2.11 The Comparative Powers of the Commons and Lords, and Lords Reform: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 30 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 Evaluate the view that the House of Lords should be replaced with a fully elected chamber.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

(Total for Question 1 is 30 marks)

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk

Mark scheme · 2.11 The Comparative Powers of the Commons and Lords, and Lords Reform: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 0 No relevant content.	**0**
Level 1 Basic, limited knowledge of the debates about Lords reform. Argument is mainly descriptive and lacks clear analysis or evaluation.	**1-7**
Level 2 Clear knowledge of arguments for and against a fully elected chamber with some analysis; evaluation is present but may be uneven or one sided. Some relevant examples or reform proposals are used.	**8-15**
Level 3 Detailed and accurate knowledge used to construct a sustained analysis that weighs advantages and disadvantages of a fully elected second chamber. Evaluation engages with constitutional implications and reaches a supported judgement.	**16-23**
Level 4 Sophisticated, wide-ranging knowledge of reform proposals and consequences used to produce a tightly argued, balanced evaluation. Precise examples, comparative evidence and consideration of design options are used to reach a well-substantiated and nuanced judgement.	**24-30**

Indicative content:

- Arguments in favour: a fully elected chamber would have clear democratic legitimacy and accountability to voters, improving democratic credentials and public trust; electoral competition could make peers more accountable for scrutiny and representation.
- Arguments in favour continued: elections could diversify representation and potentially correct perceived biases in the appointed Lords; a fixed term and electoral cycle could professionalise the chamber and clarify mandates.
- Arguments against: a fully elected chamber risks creating competing democratic mandates with the Commons, threatening Commons primacy and producing legislative deadlock, particularly if different parties control each chamber.
- Arguments against continued: elected peers might behave politically like MPs, reducing the independence and expertise that appointed or crossbench peers provide; the revising, specialist role of the Lords could be weakened.
- Design and mitigation: hybrid models or limited electoral reforms (part-elected chamber, staggered terms, different electoral system, no power to veto but only to delay) can attempt to combine legitimacy with non-rivalry, but bring complexity and unclear political consequences.
- Practical considerations: the scale of reform, transitional arrangements, cost, and impacts on conventions such as the Salisbury Convention; the existing presence of hereditary peers and bishops raises questions about representativeness that a full election would resolve but at the cost of tradition.
- Comparative evidence: some bicameral democracies with two elected chambers experience inter-chamber conflict; overall institutional design and political culture matter more than the simple fact of election.
- Judgement guidance: a balanced conclusion might accept that election would improve legitimacy but argue that it should not be implemented without safeguards to protect the Commons primacy and the chamber's revising function; alternatively, conclude that a carefully designed hybrid could offer a better balance than full election.

© Revision Library | revisionlibrary.co.uk