2.11 The Comparative Powers of the Commons and Lords, and Lords Reform: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be brief phrases; the two levels-marked questions require full sentence answers and developed argument. The source-based 12-mark question must be answered using the material in the source provided within the prompt.

1 This question concerns the Parliament Act 1949 and how it modified the legislative delay allowed to the House of Lords. State how the Parliament Act 1949 changed the legislative delay allowed to the House of Lords.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 This question concerns the Salisbury Convention and its practical effect on the House of Lords since the post-war period.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 This question asks you to explain how the Parliament Acts procedure allows the House of Commons to bypass the Lords for most public bills once timing requirements are met.

(Total for Question 3 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.11 The Comparative Powers of the Commons and Lords, and Lords Reform: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

states that the 1949 Act reduced the Lords suspensive delay from two years to one year **B1**

Answer: It reduced the Lords suspensive delay from two years to one year for most public bills.

Question 2

states that the Salisbury Convention means the Lords will not block government manifesto commitments **B1**

briefly explains it was an informal convention arising after 1945 to respect the Commons electoral mandate **B1**

Answer: The Salisbury Convention is the informal agreement that the Lords will not block legislation implementing the governing party's manifesto commitments, developed after 1945 to respect the Commons electoral mandate.

Question 3

Level 0 No relevant content. **0**

Level 1 Basic, limited description of the Parliament Acts process with inaccuracies or missing steps. **1-2**

Level 2 Clear description of the main stages and timing required under the Parliament Acts, but with limited analysis of implications. **3-4**

Level 3 Detailed, accurate explanation of the procedure and its implications for Commons-Lords relations, including timing, types of bills excluded, and practical consequences. **5-6**

Indicative content:

- Under the Parliament Acts the Commons can present the same public bill in two successive sessions without the Lords consenting; if the Lords still refuses, the bill can be presented for Royal Assent without the Lords' consent after the required interval.
- Timing specifics: following the 1949 Act, the delay is effectively one parliamentary session in practice, meaning a bill rejected by the Lords in one session can be reintroduced and, if passed again, sent for Royal Assent the next session, subject to specified notice and procedure.
- Money bills are treated differently: a money bill certified by the Speaker can become law if not passed by the Lords within one month, reflecting Commons financial privilege.
- The Acts exclude certain types of bills, for example, bills extending the life of Parliament beyond five years are excluded, and the Acts do not apply to private bills.
- Implications: the mechanism preserves Commons primacy while allowing the Lords a revising and delaying role; in practice the Acts are used rarely because the threat of use influences Lords behaviour and because political costs of forcing a bill without Lords' consent can be high.

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