2.4 The Structure, Composition and Functions of Parliament: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 25 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 who is elected to the House of Commons.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State how constituencies are used to elect MPs to the House of Commons.

(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)

3 Name two types of members who sit in the House of Lords, as required by the Edexcel 9PL0 topic on Parliament composition.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

4 This question is about how Parliament supplies government ministers in the UK context. State how Parliament supplies government ministers in the UK context.

(Total for Question 4 is 3 marks)

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5 This question is about how MPs represent constituents in the House of Commons as described on Edexcel 9PL0.

(a) Explain two ways an MP represents constituents in the House of Commons. **(4)**

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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6 This question is about the House of Commons' electoral link to legitimacy. Explain, using three reasons, why the Commons is usually seen as the democratically legitimate chamber in the UK Parliament, according to Edexcel 9PL0 content.

(Total for Question 6 is 6 marks)

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7 This question is about private members' bills as a route for backbench MPs to legislate in the UK Parliament context.

(a) Explain three features of private members' bills that affect their chances of becoming law. **(6)**

(Total for Question 7 is 6 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.4 The Structure, Composition and Functions of Parliament: Test Pack

Question 1

identifies that Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected to the House of Commons **B1**

Answer: Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected to the House of Commons.

Question 2

identifies that the UK is divided into geographical constituencies, each electing one MP **B1**

Answer: The UK is divided into geographical constituencies, with each constituency electing one MP to the House of Commons.

Question 3

names one correct type, e.g. life peers **B1**

names a second correct type, e.g. remaining hereditary peers or bishops **B1**

Answer: Any two of: life peers; the remaining hereditary peers; bishops (the Lords Spiritual).

Question 4

identifies that government ministers are normally drawn from members of Parliament, especially MPs from the governing party **B1**

identifies that some ministers may be drawn from the House of Lords **B1**

brief development, e.g. the PM appoints ministers who must command Commons confidence **B1**

Answer: Government ministers are normally drawn from members of Parliament, primarily MPs from the governing party, though some ministers can be peers in the House of Lords; the Prime Minister appoints ministers who must command Parliament's confidence, especially in the Commons.

Question 5

(a) identifies one way, e.g. raising constituency issues in Commons debates or questions **B1**

(a) explains how this represents constituents, e.g. brings local concerns to national attention and holds ministers to account **B1**

(a) identifies a second way, e.g. providing casework and assisting individuals with government services **B1**

(a) explains how this represents constituents, e.g. helps constituents resolve problems and gives them a voice in the political system **B1**

(a) Answer: An MP represents constituents by raising constituency issues in Commons debates and questions, which brings local concerns to national attention and holds ministers to account, and by doing casework to help individuals with government services and complaints, which gives constituents a direct voice and practical help.

Question 6

identifies that MPs are directly elected by constituents in single member constituencies **B1**

explains why this gives legitimacy, e.g. direct electoral mandate and accountability via elections **B1**

identifies that the Commons determines the government and holds it to account **B1**

explains why this reinforces legitimacy, e.g. government must command Commons confidence and can be removed by losing it **B1**

identifies a further reason, e.g. MPs face local accountability through constituency surgeries and casework **B1**

explains the effect, e.g. this local accountability strengthens the link between voters and national policy influence **B1**

Answer: The Commons is democratically legitimate because MPs are directly elected in single member constituencies, giving them an electoral mandate and accountability at general elections; the Commons determines who forms the government and can remove it by losing confidence, which concentrates national democratic authority in the elected chamber; and MPs face local accountability through surgeries and casework, strengthening the link between voters and national decision making.

Question 7

(a) identifies one feature, e.g. limited parliamentary time for debate on Fridays or ballot bills **B1**

(a) explains how this limits progress, e.g. lack of time means many bills run out of time and fail **B1**

(a) identifies second feature, e.g. government support or opposition **B1**

(a) explains its effect, e.g. government backing greatly increases chance of passage, opposition or lack of prioritisation reduces it **B1**

(a) identifies third feature, e.g. reliance on cross-party consensus or absence of financial implications **B1**

(a) explains its effect, e.g. bills with cross-party support or no major cost are more likely to succeed **B1**

(a) Answer: Private members' bills are often limited by restricted parliamentary time, for example much debate happens on Fridays when attendance is low so many bills run out of time and fail; government support or opposition is critical, since backing usually secures time and resources while opposition can block progress; and bills that attract cross-party consensus or have no substantial financial implications have a higher chance of success because they are less controversial and easier to timetable.

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