3.2 Core Ideas and Principles of Liberalism: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short-answer items may be brief phrases or sentences where asked. For levels-marked questions write a developed response with accurate political knowledge, clear analysis and, for the 30-mark essay, an explicit judgement.

1 State two constitutional mechanisms liberals typically support to constrain government power, naming the constitutional context.

(a) State one constitutional mechanism. **(1)**

(b) State a second constitutional mechanism distinct from the first. **(1)**

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Distinguish between 'negative liberty' and 'positive liberty' in the liberal context and explain why most classical liberals prioritise negative liberty, naming the conceptual context.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Explain what liberal political theory means by 'negative liberty' in the context of freedoms liberals prioritise.

(a) Identify the basic meaning of negative liberty used by liberals. **(1)**

(b) Explain one implication of prioritising negative liberty for government policy in a liberal context. **(2)**

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

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4 Explain the liberal commitment to foundational equality as a prerequisite for individual liberty, in the context of core ideas.

(Total for Question 4 is 3 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.2 Core Ideas and Principles of Liberalism: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

(a) one accurate mechanism, e.g. separation of powers, a written constitution, judicial review, or a bill of rights **B1**

(a) Answer: Separation of powers between branches of government.

(b) one accurate, distinct mechanism, e.g. judicial review, a bill of rights, or regular free elections **B1**

(b) Answer: Judicial review and independent courts.

Question 2

defines negative liberty as freedom from interference and positive liberty as capacity or opportunity to act **B1**

identifies that classical liberals prioritise negative liberty to protect individuals from coercive state action **B1**

explains a reason why, e.g. fear that state provision of 'capacity' could justify intrusive control or paternalism **B1**

brief example or development, e.g. opposition to expansive welfare measures seen as limiting choice if coercive **B1**

Answer: Negative liberty is freedom from interference, while positive liberty is the capacity or resources to act. Many classical liberals prioritise negative liberty because they fear that state attempts to supply capacities could become intrusive or paternalistic, limiting individual choice; for example, they warn that expansive compulsory programmes may restrict freedom even if intended to increase opportunity.

Question 3

(a) states that negative liberty is freedom from interference or constraint by others, especially the state **B1**

(a) Answer: Freedom from interference or constraint by others, especially by the state.

(b) identifies an implication, e.g. limits on state power, protection of civil liberties, or restrictions on paternalistic legislation **B1**

(b) development explaining how that implication follows, e.g. laws should focus on preventing harm rather than enforcing virtue **B1**

(b) Answer: An implication is that government should have constrained powers, protecting civil liberties and avoiding paternalistic laws, so state action is justified mainly to prevent harm to others rather than to force individuals to be moral.

Question 4

identifies that foundational equality means all individuals have equal moral worth and equal entitlement to basic rights **B1**

identifies that this equality is about equal legal and political rights rather than guaranteed equal outcomes **B1**

explains the link, e.g. equal status underpins freedom of choice and access to institutions that protect liberty **B1**

Answer: Foundational equality means all individuals have equal moral worth and equal entitlement to basic legal and political rights; it is equality of status and opportunity rather than ensuring identical outcomes, and it underpins the ability of individuals to exercise their liberty and access the protections of constitutional government.

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