2.6 The Relationship Between the Executive and Parliament: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For extended, levels-marked questions write full sentences and construct a developed response.

1 Define the term 'government majority' in the context of the UK House of Commons as it affects executive authority.

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State two ways party unity is maintained in the UK House of Commons, with reference to whipping and the payroll vote.

(Total for Question 2 is 2 marks)

3 Give one specific example of a formal arrangement between the executive and another party that reduced government dependence on a simple majority, naming the partners and the year.

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

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4 State four ways a Prime Minister can try to strengthen party unity and reduce rebellions, giving one brief example of each tactic.

(Total for Question 4 is 5 marks)

5 Explain two political consequences of the 2010 Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition for the executive-legislature balance, naming policies or institutional changes where relevant.

(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.6 The Relationship Between the Executive and Parliament: Test Pack

Question 1

a concise definition that a government majority is the number of government MPs exceeding all other MPs in the Commons, enabling easier passage of government business cao — **B1**

Answer: The number of MPs supporting the government that exceeds the number of MPs opposing it, allowing the government to win Commons votes more easily.

Question 2

one correct method, e.g. the party whipping system issuing one, two or three line whips — **B1**

a second correct method, e.g. the payroll vote where ministers and PPSs are expected to support the government — **B1**

Answer: The party whipping system (one, two or three line whips) and the payroll vote of ministers and parliamentary private secretaries who are expected to support the government.

Question 3

identifies the arrangement accurately, e.g. the Conservative-DUP confidence-and-supply agreement — **B1**

identifies the partner party, e.g. Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) — **B1**

identifies the year, e.g. 2017 — **B1**

Answer: The Conservative Party entered a confidence-and-supply agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) in 2017.

Question 4

one correct method, e.g. offering ministerial promotion or patronage, with a brief example — **B1**

a second correct method, e.g. tightening the whip or threatening deselection, with a brief example — **B1**

a third correct method, e.g. negotiating concessions or requiring free votes on conscience issues, with a brief example — **B1**

a fourth correct method, e.g. using party management and meetings to secure loyalty, with a brief example — **B1**

an overall clear development that links these tactics to reducing rebellions — **B1**

Answer: Examples include offering ministerial promotion or patronage to reward loyalty (e.g. promoting loyal MPs into junior ministerial roles), tightening the whip or threatening deselection to deter dissent (e.g. three line whips on key votes), negotiating concessions such as policy changes or amendments to win rebels back, and using party management such as regular meetings and briefings to keep MPs aligned; these tactics all aim to reduce the incentive to rebel and secure votes for government business.

Question 5

identifies one consequence, e.g. the need for negotiated compromises between coalition partners over policy — **B1**

develops with an example, e.g. the coalition negotiated the 2010 Spending Review and shared cabinet posts, moderating some Conservative policies — **B1**

identifies a second consequence, e.g. constraints on unilateral executive action and increased importance of Cabinet agreement — **B1**

develops with an example, e.g. the Liberal Democrats influenced policies such as the pupil premium and changes to tuition-fee plans, showing executive compromise — **B1**

Answer: One consequence was the need for negotiated compromise between parties, illustrated by joint decisions in the 2010 Spending Review and the sharing of cabinet posts which moderated some Conservative proposals. A second consequence was that unilateral executive action was constrained and Cabinet agreement became more important, as seen when the Liberal Democrats secured policy influence on issues including the pupil premium and revisions to tuition-fee policy.

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