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General Certificate of Education  
2013

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## Government and Politics

Assessment Unit A2 1

Comparative Government

[AQ211]

FRIDAY 17 MAY, MORNING

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### TIME

2 hours 15 minutes.

### INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided. Choose **either Option A**: The United Kingdom and the United States of America **or Option B**: The United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

From your chosen option, study the source provided and answer questions **1** to **4** and either **5(a)** or **5(b)**.

### INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 100.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in questions **1**, **3**, **4** and **5**.

Figures in brackets printed down the right-hand side of pages indicate the marks awarded to each question or part question.

### ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

You are advised to take account of the marks for each question in allocating the available examination time. For your chosen option, you should spend approximately **40 minutes** in answering question **1** in Section A.

You are advised to study the source before attempting to answer this question and refer to the source in your answer.

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**Option A: The United Kingdom and the United States of America****Section A: The US Constitution**

Study the source below and answer the question that follows.

**Source**

For a brief period in the 1990s, President Clinton had the power of the so-called “line-item veto”. With both the regular and pocket vetoes, the President must veto the whole bill or none of it. But the line-item veto gave the President the power to veto sections, or “items”, within a bill while signing the remainder of the bill into law. President Clinton used the power for the first time on 11 August 1997. But less than a year later, on 25 June 1998, the US Supreme Court, in the case of *Clinton v New York City*, declared the law unconstitutional. President Clinton had used the power 11 times to strike 82 items from bills passed by Congress.

*Adapted from Anthony Bennett, 3rd edition, US Government and Politics, 2009, p205*

- 1 With reference to the Source and any other relevant information you have studied, assess the extent to which the checks and balances in the US Constitution prevent effective government.

[30]

**Section B: Government in the UK and the USA**

**Answer all four questions.**

- 2 What is meant by the term “gridlock”? Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]
- 3 Explain the role of the Vice President in the United States. [10]
- 4 Compare and contrast the scrutiny powers of the House of Lords and the Senate. [25]
- 5 **Either**
- (a) “US Presidents and UK Prime Ministers are more at risk from their own party colleagues than they are from their opponents.” Evaluate this view. [30]
- Or**
- (b) “The UK Prime Minister enjoys much greater legislative freedom than the US President.” Evaluate this view. [30]

## Option B: The United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

### Section A: The Irish Constitution

Study the source below and answer the question that follows.

#### Source

Ireland has to change radically. There is no point in rescuing Ireland if the only effect is to keep in power the elites and systems that created the catastrophe. Ireland has to replace the existing system with one that gives the people real power. The emergence of a genuine republic in Ireland has been blocked by the power of the Catholic Church and by the corruption that turned the state into a vehicle for private interests. The Irish people can reshape the political system and create a new form of politics. They can create a parliament that actually holds the government to account.

*Adapted from: Fintan O'Toole. The Observer. 14 November 2010.*

- 1 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, discuss whether Ireland now needs a new constitution. [30]

**Section B: Government in the UK and the Republic of Ireland**

**Answer all four questions.**

- 2 What is meant by the term “referendum”? Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]
- 3 Explain how backbench TDs hold the government to account. [10]
- 4 Compare and contrast how important party loyalty is for MPs and TDs. [25]
- 5 **Either**
- (a) “There are similar limitations on the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach when it comes to choosing their cabinets.” Evaluate this view. [30]
- Or**
- (b) “There is greater executive control over the legislature in the UK than there is in the Republic of Ireland.” Evaluate this view. [30]

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**THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER**

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