1.7 Long-Term Factors Influencing Voting Behaviour: Class, Age and Region: 30-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. Short-answer questions may be brief but must be precise. At least two extended answers require full sentences and developed explanation. The final 30-mark question must be a structured essay with a clear judgement.

1 Evaluate the view that class is no longer a significant influence on voting behaviour in the UK.

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(Total for Question 1 is 30 marks)

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Mark scheme · 1.7 Long-Term Factors Influencing Voting Behaviour: Class, Age and Region: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 0 No relevant content.	**0**
Level 1 Basic assertions about class and voting with limited factual support, little analysis and no sustained evaluation. Arguments are generalised and unbalanced.	**1-7**
Level 2 Clear knowledge and some analysis of evidence for and against the view. Evaluation is present but may be one sided or underdeveloped, and the judgement may be tentative.	**8-15**
Level 3 Detailed, accurate knowledge and developed analysis engaging with both sides of the debate. Evaluation weighs different arguments and evidence and reaches a supported judgement, though some aspects may lack depth.	**16-23**
Level 4 Sophisticated, wide-ranging knowledge and sustained analysis that integrates empirical evidence, theory and counter-arguments. Evaluation is balanced and reaches a clear, well-justified judgement on the extent to which class remains significant.	**24-30**

Indicative content:

- Arguments that class is less significant: evidence of class dealignment and partisan dealignment since the 1970s and 1980s, with a decline in class-based voting; more voters identifying as non-party identifiers; rise of valence voting where competence and economic management matter more than class identity.
- Empirical support for decline: falling correlation between occupational class categories and vote share across successive general elections; growth of floating voters and volatility in many constituencies since the 1990s.
- Arguments that class remains significant: class still correlates with voting in many areas, especially where socioeconomic inequalities persist; working-class concentration in specific regions often predicts party preferences, and class intersects with region, education and ethnicity to shape voting.
- Empirical support for continued significance: examples where traditional class bases persist, such as Labour strength in many northern urban areas until 2019 and continued Conservative strength among older, more affluent voters; party realignments often operate along class-related economic issues such as austerity or welfare.
- Complexity from interaction effects: class may operate indirectly via related variables such as education, occupation, and place of residence; education as a predictor has risen in importance and sometimes mediates class effects, for example higher education levels correlate with Remain voting in 2016 and with support for certain parties.
- Counter-evidence and nuance: 2019 saw Conservative gains in some traditionally working-class seats, suggesting class voting is conditional on issues like Brexit and leadership; class retains predictive power but is not deterministic for all voters.
- Theoretical points: distinction between lifecycle and cohort effects, and between structural class effects and short-term issue-based shifts; class may remain a structural background influence even when short-term valence or issue factors change outcomes.
- Conclusion approaches: a balanced judgement might argue class is less dominant than in the mid 20th century but remains an important, though mediated, influence; its explanatory power has changed rather than disappeared, so the view that class is no longer significant is too strong, but recognising the decline is also accurate.

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