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General Certificate of Education

2018

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# Government and Politics

Assessment Unit A2 1  
Comparative Government



AQ211

[AQ211]

MONDAY 11 JUNE, AFTERNOON

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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 to refer to the source in your answer.

**Option A: Comparative Government:  
The Government and Politics of the UK and USA**

**Section A: The US Constitution**

**Study the source below and answer the question that follows.**

**Source**

Human Rights Watch, a group of lawyers, academics and leading human rights experts from across the world, has claimed that the USA has strong constitutional protections for many civil and political rights. However, it is also guilty of allowing the violation of a range of internationally recognised rights. Its website lists groups whose rights have been violated. For example, there are widespread allegations of racial bias within the police. This follows a series of highly publicised police shootings of young black males.

- 1 With reference to the Source and any other relevant information you have studied, assess the view that the Constitution has failed to protect the rights of all American citizens. [30]

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

**Answer all four questions.**

**2** Explain what is meant by the term “Electoral College”. Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]

**3** Explain the roles played by committees in the US Senate. [10]

**4** Compare and contrast the appointment powers of the Prime Minister and President. [25]

**5 Either**

**(a)** “British Prime Ministers and American Presidents increasingly dominate their political systems.” Evaluate this view. [30]

**Or**

**(b)** “For Members of Congress, representing their voters comes first. For MPs, representing their voters comes second or even third.” Evaluate this view. [30]

**Option B: Comparative Government:  
The United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland**

**Section A: The Irish Constitution**

**Study the source below and answer the question that follows.**

**Source**

The 1937 constitution guaranteed the usual liberal democratic rights – the right to vote, free association, free speech and so on. The articles setting out these rights were influenced by Catholic social thought. In some cases there is nothing visibly Catholic about the language used in Bunreacht na hÉireann. However, in other cases the Catholic flavour is obvious, such as the prohibition of divorce. Two clauses of Article 44 gave Roman Catholicism a unique status while the State merely “recognised” a list of other, presumably less significant, religions. While the constitution may have been reformed, critics argue that it remains an essentially “Catholic” document.

*Adapted from John Coakley and Michael Gallagher, Politics in the Republic of Ireland, PSAI Press. 2nd Edition. 1996. p54*

- 1** With reference to the Source and any other relevant information you have studied, discuss the view that Bunreacht na hÉireann remains a “Catholic” document. [30]

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

**Answer all four questions.**

- 2 Explain what is meant by the term “motion of no confidence”. Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]
- 3 Explain the criticisms made of committees in the Oireachtas. [10]
- 4 Compare and contrast the legislative functions of the House of Lords and Seanad Éireann. [25]
- 5 **Either**
- (a) “Prime Ministers are no more able to dominate their cabinet than their Irish counterparts can control theirs.” Evaluate this view. [30]
- Or**
- (b) “TDs are focused on local issues, while MPs are more concerned with national issues.” Evaluate this view. [30]

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

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