3.10 Traditional Conservatism and the New Right: Tensions Within the Tradition: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answers may be brief but must use complete sentences where indicated. The final 30-mark essay must be a developed, structured evaluation with a clear judgement. This pack covers tensions between traditional conservatism and the New Right within the Edexcel 9PL0 Core Political Ideas content.

1 Explain the difference between Burkean empirical scepticism and the New Right's ideological confidence in market theory, with one short example of each. Use complete sentences.

(Total for Question 1 is 6 marks)

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2 Evaluate the extent to which conservatives disagree over the role of the state.

(Total for Question 2 is 24 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.10 Traditional Conservatism and the New Right: Tensions Within the Tradition: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies Burkean empirical scepticism as cautious reliance on tradition and accumulated experience rather than abstract reason	**B1**
provides a brief example or development for Burkean scepticism, e.g. warning against revolutionary schemes	**B1**
identifies New Right confidence in market theory as trust in markets to allocate resources efficiently and shape social behaviour	**B1**
provides a brief example or development for New Right market confidence, e.g. 1980s privatisations as an application	**B1**
links the two positions to their implications for the role of the state in one or two clear sentences	**B2**

Answer: Burkean empirical scepticism emphasises gradual change rooted in tradition and experience, warning that abstract schemes can destroy valuable social inheritances; the French Revolution is often cited as a cautionary example. The New Right's confidence in market theory trusts market forces to allocate resources and incentivise behaviour efficiently; 1980s privatisations are a practical instance. The Burkean view implies a more cautious role for the state in reform, while the New Right trusts markets and expects a roll-back of state economic involvement, with the state retained for order and defence.

Question 2

Level 0 No relevant content.	**0**
Level 1 Basic, limited knowledge of conservative strands with little or no developed analysis or evaluation. Answers may describe one strand only or make general assertions without evidence.	**1-6**
Level 2 Clear and generally accurate knowledge of One Nation and New Right positions with some analysis and partial evaluation. Response may be one-sided or lack detailed evidence from examples.	**7-12**
Level 3 Detailed, accurate knowledge and analysis of both strands used to construct a sustained evaluation. The answer weighs areas of disagreement against areas of agreement and uses appropriate examples; judgement is reached but may be slightly unbalanced.	**13-18**
Level 4 Sophisticated, wide-ranging and accurate knowledge deployed in a tightly argued evaluation that directly compares One Nation and New Right views on the state, uses precise historical and conceptual examples, addresses counterarguments and reaches a clear, well-supported conclusion on the extent of disagreement.	**19-24**

Indicative content:

- Clear points of disagreement: One Nation conservatives accept a more interventionist economic role for the state to preserve social cohesion, endorsing paternalistic measures and selective redistribution. New Right neo-liberals favour minimal economic intervention, privatisation and market solutions, arguing that state welfare can create dependency.
- Clear points of disagreement: New Right neo-liberals and neo-conservatives combine a reduced economic state with a strong state in law and order and defence, producing a different allocation of state responsibility compared with One Nation paternalism.
- Areas of agreement: both strands defend private property and property rights, value social stability and order, and are sceptical of radical egalitarianism and abstract schemes for remaking society; both prefer pragmatic solutions over utopian ideology.
- Thinkers as brief illustrations: Hobbesian pessimism about human nature underpins the desire for order; Burkean empiricism supports gradual reform; these support overlapping conclusions about the necessity of some state authority even where they disagree about economic scope.
- Evidence and examples: the 1980s Thatcher governments implemented New Right economic reforms such as privatisation and trade union limits while retaining strong policing and defence spending; One Nation examples include post-war welfare settlements and Tory paternalistic policies at times when the party has sought to reduce social division.
- Evaluation of extent: a strong answer will argue that disagreement is substantial and politically consequential on economic policy and welfare, but limited at a deeper level because both strands accept state authority for order and the defence of institutions. Alternatively, the answer can argue that practical politics often produces a hybrid in which New Right economic measures are tempered by One Nation pragmatism, so disagreement is significant in rhetoric and emphasis but not absolute in practice.
- Counterarguments: note that electoral politics, coalition arrangements, and institutional constraints (e.g. bureaucratic inertia, public opinion) frequently moderate ideological positions, so empirical divergence may be smaller than doctrinal claims imply.
- Conclusion: a well-supported judgement should specify whether the candidate believes the disagreement is primarily about the state's economic role while there is substantial agreement on social and institutional roles, or whether they believe the disagreement permeates the understanding of state authority more deeply.

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