

WORKBOOK

PEARSON EDEXCEL A-LEVEL

Politics **1**

UK GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

- ✓ Build confidence with practice questions structured by Assessment Objectives
- ✓ Prepare for assessment with exam-style questions



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Rights in context

The UK rights culture has developed in conjunction with democracy in the UK. The nature of rights and liberties is fundamental to the British system of democracy.

Practice questions



Are rights effectively protected in the UK political system?

AO1 Knowledge and understanding

60 Define, with an example, what is meant by an individual right. **2 marks**

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61 Define, with an example, what is meant by a collective right. **2 marks**

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62 What is the Human Rights Act? **2 marks**

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63 Identify three rights that are protected by the Equality Act 2010. **3 marks**

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64 Identify three ways in which the Supreme Court protects rights in the UK. **3 marks**

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65 Give an example of the Supreme Court protecting rights in the UK. **2 marks**

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66 Identify three ways in which pressure groups protect rights in the UK. **3 marks**

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67 Give an example of a pressure group protecting rights in the UK. **1 mark**

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68 Identify three ways in which parliament protects rights in the UK. **3 marks**

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69 Give an example of parliament protecting rights in the UK. **1 mark**

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AO2 Analysis

70 What does the word 'effectively' mean? **1 mark**

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71 Copy the table onto a separate sheet and then explain one way in which each of the following institutions is effective and another example of one way they are not effective. **6 marks**

Institution	Explanation of how it is effective in upholding rights	Explanation of how it is not effective in upholding rights
Supreme Court		
Pressure groups		
Parliament		

AO3 Evaluation

72 Overall, explain whether or not you think rights in the UK are effectively protected. **3 marks**

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73 Explain how your views on the effectiveness of the Supreme Court, pressure groups and parliament fit with your overall judgement given in Question 72. **9 marks**

a Supreme Court

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b Pressure groups

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c Parliament

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74 Evaluate the view that rights are effectively protected in the UK political system.

6 marks

Worked example

Rights in the UK are protected by a variety of political institutions, including the Supreme Court, parliament and pressure groups. Since rights are now seen as positive rights, and in many cases universal, it is important that such political institutions protect these rights in order to ensure a fair democratic system. To be effective, it also means these bodies have to be able to check each other.

Although all three bodies play important roles in protecting rights, how effectively they are able to protect such rights is a matter of some debate and depends on the body and who controls the rights protection being discussed. While there may be some exceptions, mostly it is clear that rights are generally well protected in the UK, thanks to the three institutions and the attitudes of the general public.

A01 This example serves as a strong introduction to an essay and the opening lines clearly set out the detail and information to be addressed.

A01 and A02 Further A01 knowledge is introduced by discussing key concepts and builds into A02 by explaining the key ideas and concepts to be considered.

A02 Core ideas of the debate are developed.

A03 A clear judgement is given, indicating what the conclusion will be, which will be consistently applied throughout.

Exam-style questions



Try to allow 6 minutes to read the source in a source question and about 2 minutes to plan an essay answer to ensure a solid structure. This leaves you with 40 minutes to write your answer.

Answer the exam-style questions on separate sheets of paper and keep them with this Workbook for reference.

- 1** Using Source A, evaluate the view that the UK is experiencing a participation crisis.

30 marks

Source A



People make too much fuss about there being a participation crisis. Look at the way in which Labour Party membership soared under Miliband and Corbyn; look at the turnout in the Scottish and EU referendums; look at the consistently high levels of turnout in Scottish elections. Sure, the turnout in the 2001 general election was a record low, but it's been increasing ever since then and is not far off historic norms now. People may not be rushing to join the other major parties, but they are joining online campaigns and educating themselves in other ways. Look at the Black Lives Matter protests and the protests against lockdown as examples of people engaging and participating in politics. People may not have voted in large numbers in previous referendums, but they are now, which shows that they are becoming more familiar with them. Turnout for other devolved bodies may be low, but if they gain equal powers and status with Scotland, we will probably see these second-order elections rise too. The political polarisation surrounding the issues of today, far from leading to apathy, is leading to political engagement and that in turn is boosting participation. People just need to accept that the way in which people participate is changing and need to move with the times.

A political commentator writing in 2021

- 2** Using Source B, evaluate the view that pressure group activity undermines democracy in the UK.

30 marks

48

Source B

Governments favour disproportionately the interests of well-funded, well-organised pro-capitalist pressure groups because they depend for their very survival on the profitability and efficiency of private capitalism, on which in turn levels of employment, living standards and economic growth depend. Furthermore, most pressure groups, apart from trade unions, are joined mainly by relatively affluent middle-class people. It has also been argued that the existence of so many pressure groups persuades people to believe that they have influence when in fact they have very little. Theorists influenced by New Right ideology argued in particular that the trade unions had excessive powers which they used to weaken the economy, and that welfare-oriented pressure groups such as Shelter raised unrealistic expectations of increased spending on the welfare state, which when they were not met served only to undermine confidence in government.

Whereas political parties represent the general interests of voters across a range of issues, pressure groups provide for the representation of citizens' views on particular issues relating to their own personal well-being and/or to their particular causes for concern. As a result of the resources at their disposal, pressure groups can represent individuals more effectively than they could do themselves, a point which may be especially relevant to more disadvantaged individuals. It is possible that pressure groups can address controversial issues that political parties might initially seek to avoid and likely also that as new issues reach the political agenda, new pressure groups can be formed to address them. Pressure groups enable their members and supporters to participate more fully in the political process on a continuing basis between general elections and this is likely to enhance political understanding and thereby to strengthen support for the liberal democratic system as a whole.

Adapted from an academic report on pressure group influence

- 3** Evaluate the view that the franchise should not be extended beyond its current requirements for general elections in the UK.

30 marks

42

- 4** Evaluate the extent to which rights in the UK are effectively protected.

30 marks

42