2.4 The Structure, Composition and Functions of Parliament: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be brief. For levels-marked questions write a clear, developed response with accurate political knowledge and precise terminology. The source-based question requires answers driven by the extracts provided.

1 State one formal function of Parliament in the UK constitutional context, from the Edexcel 9PL0 specification.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 This short question concerns the remaining hereditary peers in the House of Lords as of Edexcel 9PL0 teaching. State how many hereditary peers remain entitled to sit, and name the mechanism by which they remain.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 This question is about the role of backbench MPs in scrutinising the executive in the UK Parliament, per Edexcel 9PL0.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.4 The Structure, Composition and Functions of Parliament: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies one correct function, e.g. legislating	**B1**
development, e.g. passing laws through both Houses and receiving Royal Assent	**B1**

Answer: One function is legislating, that is, debating and passing laws through the House of Commons and House of Lords before Royal Assent.

Question 2

states the correct number, 92	**B1**
identifies that they remain following the House of Lords Act 1999 transitional arrangement	**B1**
explains the mechanism, e.g. 90 elected hereditary peers plus two holders of offices (the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain)	**B1**
brief development, e.g. replacement hereditary peers are elected by hereditary peer groups when vacancies arise	**B1**

Answer: There are 92 hereditary peers remaining, retained as a transitional arrangement under the House of Lords Act 1999: 90 elected hereditary peers plus two office holders (the Earl Marshal and the Lord Great Chamberlain), with replacements elected by hereditary peer groups when vacancies occur.

Question 3

identifies that backbench MPs scrutinise government through questions, debates and votes	**B1**
explains the impact, e.g. exposing policy weaknesses, forcing ministerial explanation or changes	**B1**
identifies that backbenchers sit on committees or table amendments	**B1**
explains the consequence, e.g. shaping legislation or public opinion and constraining the executive	**B1**

Answer: Backbench MPs scrutinise the executive by asking parliamentary questions, initiating debates and using votes to challenge policy, which can expose weaknesses and force ministerial explanation or policy change; they also participate in committees and table amendments, helping to shape legislation and influence public opinion, thereby constraining the executive.

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