraph claim that the opposite had been proved. Equally, there are still some answers that argue for or against both sides, which renders a judgement difficult. Centres need to remind candidates that while both sides must be considered, a clear line of argument must be evident throughout the answer.

One of the ways to show AO3 is by interim judgements (the other is to incorporate judgements into paragraphs – which is equally valid). However, a high proportion of the interim judgements just repeat what has already been written therefore not adding any real value, the answers that gained higher levels for AO3 had judgements that added to what had already been said, to make clear judgements.

A good L5 answer.

Democracy is defined as the will of the people and as the current UK system stands, there is no democracy in the UK. Due to a lack of accountability, legitimacy and ~~and~~ a lack of participation, it is clear that the UK is suffering a democratic deficit as the power of the people is ineffective.

There is limited accountability of governments in the UK which means that the people do not have a say in ~~the~~ providing necessary scrutiny of the government. However, some may wrongly argue that "our democracy ensures clear ~~at~~ accountability of our elected representatives" according to the source. They would say this because of the fact that there are still weekly PMQs in which the Prime Minister is held accountable for their, and their governments actions. Furthermore, when a particular elected representative acts incorrectly, they are bound by the principle of IMR (Individual Ministerial Responsibility) and this evidently still works as former Health Minister Matt Hancock had to resign after he breached Covid restrictions. A similar thing happened to ~~the~~ Amber Rudd regarding the 'Windrush Scandal' suggesting that representatives are held accountable. However, this weak and incorrect argument neglects the evident ~~truth~~ truth that representatives can easily usurp scrutiny and therefore as the source says "those who are elected need

to be held more accountable". Accountability has actually eroded and these aforementioned incidents of IMR only succeeded due to pressure from the media but when Priti Patel was accused of bullying in early 2023, she was not forced to resign as her story was not focused on by the media. Additionally, ~~the~~ Johnson and his government managed to get away with 'Partygate' and even after Sue Gray's enquiry, they were not held ~~out~~ accountable enough, emphasising the need to strengthen accountability of elected representatives. Additionally, within PMQs, there is an epidemic of 'planted questions' as only 50% of the questions are asked by the opposition proving that the Prime Minister does not succumb to ~~the~~ sufficient scrutiny. Also, there is limited scrutiny of the government by the House of Lords as written questions dropped by 13% according to YouGov between 2020-2022. Therefore, it is evident that the accountability of elected representatives is insufficient and ineffective because representatives have enough power to get away with their lies and not abide by the rules of ministerial responsibility therefore eroding democracy as scrutiny no longer plays a part within the government.

In relation to legitimacy, governments are becoming increasingly illegitimate. Despite this fact some may still wrongly argue that "our democracy ~~has~~ has produced stability and

consensus" which ultimately "builds a bond of trust" according to the source. This wrong argument would be made on the basis that FPTP generally succeeds in making strong governments ~~the~~ with a clear mandate as in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; <sup>there has</sup> ~~there~~ only been minority governments. Additionally, in 2019, Johnson's Conservatives won the election with an 80 seat majority showing that he had a strong a legitimate government. Outside of general elections, the UK still has strong legitimate governing bodies as Sadiq Khan, as the mayor of London, <sup>had</sup> ~~has~~ an electoral mandate of ~~56-87~~ 56-87 in 2012 showing that he had great support and therefore a legitimate government. However, this argument is insufficient and the correct argument outlined in the source is that there is "a problem ~~with~~ of legitimacy as governments are elected on minority votes". This is evident as the last 2 prime ministers of the UK were unelected showing that Truss and Sunak did not even have any votes let alone minority votes proving that governments have grown increasingly illegitimate. Additionally, <sup>strong governments</sup> ~~legitimacy~~ have decreased as Johnson's 80 seat majority does not compare to Blair's 179 seat majority. Even though there have only been 2 minority governments in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the fact that they even existed presents a problem with legitimacy as the source correctly states "governments are elected on minority votes". This points to the problem with FPTP as it is not majoritarian e.g. in 2019 Johnson only won 43% of the popular vote proving that the

majority of the UK did not vote for him. In regards to governments outside of the UK governments, they still have weak governments as currently in Scotland, there is the 'Bute House' coalition in government between the SNP and Scottish Greens. Overall, it is extremely evident that the UK is suffering from a democratic deficit as the ~~people~~ government are often not chosen by the people which undermines the entire definition of democracy.

Lastly, there is a lack of participation in the UK which removes democracy. Some may present the incorrect argument that we have <sup>according to the source,</sup> "free, fair and open" elections in the UK which therefore encourage participation. This is clear in Scotland as the elections actually became more open when 16 and 17 year olds got the opportunity to vote in the 2014 Scottish independence referendum and 75% of this age category did vote. Additionally, "fair" elections can often be seen as referendums because it is the purest form of democracy and therefore the fairest way to vote and in referendums, participation remains high. For example, the turnout in the 1998 Good Friday agreement was 81%, in the Scottish independence referendum it was 84% and in the Brexit referendum it was 72% suggesting that over time participation has stayed high in "fair" elections. However, the correct and much more compelling argument in the source

states that "voters are disengaged from politics which creates a participation crisis". This is ultimately true as in UK general elections, the turnout has dropped recently as in 2017 the turnout was 69% but in 2019 it ~~dropped~~ fell to 67% proving that people are becoming less engaged with ~~part~~ politics. Additionally, a poll by 'The Student Room' showed that only 34% of 18-24 year olds were "very" interested in politics proving that <sup>the majority of youth</sup> ~~many~~ are not willing or to participate in politics. To reinforce that there's a lack of participation, participation remains low across the UK as the 2021 Senedd elections had a turnout of 46%. Therefore, overall, a democratic deficit is clear as if the people are not participating in politics, then democracy is impossible as there's no democracy without people.

In conclusion it is evident that there is a democratic deficit in the UK because the power of the people has been diminished as they can no longer scrutinise or choose the government which makes them not want to be involved in politics therefore eroding democracy.



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Examiner Comments

An excellent response which uses arguments from the source, but then develops and analyses them to a very high level. Paragraphs are paired and there is a clear very throughout which is well argued.

This response was a mid-Level 3.

Democracy in the UK is in deficit, the functions of democracy are to provide choice, participation, representation and education which is not being fully exercised as seen in the argument made by Unlock Democracy, there is a lack of legitimacy and representation due to the unproportional first past the ~~post~~<sup>post</sup> system and the barriers to participation due to disengagement in politics.

Chloe Smith argues our democracy is healthy as it 'offers real choice to the electorate' this can be supported by the rising influence of minor parties such as UKIP and the green party who collectively achieved 5 million votes in the 2015 election and can be seen to have had great influence over policy in the major governing parties for example Boris Johnson's pro Brexit stance despite

being pro EU in the past and his stance on green policy stating at the COP 27 conference 'it is lucrative and right to be green' ~~showing~~ despite votes against green policy in the past. This shows the importance of smaller parties and how they increase choice in UK democracy even if not governing. However this is highly limited as despite gaining 5 million votes in 2015 UKIP and the green party both only secured 1 seat each showing a lack of representation in West Minister. In addition to this, ~~though~~ the government is still two party dominant and smaller parties act more like pressure groups. The ~~poor~~ wide distribution of smaller parties is over powered by the major parties seeing safe seats and a 'winners bonus' particularly in the 2015 election where the conservative government won only 37% of the vote share yet 51% of seats; this shows the first past the post system limiting choice. Unlock democracy argue that 'it must be replaced by a ~~proportional~~ system of proportional representation

which more accurately reflects how the country voted' which would see choice rise - as voters would feel voting for smaller parties would not be 'wasted votes' and reduce the need for tactical voting which only raises the profile of major parties - it is estimated that 8.5 million people voted tactically in 2017 showing how choice is limited by FPTP. However, it should be considered that overall people feel comfortable and content with the First Past the Post system as proved by the 2011 AV referendum and the complications of more proportional systems such as STV which has seen a rise in spoiled papers when used in Scotland. However, overall Unlock Democracy's rejection of the current voting system does heavily outline deficit in UK democracy.

Chloe Smith also argues that 'our elections function perfectly well in being free fair and open' this can again link to the contentment of the general public toward current elections which

Shows that voters feel represented in the current system and aren't intimidated by a complicated system which supports the function of participation. However there has been a drop in turn out in general elections falling from 73% in 1945 to 68%. In 2019 not only this but future participation is likely to decline due to the introduction of voter ID laws which saw hundreds of thousands of people turned away from polling stations in the 2023 local elections. Unlock Democracy also discusses participation stating 'ordinary people must become more involved in decisions and events which effect them' which is representative of the decline in turn out and rise of apathy - particularly with elections becoming less accessible. It could be seen that people are better represented in referendums such as the Brexit referendum which saw a 72% turnout however this is highly limited as this high turnout isn't guaranteed - for example the 2011 AV referendum had only a 42% turnout and ultimately the decision to run a referendum and

~~then~~ if / how it is imposed lies at the hands of government and <sup>the</sup> general elections that determine them. Therefore the democracy in the UK is in deficit.

Overall, the UK does suffer from a democratic deficit as its flawed electoral system increases apathy and disengagement and is becoming increasingly more in danger of worsening its deficit with new voter ID laws and more disengagement.



This answer has a view throughout and discusses points raised in the source. However, it is sometimes unclear where one point starts and another one ends, so pairing is not as strong as it could be. Also it is dominated by discussions about elections, making the answer quite narrow. It also seems to lose sight of the question.

## Question 2 (a)

This question was the more popular of the two essays and overall, was done well. Almost every candidate who attempted this question understood, at some level, the issues surrounding referendums in the UK.

Stronger answers were well structured and focused on the advantages and disadvantages that referendums brought, and ensured that their points were well paired. Evidence was very well used, particularly the Brexit and IndyRef. There were some really nice arguments about popular vs parliamentary sovereignty and about how a referendum can have an impact on the sovereign nature of Parliament. Some good answers used the NI referendum to show how they can bring stability, and many mentioned that the further calls for the Scottish Indyref 2 was a “neverendum” therefore not settling disputes.

However, many answers adopted a different approach, taking three referendums in turn, usually Brexit, IndyRef and AV and discussed them in detail. This approach tended to result in descriptive answers rather than analytical ones and didn't manage to address the wider range of points that other answers managed. More widely, there was a lot of reliance on Brexit and IndyRef to illustrate points and a limited discussion of other referendums. Often, candidates then ended up discussing the consequences of devolution and Brexit rather than the consequences of referendums, which wasn't really relevant to the question. Other weaker answers tended to just describe the issue the referendum was addressing, mentioning briefly why this was an advantage/disadvantage. One other issue which limited scores was that many answers were not well balanced, mostly leaning heavily towards disadvantages. Centres should remind candidates that both sides of an argument must be considered in a balanced way, while maintaining a clear line of argument.

There was a common misunderstanding that referendum aren't binding, when in fact they can be made so by Parliament, as the AV referendum was in 2011.

Strong answers made coherent points using themes, usually participation, resolution of issues, and education, to name the more common ones, and made effective use of evidence rather than just a deluge of evidence used without discrimination. The very best answers added a depth of analysis which showed a mastery of the arguments. These answers spent a lot of time assessing the validity of each argument while maintaining their line of argument throughout.

Many answers had introductions which stated their main line of argument. Stronger introductions, however, gave some context to the question, **briefly** framing the debate before stating their argument. Most candidates also understood that they needed to write a separate conclusion reasserting their main argument.

However, as with the sources, many candidates did not develop high levels of evaluation in their answers. Those that attempted it, were often just using stock phrases at the beginning of paragraphs which, in themselves, will not lead to higher levels of AO3. Poorer levels of AO3 across the paper led to weaker performance than might have been expected. Centres might want to focus on helping candidates understand the importance of effective AO3 to raise their marks.

Candidates who had a clear essay structure, with an introduction, paired, balanced arguments (which was factor led, with clear criteria for judgment within the paragraph), and a conclusion were the most successful. These answers also included substantiated judgements throughout their answer which were well explained and convincing. Additionally, candidates who had taken time to plan an answer tended to be more successful.

Poor quality handwriting in many cases, hindered understanding. This was problematic and tended to get progressively worse as they got tired when writing. Poor quality English/grammar also hindered understanding.

A top L5 answer.

Overall, referendums since 1997 has brought more advantages than disadvantages. Granted, calls of 'eroding' parliamentary sovereignty, especially by false information have some merit in the debate of undermining representative democracy, as well as the threat of 'tyranny of the majority' and further devolved tensions propelled by lack of decisive decisions. However, it is more significant that referendums have aided participation in local matters proved by high turnout, provided a key check on 'elective dictatorship' and takes all views into account proportionally, which is a stronger argument in debating the strength of UK democracy.

Firstly, there is some merit in arguing that to an extent, parliamentary sovereignty and aspects of representative democracy are undermined by the over use of referendums, especially enhanced by poor turnouts such as Wales on devolution in 1997, when 1/4 of the electorate decided a key constitutional change, as well as the 2011 AV referendum being arguably hijacked by a consensus on how the Lib

demonstrate performing in the coalition, with a turnout of 42%. Further, the disadvantages to the quality of democracy are limited by widespread municipal council referendums, evidenced in 2016 by both Leaver remain campaigns, fuelled by Farage's anti-immigration posters, the notorious "£350 million" bus and on the other side, George Osborne's claim to newspapers that leaving the EU would cost each household "£3,000" a week. As a result, the ERS reports that only 33% of the electorate felt informed on the vote, in turn undermining rep. democracy with MPs (60% of which voted to remain) disagreeing with constituents. Thus, the over-use of referendums holds more disadvantages, with the public 'ending' participating over uninformed decisions, which can ultimately lack legitimacy.

However, this argument lacks merit significantly, as referendums provide participative chances for the electorate, especially decisive answers to local issues, which inherently calls for referendums lacking legitimacy. For example, the North East Regional Assembly referendum had a 48% turnout in 2004 & 78% 'No' for further English devolution here, directly allowing constituents to decide the

extent of localised papers, which is an issue that Reps discarded. Meanwhile, the 2005 Edinburgh Congestion Charge referendum saw a decisive 74.1% 'no' with a 61.7% turnout, illustrating this point of repeatability & choice. Meanwhile, the Scotland Indep. vote 2014 saw a huge 84.6% turnout (90% in some regions), with a 75% turnout of 16-17 yr olds, with 89% registering. As a result of this vote for the referendum, Jan 2023 studies have shown that 16-17 yr old participants in that referendum have shown a long term voting trend to turnout in elections since, with more 16-17 yr olds voting in the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections than 18-20 yr olds, as well as more 23-24 yr olds who initially voted 16/17 in 2014. Thus, it must be said in argument to say that elements of representative democracy are undermined in extent by referendums, it is more significant to evidence referendums as being advantageous to increase turnouts in the future, not hold clear decisive decisions on local matters, fueling democracy.

Next, referendums do create disadvantages of devolved territories since 1997 that have threatened UK unity, with indecision causing distrust in the political system, and in the case of Brexit, protests weeks after with over 1 million people attending. This can further be examined in the case

of Scotland, with 58% of the 62% voting 'remain' in 2016, as well as Northern Ireland, creating tensions in the 2017 DUP coalition, with the crossing of the assembly over a soft or hard border concern, which is predicted to cause more tensions with Sinn Féin now being the top party in assembly & local councils (144), as of May 2023. Ernie, despite a 56% 'no' to independence in 2014, caused a 2nd referendum due to a decision formulated by the SNP's 2017 campaign, and is still in debate under Nicola Sturgeon in 2023, heightened by issues over the government for the first time regarding legislation on devolved matters in the 2023 Gender Recognition Bill. Thus, desired tensions have notably risen due to referendum results, being a clear disadvantage.

Conversely, the act of referendums ultimately checking 'electronic dictatorship' was caused by hard nationalism, or a general check on government is more significant in the democratic role of accountability, and in fact, calls for a 2nd Scottish independence referendum could be viewed as undemocratic, almost disregarding the original 2014 decision by such a large amount of the electorate.

Sander Vernan Bogdanor describes the electorate

view a referendum as acting as a "third legislative branch" aligning with popular sovereignty, thus granting a popular mandate, which is advantageous to democracy. Further, the electorate's role in providing a check on power cannot undermine representative democracy, in the case of Brexit showing that when the will of the people is largely divided (52% remain), and a minority goes in place (2017) MPs have more power in decision making, especially in forming a commitment needs. Thus, the issue of devolved territories as a result of referendums is mostly undermined by the role of the electorate ensuring accountability for governments, thus more advantages than disadvantages.

Lastly, results of referendums enable issues of the 'tyranny of the majority', which is an argument with ~~some~~ some credit as a result of the 2016 vote. For example, in 2019, Johnson was willing to grant a No-deal Brexit in line with the 52% 'Leave', despite the fact that only 37% of the adult British population had voted leave, which is significant in arguing that referendum results cause legitimacy issues UK-wide,

despite a stark 77% turnout. Thus, the tyranny of the majority result of referendums arguably, to an extent undermines the idea of governing with mandate.

Contrarily, this argument is defeated by the democratic significance of the referendum vote system, which in conjunction with FPTP, ensures that the majority view is taken on, and there is no threat of a minority decision taking legislative agenda. In contrast, the 2015 GE lead to UKIP getting 12.6% of the vote, but one seat, whereas every European vote in 2016 would have counted equally, making the overall decision more proportional, thus legitimate, as well as urging the government to agree on a 'Get Brexit done' 2019 manifesto. Therefore, referendums may have some contrary arguments to tyranny of the majority, but more significant is the legitimacy of decision being enhanced by a truly proportional system.

In summation, referendums are more advantageous than disadvantageous since 1997. Granted, issues on misinterpretation somewhat deplete the democracy, but systems in place provide key legitimate proportionality.



An outstanding response which is a really good example of excellent AO3 throughout (albeit a slightly rushed conclusion!). The answer analyses the consequences of referendums held in the UK with impressive knowledge, balanced with detailed analysis and evaluation.

This response was a lower L3.

Referendums are an example of direct democracy in the UK and is when the general public vote on a particular issue which usually only requires a yes or no answer. However, whilst direct is the purest form of democracy, there are also many disadvantages to referendums. This essay will argue that ~~have~~ referendums have brought more advantages than disadvantages.

### Referendum

Referendums are known to have a higher outcome vote due to the simplicity of the vote. As well as this, referendums usually are in public interest and relevant which encourages people to vote more because they are acting in personal interest and ~~offe~~ often feel the issue is ~~persona~~ important to them. For example during ~~to~~<sup>the</sup> 91 referendum on Scottish Independence, ~~are~~ voter turnout was 84% which is the highest referendum turnout and meant the result of the vote was completely fair and was able to represent the population's opinion, making it legitimate, fair and representative. Despite this, many other referendums before this had an increasing low turnout like the Welsh referendum for more powers which only had a voter outcome of 38%. This meant the decision made by government did not have much public influence and may

not have been entirely in favour of the public which meant the decision would have been less democratic than envisioned. However, the public may have felt this issue was not as important to them so chose not to vote which leaves the election to being fair and open and results would be made depending on the people who voted which is an advantage of referendums.

Another advantage of referendums in the UK is that the vote is on a particular issue. This means tactical voting is not necessary and means an individual's vote will not be biased to a party. For example, in the Brexit referendum, the decision to leave the EU was put forward by the conservatives and pushed by UKIP. However, because the actions necessary to leave had taken so long, a referendum was necessary to know the public's opinion and if it had changed. Although, despite referendums being held in favour of public opinion, the government does not need to follow up on the results of the vote which could mean a referendum could be a waste and shows that government power is stronger than public opinion. This would also cause a division between parliament and the general public as it wouldn't be representative. However, this action is not common and instead shows that the government offers real choice to the public and is democratic.

Finally, Referendums are usually easier to understand, get results and use media coverage to educate people. This encourages people to get more involved with politics and results in a higher voter turnout as it is easily accessed by all class of people. Brexit had a huge amount of media coverage that was dedicated to many different views. This meant people were able to understand the situation and make a decision based on their own beliefs which could have resulted in Brexit's high voter turnout. Although not all referendums have much media coverage especially because some issues are not seen as 'big issues'. This means people may not make an educated vote which determines the government decision and cause further issues to the political system. When held accountable, this damages a party's reputation and mean they lose the next election.

Despite referendums not holding political power, they have great influence on policy and issues. As well as being representative because of the high turnout. This leads me to believe referendums have more ~~disadvantages~~ advantages than disadvantages.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This response is quite simple with many generalised statements. It presents a view in the introduction and conclusion, and does attempt to continue it throughout the answer. However, it lacks any depth of analysis and knowledge is inaccurate at times.

## Question 2 (b)

This question was by far the less popular essay question and higher scoring answers were quite rare. This is clearly an area where candidates either knew a great deal about it and found it a straightforward question to answer or knew very little and resorted to vague and generalised answers. Having said this, there were some excellent answers.

Good answers discussed the nature of reform (mostly focused on state funding of political parties) and the drawbacks were explained and compared to the current situation. Higher level answers made the link between big private donations which could lead to corruption. They used examples like Lord Cruddas and other Conservative Party treasurers who have donated large money to the Conservative Party being given peerages. Additionally, scandals under Blair such as 'Cash for honours' and Bernie Ecclestone may be dated but show that this issue affects both parties, the role of Trade Union funding of Labour was also discussed. These responses also looked at the inequality in funding and the effects on the two-party system, with the majority of funding going to the two big parties and thus propping up the two-party system and were able to connect the unfairness of the current funding to the first past the post system.

Higher level responses referred to the different types of funding that was currently available showing clear and specific understanding of restrictions and how Short Money, Cranbourne Money and Policy Development Grants means there is already an element of state funding. Stronger candidates often referred to changes that have already been implemented to reduce corruption such as the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act 2000/2009 and evaluated how successful they have been. Some candidates discussed the impact of membership fees and how these have changed in recent years and the impact it has had.

Stronger candidates were able to provide clear examples of reform and analysed the ways in which state funding might impact the party system, both in a positive and potentially negative way, that taxpayers may not be happy about their money going to a party they don't support.

While a few candidates were able to present very accurate knowledge, most candidates knowledge was not well developed or supported with up-to-date evidence. Weaker answers were generally vague, they knew there were big donations made to parties and that this had a negative effect on our politics leading to suggestions of corruption and unfair competition but were not able to develop their answers beyond this. However, they were generally unable to give many examples. Lower scoring answers did not mention state funding or the 2000 legislation and just focused on wealthy donors to parties and corruption / buying influence. Typically, questions were better at focusing on problems with the current model of party funding rather than reforms.

Weak responses struggled to provide specific examples to illustrate their points and when they did, it was usually out of date examples. These types of responses also lacked knowledge on the existence of rules and regulations on funding of political parties. Linked to this, some candidates referred to Short Money but did not show that they fully understood the way in which it worked and the impact it has, often assuming this money could be used for anything, including campaign expenses. Often candidates gave examples which received little credit like the expenses scandal, Boris Johnson's flat refurbishment and lobbying which have little to do with party funding.

Some candidates failed to present a balanced argument and only explored one side of the argument, hindering their response. Weaker answers also lacked a range of different points. As with the other questions, evaluation was not very evident in responses, even in the better responses.

This response does enough to access L5.

The current funding of political parties is mainly based on donations and member fees. The Conservatives are known for their large private donations, whereas the Labour party is traditionally funded through trade unions and membership fees. The debate around funding is a topic of much contention with those that agree it requires reform, pointing to a lack of transparency, cronyism and an unfair context. Whereas those that disagree with reform needed point to the idea that it ~~is~~ demonstrates popularity, keeps extremism at bay and parties don't need funding to be successful. Overall I would agree that the current funding system needs reform urgently.

Finally, an argument that agrees with reform points to the lack of transparency with who donates and how ~~much~~. Cronyism surrounding party funding. Many businessmen, etc donate to the Conservative party and often get 'VIP' treatment or make sizeable donations for favourable treatment. This became evidently clear during Covid where there was a JD called 'VIPlane' for top donors to have a first 'dub' at Covid contact. For example Michael Ancrort donated millions to

The ~~conventions~~ conventions over the years and his company was given a million pound contract for covid supplies. This was the story with many covid contracts, much of it becoming useless. ~~This is the~~  
~~uphold the idea that the rich~~ This concept that the government can give favourable contracts to put down, is integrity wrong and could go as far as saying undermines democracy. With funding reform this could be eradicated. However, if funding was reformed to avoid such donations the money would ~~be~~ come from the state, tax payers money. This could cause quite a lot of tension whereby ~~tax~~ citizens don't want their money funding a party they don't support. This brings up a second point which is that the parties that receive the most funding are simply the most popular and therefore in democracy for the current system to stay in place. For example Labour received 50% of the vote in the run up to the 2019 election (6 week window) and the conventions 19 million. ~~Of the~~ You could argue that the conventions are simply not more popular, so democratically received more money. Overall I would say that the argument of populism is highly flawed as much of it is access to the elite and appeal and the concept of cronyism certainly warrants reform.

Secondly, ~~however~~ an argument that agrees with reform is the lack of transparency within the system. Many donors aren't published or revealed until after various elections. For example Peter Hargreaves became a member of the 'leads group', an elite dining group where there is considerable access to top civil servants, the PM etc, and ~~requires~~ requires £50,000 to join. He made a sizeable donation in the run up to the election in 2017 but it wasn't published until January 2020. Transparency here would have allowed the public to know that a donation was made after having access to top officials personally as well as a right to know whose funding who at the time of voting. This argument clearly supports the need for further transparency. However, an argument against the funding system requiring reform points to the reforms already in place, ~~that Blair put in. This put significant requirements in place for example most notably the~~ PPERA. This put significant requirements in place such as donations over £7,000 to be registered, no foreign donations and many more. This vastly improved the funding system and many would agree has done enough. This argument is continued by the belief that our current system, within reform from the Act keep extremism at bay. A reform that meant parties were state funded might allow extremist parties to gain

more funding, therefore possibly more success by the Brexit party and its extremist view on immigration. Overall I would disagree that the reforms have gone far enough, and would advocate for more reforms.

Thirdly, an argument that supports the view that current funding system requires reform is that it isn't on equal terms between political parties which undermines democracy. The disparity between the levels of funding can affect their ability to perform well. As stated before Labour received just over £5 million, Conservatives £19.4 million but the SNP received just over £200,000 and the Lib Dems around 1 million. For example the Conservatives could afford to spend over £500,000 on twitter graphics alone, possibly extending their reach improving their image whereas parties with less funding are unable to do so. This means that elections could not be considered a fair contest, and ~~in fact~~ should be reformed. This also highlights the idea that the rich can buy the election. As the Conservatives policies often appeal to those who are wealthier, lower taxes etc they are open to the ones funding them, improving their chances. They are essentially "buying the election".

However, you could also point to the idea that you don't need high amounts of funding for a party to be successful therefore we don't need reform. This is supported by the SNP, success winning 48 seats in the last election with a significant amount less than other parties. But also the idea that political parties don't need to win seats to be successful. UKIP successfully persuaded the Conservatives into a EU referendum in fear that their <sup>10m, 2e</sup> gains would push a majority out for Conservatives. UKIP here didn't need funding nor seats, but just a political ideal to be successful.

In conclusion, I think that the current funding system does require reform as it upholds elitist values that the rich can go on for and buy elections, the uptake in corruption and the lack of transparency even with past reforms.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

A very good response which considers the consequences of the current funding of parties in the UK. It has good knowledge which it develops with some excellent examples, and pairs its points very well, while maintaining it a clear view throughout.

This is a level 3 response.

State funding of political parties in the UK would involve a use of tax ~~money~~ to fund campaigns and elections. Currently there is ~~no state~~ limited state funding for parties. Arguably, the use of state funding would allow for more transparency of donors, <sup>and</sup> minor parties would be allowed more representation. ~~each~~ Yet, through parties raising funds, this requires strong campaigns and increases participation between elections. Therefore the current funding of political parties in the UK does not require reform to a large extent.

The most significant reason as to which the current system does not require reform, is due to increased participation of p with parties. The electorate will invest money into parties they align their political views with. Therefore this monetary investment will allow for stronger MP/constituent links due to their money being put into the party, as

evident through the Labour parties fee of ~~£4.33~~ £4.33 per month. Therefore, if state funding was introduced, there would likely be less participation from the electorate.

Yet, state funding may allow for more representation of minor parties to represent wider viewpoints, such as the Green party. If each party had equal resources, more representation may be seen.

Nevertheless, due to the ~~need to raise~~ ~~funds~~ increased participation in larger parties, this must be due to more people supporting them and so state funding would become unfair, if equal funding was given to each party, despite their size.

Secondly, the introduction of state funding ~~would increase~~ may decrease the campaigning of parties ~~and~~ due to the reliance on the state. In 2019 the Conservative party raised £1 million to campaign for the general election. They even released an advert on Google in which a Google

search for Labour would prevent the Conservative party. As such state funding would likely decrease the effort of fundraising and raising support due to the lack of need to campaign for money.

Despite this, the introduction of state funding might increase transparency of ~~donors~~ ~~donor~~ donations due to the need to declare funding.

However, with the introduction of the Transparency of Lobbying Act 2014, donors are more careful of donating ~~again~~ illegally for example. Thus, it is clear that reform to the funding of political parties is not needed.

Lastly, it has been argued that without the introduction of state funding, two parties have dominated Westminster. Yet it could be argued that political party funding is not the main issue, the voting system ~~is~~. FPTP has seen two party dominance & since 1945, ~~with~~ in the last 13 years single party dominance has been seen. Therefore the perceived

inequality of minor party representation can be largely due to the use of FPTP and not party funding. As seen in 2019, the Green party gained over 1 million votes and only gained one seat. Also seen through minor parties forming coalitions and entering agreements to exert power. Evident through the confidence and supply agreement with the DUP in ~~2019~~ 2017.

However, it is clear that major parties receive more private donations, thus it is unclear how minor parties can gain more funding to be represented more in Westminster as a change in electoral system is not wanted, as seen through the 2011 AV ~~referendum~~ referendum.

Nevertheless, a change to electoral system would <sup>undoubtedly</sup> ~~undoubtedly~~ provide more representation than state funding. \*

In conclusion, it is abundantly clear that the current political party funding system provides increased participation, and strong campaigns.

for elections. The most effective reform to increase the fairness of elections would be to introduce a new voting system as FPTP breeds inequality of votes. Yet the introduction of state funding would likely decrease participation and ~~increase~~ ~~interest~~ weaken party campaigns due to the reliance on the state.

\* This may also be more favourable in the current living crisis as a raising of tax to provide this funding may be ~~the~~ unpopular, and <sup>may</sup> even be seen as unnecessary.



This answer is a basic answer to the question but the premise of some of the points made is questionable. Equally it lacks balance and doesn't pair points very effectively. However, it does maintain a view throughout. Lastly, it could have made better use of examples.

### Question 3 (a)

This was overwhelmingly the most popular choice of question for candidates. The topic has been well taught, and most candidates understood the beliefs of classical and modern liberalism as well as a good understanding of their views of the state.

However, the wording of this question, with its focus on 'fear of the state' was missed by the majority of candidates who consequently wrote a generic essay about the liberal view of the state. These essays did not score highly because they did not answer the question set. Centres should remind candidates to answer the question in front of them, not the one they may have prepared for. Candidates must dedicate appropriate time to planning how they will answer questions to avoid making these errors.

Candidates seemed to have a good understanding of Liberalism's view of the state in relation to freedom and individualism, but they were unable to connect their view with whether this meant they feared the state. Quite a few didn't seem to understand what 'fear of the state' meant and were unsure as to how to answer the question, often simply putting the word 'fear' in at regular intervals, hoping for the best.

Stronger candidates latched on to the key word 'fear' and were able to link this to ideas such as liberty, individualism, mechanistic and harm theory as well as how fear of the state linked to the economy, minimal v enabling state interpretations and so on. Interestingly, only a few candidates made the connection between the corrupting nature of power, where the state can restrict liberties, hence why its power must be feared, as well as the need for constitutionalism to limit the state. Additionally, some very weak answers focused more on general similarities and differences between modern and classical liberals and did not focus on the state let alone fear of the state.

There are still a number of candidates who refer to recent examples which are not necessary for ideas answers. There did seem to be greater focus on strands this year, which is the correct approach although it was not uncommon to see thinker led discussions, which should be discouraged.

When looking at structure, many answers reverted back to discussing the views of modern and classical liberals in separate paragraphs, making it harder for them compare their views effectively. Weaker answers were largely descriptive, simply outlining the views of classical liberals and then modern liberals with very limited comparison between them. Candidates would often make a point about liberals fear of the state and then just discuss classical liberals rather than engage in a comparison between classical and modern liberals. In order to effectively compare, candidates need to compare strands within a single paragraph.

Good answers seemed to use two approaches. One was themed paragraphs where agreement over the fear of the state was discussed, followed by a more compelling discussion of disagreement (or vice versa), with evaluation running through the paragraph and reinforced at the end. Though this approach was rare it did score highly. Equally effective were answers which did a mix of agree and disagree paragraphs (typically 2:1 disagree: agree) with a clear line of argument running throughout.

One of the biggest surprises was the many, many candidates who only discussed areas of disagreement, ignoring areas of agreement. These answers usually scored L2 because of lack of balance. It is essential that answers focus on agreement and disagreement. Some answers paid lip-service to agreement, with maybe a sentence but then going on quickly to spend a paragraph discussing differences. Better responses addressed both agreement and disagreement between the strands of Liberalism.

However, the weakest area in nearly every single answer was the lack of AO3. It is probably the case that every candidate scored worse in AO3 than the other two AO's. As the stem of ideas questions is "To what extent", evaluation takes a different form. **Candidates needed to come to a judgement of whether fear of the state within liberalism was greater than the lack of fear.** This was not seen in 95% of responses. Instead candidates made binary judgements – liberals do/do not fear the state. This is not correct for 24min ideas questions. Centres should work with candidates, as they have for 30min questions, to ensure that candidates are making effective judgements throughout their answers.

Very few candidates failed to mention at least two key thinkers, which shows centres are preparing candidates well in this way. However a considerable number of candidates included Rand and Nozick as they were discussing neoliberalism as a part of the answer. Centres should be advised that neoliberalism is not part of the liberalism specification and so no credit was given for this. Hobbes view of state was also discussed here, once again, centres should be reminded that while Hobbes is associated with Social Contract theory, he is a Key Thinker in the Conservatism specification. Centres can remind candidates that as long as they use two Key Thinkers, they can also use other relevant thinkers, TH Green, Adam Smith and even JM Keynes were well used in this way by some candidates.

Most candidates used key thinkers effectively, to reinforce their explanation of a strand, better responses used the thinkers well to not only support their argument but to develop it. However, there were a considerable number of candidates who were determined to include all five key thinkers, when other thinkers might be more useful. There appears to be a mistaken belief that using all five thinkers will always lead to higher marks; this is not the case. Appropriate and relevant thinkers should be used, as long as two of them are listed Key Thinkers from the topic.

A word about Wollstonecraft and Friedan. Both Key thinkers have a lot to add to modern political thought, arguably more on feminism than liberalism, but they are on the Liberalism specification. Candidates need to use them sensibly, where appropriate, and not use them in a way that turns a Liberalism essay into a Feminism essay. Wollstonecraft is best used when discussing the Liberal view of human nature and the need for formal equality. Freidan can also be used when discussing Formal equality as well as equal opportunity.

This answer does enough over all three AO's to achieve L5.

Classical liberals - fear of the state

modern liberals - do not fear the state

but rather utilise it to enhance individualism.

Agree - both have fear of state <sup>Social contract</sup> taking away rights. However negative freedoms vs constitutionalism.

Disagree - state in the economy. laissez-faire

fear of state stifling individualism in the

economy vs keynesian - using the state to enable

those less off in society.

Somewhat - role of the state - individualism

minimal vs enabling. Harm principle.

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Liberalism as an ideology accepts the need

for a state while classical liberals view it

as a 'necessary evil' suggesting fear for the

states powers. modern liberals are more in

favour of using the state to bring about

individualism and equality of opportunity. It can

argued that all liberals only fear the state taking away rights and individual liberties and on other matters such as the economy, their is contrasting opinion and fear over the state.

All liberals fear the state removing individual rights. Liberals are informed by the classical liberal thinker Locke to believe that human nature is individualist and rational resulting in them being granted individual freedoms and liberties. Lockes 'social contract' explained how the people should be wary of the state and if that ~~their~~ their trust or freedom is restricted then they should ~~over~~ overthrow the state. This has resulted in both modern and classical liberals valuing rights and democracy of which they are fearful of the state taking away. Liberals, such as wallstonecraft (classical) and Friedman (modern) are fearful of the state taking away or limiting the rights of women. This results in all liberals arguing for constitutionalism where the states actions are limited by a codified constitution. It can be argued that this stems from fear of the state taking away rights of individuals.

However, while all liberals are wary of the state stifling individualism which they all value, it can be argued that classical liberals are more fearful of the state than modern liberals. Classical liberal John Locke believed in a minimal and tolerant state ~~where~~ which grants negative freedoms; this means people are free from restrictions. This influences classical liberals to fear a large state which they would view as encroaching on individual liberties. In contrast, modern liberals are more influenced by Mills 'harm principle' which states that individuals should be limited by the state when they harm others individual freedoms. This leads modern liberals to value the state to carry this out, this leads to them favouring a fair judicial system set up, however separate, to the state. It can possibly be argued that modern liberals are more fearful of the harm individuals can cause one another rather than the state being larger to and having more control over individuals, which classical liberals fear. Therefore, while modern and classical liberals fear the state removing rights and liberties, it can be argued

that classical liberals have more of a fear for the state than modern liberals.

~~yet~~ It can also be argued that classical liberals fear state intervention in the economy while modern liberals favour it. Classical liberals are influenced by Mill's concept 'vindication of the rights of women' which argued that men and women should have equal participation in the economy in order to all thrive as individuals. This leads classical liberals to fear state intervention in the economy and results in them supporting a laissez-faire capitalist model and a laissez-faire state which deregulates and privatises markets<sup>①</sup>. In contrast, modern liberals do not fear the state's intervention in the economy. This is due to John Rawls' 'veil of ignorance' which argues that if one did not know the place they would have in society, they would try to improve the position of those at the bottom of society or the most unequal. Rawls argues that this can only be done through a larger state which should control the economy through Keynesian economics.

This economic model controls booms and recessions and enables individuals to not be severely impacted during times of economic crisis. Therefore, modern liberals do not fear the state's involvement in the economy and believe that an enabling state is the best way to promote individualism. Differently, classical liberals do fear the state involvement in the economy. Therefore, not all liberals are fearful to the same extent.

In conclusion, all liberals fear the state to the extent of individual freedoms and liberties being taken away. However, classical liberals are more fearful of the state and influenced by the key thinkers believe that the state should be minimal and tolerant, in the economy and society. In contrast, modern liberals do not fear the state but rather the impact of laissez-faire capitalism has on vulnerable and unequal individuals and therefore support an enabling state and state control in the economy.

① This is a popular idea among classical liberals today and forms the ~~base~~ basis of the

Washigb condenses.



A very good answer which stays focused on Liberal's fear of the state. It also includes both agreement and disagreement between the strands and answers the question from the strand's perspective and uses thinkers to develop these views. While AO3 is not outstanding, it does indicate throughout that there is more disagreement than agreement within Liberalism over fear of the state.

Liberalism at its core is about liberty and freedom, there is a universal suspicion about the power of the state and how it may corrupt, however modern liberals have a more positive view of the state entrusting it with greater power and responsibility, whereas classical liberals believe it should be reduced down to be a small watchmen state, liberalism as a philosopher has a universal suspicion but classical liberals have a much more profound fear. However all agree on its necessity to exist.

Classical liberalism fundamentally believes that the state should be as small as possible highlighting a kernel of fear towards it. ~~John Locke~~ ~~argued that~~ John Locke the father of liberalism was writing at a time dominated by with monarchs and argued that a state can only rule with consent from below this is known as a social contract, modern liberals also recognise this as a necessity

Given government, This entrusts that the government is representative of the people and limited to their wishes. Both Classical and Modern liberals reject the Hobbesian view that we should surrender to an all powerful state as all liberals believe that power has the capacity to corrupt therefore we may say liberalism has a fear of the state.

Given this sincere fear all liberals would wish for a limited constitution with their rights enshrined as a clear protection from the state. They would also advocate for a separation of powers ultimately favouring a system similar to the US's.

However Modern liberals have greater faith in the state and enshrine it with the capacity to enable other and poorer people's freedoms. John Rawls through his argument the veil of ignorance argued that if we were to be a part of a random society we would strive for greater equality and therefore

The State would have to be bigger through increased taxation and increased spending. Classical Liberals such as Locke would see this as a violation of natural rights such as wealth and privacy. The welfare state created under Clement Attlee and characterized under the ~~Similar to the~~ Barrow report would be seen as too statist by classical liberals. It is evident that classical liberals have a fear over the potential power and corruption that a larger state would be. Modern liberals on the other hand while still having a suspicion towards it grant it more responsibility indicating more trust in the state.

Within the Economy Classical liberals belief is developed from Adam Smith's book 'a wealth of nations' 1773 in which he argued that the state should have no role in the economy and that the 'invisible hand of the market' would monitor things. This way of thinking was put into practice under Margaret Thatcher and Reagan under their policy book of the state, ~~Classical~~ ~~liberals~~ which included low taxation and

privatisation, Classical liberals Evidently wish to remove the states role from key aspects Society Ensuring a small mechanistic state, modern liberals having greater faith and trust in the state advocate for Keynesian Economics in which the state plays a larger role Ensuring High Employment, it is evident from their Economic belief that not all liberals have a fear of the state as modern liberals allow to be an active member of the economy whereas Classical liberals wish to remove it from Controlling anything.

Another fundamental measurement in quantifying the fear liberals have of the state is their ideas of freedom, Classical liberalism places on ~~liberalism~~ freedom largely come from J S Mills book 'on liberty 1881' in which he founded the main principle which can be characterized by the quote "the freedom to swing my fist and the tip of your nose"; this belief is known as negative freedoms allowing people to do whatever they wish and reducing the state to a heelster Ensuring others do not infringe on others freedoms.

Modern liberals however advocate for positive freedoms which is essentially a definition of what you can do. Modern and classic liberals disagree on which is important as a result of their contrasting fear of the state. In practice we would see a classical liberal advocate for ultimate freedom of speech whereas a modern would advocate for laws against hate speech, although classical liberals believe everyone should be free from harm, creating laws which controlled speech would be handing over too much power to the state as it may lead to a slippery slope conclusion. Modern liberals would entrust positive freedoms to the hands of the state.

Ultimately all liberals have a united suspicion on the power of the state and universal advocate for a clear separation of powers and a codified constitution, however there is a big area where modern liberals entrust a much greater responsibility to the state, modern liberals are less extreme

In their fear as they see its  
Expansion in size as necessary in ensuring  
the freedoms to the poorest of society.



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Examiner Comments

As was very typical, this answer doesn't focus enough attention on Liberal's fear of the state, instead its focus is on their view of the state. The discussion is quite generalised, without the detail required for higher level answers. Equally, the comparison of strands views is not as strong as it could be. Sometimes strands views are discussed alongside each other, at other times in separate paragraphs. Lastly, there is no real evidence of clear evaluation of whether the differences are greater than the similarities.

### Question 3 (b)

This question was considerably less popular than 3a, and there was a wide range of responses, some extremely weak and other very strong answers. Although the mean mark on 3b was higher than 3a.

This question required candidates to consider whether the Third Way had abandoned socialist principles, comparing their views to the views of the other socialist strands in the specification.

Stronger answers identified key areas and looked at ways that the Third Way had/hadn't abandoned them e.g. equality, state, collectivism, common humanity, class. With many identifying that their view of human nature – common humanity – was an area where there were similarities across all socialists strands. Other approaches argued that while they had very little in common with Revolutionary Socialists (and therefore could have seen to abandon socialist principles), if compared with Social Democrats, they had much more in common (and had not abandoned socialist principles). This was done by adopting either a themed approach or an agree/disagree approach (as mentioned above) and both are equally valid.

Some candidates decided that 'socialism' in the question meant only Revolutionary socialism and compared the extent to which the Third Way agreed with Revolutionary Socialism. Whilst some of these responses did achieve reasonable marks, this narrower approach was unlikely to score in the higher levels. Weaker approaches didn't focus on whether they had abandoned socialist principles, but just wrote up a pre-prepared answer on the way socialists were similar and different.

As mentioned in previous Exam Reports on socialism questions, there are a number of candidates who continue to refer to socialist strands which are not mentioned in the specification, specifically Democratic Socialism, which is sometimes discussed to the exclusion of Social Democracy. Centres should ensure candidates do not focus on this strand, as discussion and comparison of this strand is not creditable. Also, as mentioned in previous exam reports, candidates use a wide array of terms for socialists e.g. Traditional, Revisionist, Fundamentalist, Utopian. Candidates should be reminded that they should primarily reference them by the strand name mentioned in the specification before categorising them in any other way. This would be helpful.

Also, many candidates are still using recent political examples, which was apparent in this question with the number of candidates referring to specific policies of New Labour and Tony Blair rather than their broader ideological approach of the Third Way and Antony Giddens.

There were no real issues with Key Thinkers in this question as candidates were broadly familiar with which thinker to use to illustrate which point. However there was a small minority of candidates who got there 'Tony's' confused and should be reminded that Tony Giddens is the only Third Way Socialist on the specification.

One of the biggest surprises was that the vast majority on answers only discussed ways the Third Way had abandoned socialism, with no reference at all to any way they might not have. This was across a wide range of answers, not confined to weaker responses. As a result, no matter how good their knowledge was, these responses struggled to get out of L2 for lack of balance.

Equally, as with Q3a, very little evaluation was in evidence. As a reminder, candidates should have been judging **whether the Third Way had abandoned socialist principles more than they had kept to them**. This was barely seen in any responses at all. Given that AO3 is worth a third of the marks, it is imperative that candidates evaluate throughout their essays to access the full range of levels available.

This is a low level 5 response.

While there is a great degree of consensus between socialist principles and the third way on the importance of community and fraternity in society, overall, the Third Way does effectively abandon socialist principles to a large extent as it abandons the socialist rejection of capitalism and the <sup>revolutionary</sup> socialist advocacy of a large state ~~revolution class~~.

There is great retention of socialist principles by the Third Way in regards to the importance of community and fraternity in society. The third way, as said by Giddens, aims to establish a 'triangulation of interests', focusing on the market economy while still prioritising the importance of community, echoing the importance of the 'fraternal state' of human nature advocated by revolutionary socialists such as Marx and Luxemburg, ~~the~~ as showing how despite historical developments, the importance of fraternity spans the socialist spectrum where there is great consensus between <sup>all</sup> socialists on the importance of community, <sup>traditional and third way</sup> particularly significant where Giddens also

acknowledged the 'individual aspirations' that have resulted from ~~the market~~ <sup>capitalist society</sup>. Thus, it is clear to see that ~~Griddens~~ <sup>Griddens</sup> Third Way retains the socialist principle of fraternity. However, ~~on overall~~, ~~&~~ The Third Way abandons socialist principles as it ~~is~~ propels capitalism as opposed to rejecting it, and does not advocate the ~~large~~ <sup>redistribution</sup> ~~state~~ <sup>emphasis on class</sup> put forward by earlier socialist sub-ideologies.

The Third Way abandons socialist principles to a large extent as it aims to capitalise on capitalism, as opposed to rejecting it. Revolutionary socialists outright rejected the capitalist system, <sup>Marx</sup> arguing that it resulted in the people being 'corrupted by commodification', and that the working class should be the 'gravediggers of capitalism'. Luxemburg also rejected capitalism and advocating a redistribution of wealth in society. Contrastingly, The Third Way aims to capitalise on the neoliberal economy to generate money for public investment, <sup>Blair</sup> ~~Griddens~~ allowing vast economic equality as long as individuals 'paid their taxes'. This demonstrates that while earlier socialists ~~&~~ rejected capitalism, the third way aims to utilise it. This disagreement is also highly

significant where socialism is foremost an economic ideology. Thus, the Third Way abandons ~~economist~~ socialist principles to a great extent as it advocates <sup>the</sup> a free market capitalist system ~~whereas~~ that earlier socialists rejected.

★ The Third Way also goes beyond the 'state managed' capitalism put forwards by social democrat (crossland), emphasising the ideological distance between revolutionary socialism and the Third Way.

The Third Way also abandons socialist principles to a great extent in that it rejects the ~~revolutionary~~ <sup>revolutionary</sup> socialist emphasis on class put forward by earlier socialists. Revolutionary socialists believed in a strong dialectic, Marx advocating that history was dictated by 'class-conflict', ~~from the~~ <sup>the</sup> 'haves' and the 'have nots' - the 'bourgeoisie' and the 'proletariat'. While this is echoed by later revolutionary socialist Luxemburg, <sup>and democratic socialist</sup> ~~webb~~ who also believed in the working classes as the <sup>both</sup> primary driving force for change, the Third Way rejects this notion, Giddens advocating that society had 'undergone embourgeoisement' and therefore did not

reflect Marx' binary view of class. Moreover, Giddens believed that no group could be Marx's revolutionary vanguard, <sup>or force for change</sup> also ~~re~~ thus rejecting Marx, and Luxemburg and Webb's belief in the working class as the pivotal class who would shape society, also rejecting revolution outright altogether, a key element in Marx' socialist thought. Contrastingly, ~~the~~ The Third Way acknowledges the non-binary and complex nature of society, ~~but~~ echoing and furthering ~~the~~ Social Democrat Crossland's view that society is 'more complex than Marx could have ever imagined', thus ~~also~~ highlighting the ideological difference between revolutionary socialists and their revisionists. Therefore, it is clear to see <sup>subsequent</sup> that the ~~whole~~ while the Third Way ~~is~~ adheres to socialist principles in regards to human nature, the Third Way abandons socialist principles to a great extent through its rejection of class<sup>n</sup> binary class structure in society instead advocating that society had undergone 'embourgeoisment' and ~~was~~ highly complex.

In conclusion, it is clear to see that while the Third Way retains the socialist principle of fraternity and community in society, overall it abandons socialist principles to a great extent as it disagrees with earlier socialist rejections of capitalism, instead aiming to capitalise on capitalism to be for reinvestment, particularly significant where socialism is fundamentally an economic ideology. Moreover, the Third Way rejects the 'class-struggle' and binary class structure advocated by earlier revolutionary and evolutionary socialists, instead furthering Crossland's view that society was 'more complex than Marx could have ever imagined', and had 'undergone embourgeoisment', now far more nuanced and complex in the modern day. The Third Way's large rejection of socialist principles is also best evidenced by Blair's notion that 'Marx has little to offer the contemporary socialist', indicative of how far socialism great extent to which socialism has evolved in two centuries <sup>demo</sup> and how the Third Way ~~fundamentally~~ Way has largely abandoned socialist principles, instead revising it to <sup>for the</sup> complexities, challenges, and developments presented by ~~21st Century Society~~ <sup>Societies</sup> in the ~~modern era~~ 21st Century Society.



This response is looking at areas where the Third Way has and (importantly) hasn't abandoned socialist principles. It has detailed knowledge which it uses to compare strands views effectively, although more on social Democracy would have been better. It tries to focus its evaluation on the extent of disagreement – discussing areas of a larger extent and a smaller extent of agreement. Its conclusion is too long, but overall this answer just tips in to L5.

This is a low level 3 response.

Socialism is an ideology which ~~was~~ emerged as a criticism to the effects of capitalism and includes principles such as social class, common ownership, workers control, equality, common humanity and altruism. It can be split into <sup>primarily</sup> three ~~main~~ strands of: revolutionists, social democrats and the Third Way. The Third Way effectively abandons socialist principles to a large extent.

The Third Way effectively abandons the socialist principles of social class. To revolutionists especially - and social democrats - the divide between the proletariat and bourgeoisie ~~is due to capitalism~~ can be explained due to capitalism. Social class are the groups in society which have similar socio-economic status and revolutionists ~~think that~~ saw that your social class greatly affects your life and character as they believe human ~~being~~ behaviour is socially determined and so those who ~~are~~ grow up wealthy will be happier as long as capitalism breeds but that the working class will suffer great inequality at the hands of the elite and ~~to rectify this~~ ~~as~~ Karl Marx said that it must be rejected

through a revolution after the proletariat gain class consciousness and realize their exploitation through labour. ~~The Marxist principle of~~ and overthrow capitalism replacing it with communism in that Marx said would be final stage of human history. This new social class is a fundamental principle to revolutionaries that underpins their whole view on the class conflict in society and the dangers of capitalism. ~~The Third Way~~ does not believe in the importance of social class. They argue that given the mass globalisation and in the modern world that social class is not so easily split into the 'haves' and 'have-nots' like revolutionaries argue and that there is a lot of social mobilisation. This means that they don't believe in class consciousness or the need to overthrow capitalism either as the working class are no longer in a deep class conflict like Marx suggested because they can move out due to the high class mobilisation. This shows that the Third Way has effectively abandoned the socialist principle of total class as they no longer deem it important.

Another way the Third Way has abandoned socialist principles is in its approach to capitalism and views on common ownership. Revolutionaries and

Social Democrats argue that capitalism breeds inequalities and must be replaced in some way. Revolutionaries argue ~~for~~ a strong state to own the economy and for common ownership where wealth is owned and distributed communally - for all. The Third Way does not argue for common ownership nor for capitalism to be replaced as Hitler. Anthony Giddens argue in the rise of the knowledge economy and globalisation, capitalism is the best thing for the economy to thrive and argued for a 'friendly capitalism' where inequalities produced by it ~~are~~ are addressed by society but that fundamentally capitalism should remain. This shows the Third Way effectively abandons the core socialist principles of rejecting capitalism and replacing it with some form of state controlled economy.

Furthermore, Third Way does not place as much importance as Revolutionaries on the principle of workers control. Revolutionaries believe that the economy and or state should be controlled by the workers. This is advocated for by Rosa Luxemburg who said that workers should engage in practice like mass strikes, upholding fraternity, to fight for their rights against the oppressive bourgeoisie who hold the means of production.

The Third Way however, believe that since capitalism is not necessarily a bad thing that workers control is not ~~is~~ necessary. They argue that the market and capitalism is the best for the economy which by proxy means that workers being less powerful and having less control is part of the process for this, all in order to have the best economy. This shows that the Third Way is not as interested as revolutionaries in workers control.

In conclusion,

The Third Way does uphold some socialist principles like humans being naturally co-operative and social and that there will be inequalities produced by capitalism which revolutionaries and social democrats would agree on. However, they effectively abandon socialist principles to a large extent by not rejecting capitalism or by rejecting the importance of social class or workers control which underpin socialist theory.



This response is quite detailed in places, but descriptive rather than analytical in parts. Also its portrayal of Social Democracy is not entirely accurate. However, the biggest weakness of this essay is that it focusses almost entirely on ways the Third Way has abandoned socialist principles, with the exception of a couple of sentences in the conclusion. As a consequence, it achieved low L3.

## Paper Summary

- This series witnessed an improved performance on the two source questions. There was a better engagement with the political controversy in the extract and a sharper focus on how to develop a response. Few candidates made the mistake of introducing copious own knowledge which they then analysed and evaluated. It was uncommon for a response not to appreciate the binary challenge put forward by the source.
- The least developed Assessment Objective remains AO3 across all question types. There still is a need to treat this with parity alongside the other AOs. An abundance of AO1 (or AO2) never compensates for a dearth of AO3. The AOs cannot be put up for exchange.
- There is a clear need to approach the core political ideas with greater diligence and to be prepared. The essay and source question pose a binary challenge with a clear stem. The core ideas (and the non-core on 9PLO2) commence with the stem 'To what extent.....'. The answer is one of degrees – it not a binary option and this needs to be appreciated. This fact has been stressed in the report.
- Many answers contained a wealth of up-to-date information. Clear evidence that both Centres and their students enjoy the subject and are aware of current events and put these profitably to good use.

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