3.3 Classical and Modern Liberalism: Tensions Within the Tradition: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be brief, but present full sentences for any question worth 4 marks or more. The final 30-mark essay must be a developed, structured response. This pack focuses on the internal tensions within liberalism between classical and modern strands.

1 Analyse the extent to which liberals agree on the principle of individualism, focusing on the classical versus modern liberal debate within the topic of liberalism.

(Total for Question 1 is 12 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.3 Classical and Modern Liberalism: Tensions Within the Tradition: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 0 No relevant content.	**0**
Level 1 Basic, partial statements about individualism with limited development. May conflate classical and modern positions.	**1-4**
Level 2 Clear explanation of classical and modern liberal conceptions of individualism, with some analysis of similarities and differences.	**5-8**
Level 3 Detailed, balanced analysis explaining where the strands share a common commitment to individual rights and where they diverge over the role of society and the state in enabling individual development, reaching a supported judgement.	**9-12**

Indicative content:

- Agreement: both classical and modern liberals place the individual at the centre of political theory, defending individual rights, rule of law and tolerance of plural lifestyles.
- Classical emphasis: individualism framed as self-reliance, personal responsibility, and freedom from state interference, stressing property rights and market choice.
- Modern emphasis: individualism includes concern for individuals' real capacities to choose, so enabling public services and redistribution are necessary to secure substantive freedoms.
- Analysis should consider whether the difference is substantive or only semantic: both oppose collectivist subordination of the individual but disagree over whether formal liberties are sufficient without social and economic provisions.
- A good conclusion might judge that liberals broadly agree on prioritising the individual but disagree significantly on what the state must do to make that ideal meaningful, so agreement is strong in principle but contested in policy.

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