2.10 The Structures and Powers of the Devolved Governments of the UK: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be brief. For levels-marked and source-based questions, write a developed response using accurate institutional knowledge, examples and clear reasoning. The final essay requires a well-structured evaluation with a conclusion.

1 Define 'devolution' as used in UK politics, naming the three devolved legislatures covered in this topic.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State two consequences of asymmetry between the three devolved settlements for intergovernmental coordination, naming the devolved bodies.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 Name the piece of legislation that moved Wales from a conferred-powers model to a reserved-powers model and give its year.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 State two fiscal powers held by the Scottish Parliament as of 2024, naming the relevant legislation where appropriate.

(Total for Question 4 is 4 marks)

5 Explain the role of the Barnett formula in funding the devolved administrations and one criticism of it.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.10 The Structures and Powers of the Devolved Governments of the UK: Test Pack

Question 1

a concise definition: the statutory transfer of certain legislative and executive powers from the UK Parliament to regional bodies	**B1**

Answer: Devolution is the statutory transfer of certain legislative and executive powers from the UK Parliament to regional bodies, namely the Scottish Parliament, the Senedd Cymru (Welsh Parliament) and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Question 2

one consequence, e.g. difficulty in designing UK-wide policies because Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have different competencies	**B1**
development, naming the Scottish Parliament, Senedd Cymru and the Northern Ireland Assembly	**B1**
second consequence, e.g. increased administrative complexity or need for bespoke funding arrangements	**B1**
development of the second consequence, e.g. more bilateral negotiations between Westminster and an individual devolved body	**B1**

Answer: Consequences include: policy divergence making UK-wide policy design harder because the Scottish Parliament, Senedd Cymru and the Northern Ireland Assembly have differing competencies; and increased administrative complexity or the need for bespoke funding arrangements, leading to more bilateral negotiations between Westminster and each devolved body.

Question 3

identifies Wales Act 2017 cao	**B1**
gives year 2017 cao	**B1**

Answer: The Wales Act 2017, passed in 2017.

Question 4

one correct fiscal power, e.g. Scottish rate of income tax-setting powers (with reference to Scotland Act 2016)	**B1**
development that this includes varying rates of income tax for Scottish taxpayers	**B1**
a second correct fiscal power, e.g. control over devolved taxes such as Scottish Landfill Tax or Land and Buildings Transaction Tax	**B1**
development or naming Scotland Act 2012 as the act devolving those taxes, or Scotland Act 2016 as the act giving income tax powers	**B1**

Answer: Examples: powers to set rates and bands of income tax for Scottish taxpayers under the Scotland Act 2016; control over devolved taxes such as Scottish Landfill Tax and Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (which replaced UK Stamp Duty Land Tax in Scotland), both devolved under the Scotland Act 2012 and in force from 2015.

Question 5

identifies the Barnett formula as the mechanism that adjusts annual block grant funding to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following changes in England	**B1**
explains the basic operation: consequentials based on comparable England spending multiplied by population proportions	**B1**
gives one criticism, e.g. it is said to be arbitrary or not needs-based	**B1**
brief development of the criticism, e.g. it does not reflect differing needs or costs of delivering services in each nation	**B1**

Answer: The Barnett formula adjusts annual block grant funding to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland by applying consequentials from comparable England spending to population-based proportions for each devolved nation. A common criticism is that it is arbitrary and not based on assessed needs, so it can produce funding outcomes that do not reflect the differing needs or costs of delivering public services across the nations.

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