# 1.9 The Media, Opinion Polls and Their Influence on UK Elections: Test Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 15 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

**Answer ALL questions. Short answer questions may be answered in note form unless a question asks for a developed sentence. For levels-marked questions, write a well-structured, developed response using accurate political knowledge, named examples, and precise terminology. Allow approximately 15 minutes for the whole paper.**

**1** Define the term 'tabloid press' in the context of UK media and elections.

**(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)**

**2** Name the UK regulator responsible for enforcing statutory impartiality rules for broadcast news.

**(Total for Question 2 is 1 mark)**

**3** State the name and year of the UK public inquiry that investigated press ethics following the phone hacking scandal.

**(Total for Question 3 is 1 mark)**

**4** State two commonly cited limitations of opinion polls in predicting UK election outcomes.

**(a)** Limitation one of opinion polls in UK elections. **(1)**

**(b)** Limitation two of opinion polls in UK elections. **(1)**

**(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)**


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**5** Explain the statutory impartiality requirement for UK broadcasters and its intended effect on election coverage.

**(Total for Question 5 is 4 marks)**

**6** Explain why the partisan print press can remain influential despite libel laws and regulatory scrutiny in the UK.

**(Total for Question 6 is 5 marks)**


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# Mark scheme · 1.9 The Media, Opinion Polls and Their Influence on UK Elections: Test Pack

## Question 1

a brief definition identifying a tabloids as mass market newspapers focusing on sensational stories, short articles and strong editorial opinion **B1**

**Answer: Mass market newspapers characterised by sensational headlines, short articles, large photographs and a tendency to express clear political editorial positions.**

## Question 2

Ofcom cao **B1**

**Answer: Ofcom.**

## Question 3

Leveson Inquiry, 2011 or 2012 (set up in 2011, reported in 2012) **B1**

**Answer: The Leveson Inquiry, 2011-12 (set up 2011, reported 2012).**

## Question 4

(a) identifies one limitation, e.g. sampling error or unrepresentative samples **B1**

**(a) Answer: Sampling error or use of samples that do not accurately represent the electorate.**

(b) identifies a second limitation, e.g. late swings in voter intention or shy voter effects **B1**

**(b) Answer: Late swings in voter intention and 'shy' voter effects where respondents hide true preferences.**

## Question 5

states that UK broadcast news is required to be impartial under Ofcom rules and relevant broadcasting legislation **B1**

explains impartiality means presenting a range of significant viewpoints and avoiding systematic political bias **B1**

explains intended effect, e.g. to ensure voters receive balanced information to make informed choices **B1**

provides an example or consequence, e.g. regulated party political broadcasts, question time format and equal airtime during election periods **B1**

**Answer: UK broadcasters must follow Ofcom impartiality rules requiring them to present a range of significant viewpoints and to avoid systematic political bias; the intended effect is to provide voters with balanced information so they can make informed choices, implemented through regulated party political broadcasts, balanced news items and formats such as equal questionnaire and question time arrangements during election periods.**

## Question 6

identifies reason one, e.g. large circulations and loyal readerships give tabloids reach **B1**

identifies reason two, e.g. strong editorial framing and agenda setting can shape what readers consider important **B1**

identifies reason three, e.g. partisan tone and selective use of facts can influence perceptions without necessarily breaching libel thresholds **B1**

identifies a limitation of regulation, e.g. press regulators may lack the enforcement power of statutory bodies and commercial incentives favour provocative content **B1**

explains consequence, e.g. editorial endorsements and campaign narratives can still mobilise or demobilise voters **B1**

**Answer: Partisan print outlets retain influence because they often have large, loyal circulations and use strong editorial framing to set agendas and highlight particular issues; they can shape perceptions through selective presentation of facts that may not meet libel thresholds, and press regulators lack the enforcement reach of statutory bodies so commercial incentives continue to reward provocative, partisan coverage which can mobilise or demobilise readers at election time.**


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