5.4 US Federalism: The Changing Relationship Between Federal and State Government: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 State one way the Commerce Clause has been used to expand federal authority, naming a relevant policy area.

(Total for Question 1 is 2 marks)

2 Explain the concept of New Federalism promoted in the late 20th century and name one policy instrument associated with it.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

3 Explain two ways modern federal-state conflicts over healthcare policy illustrate the changing balance of power, using recent US federal and state actions.

(Total for Question 3 is 4 marks)

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Mark scheme · 5.4 US Federalism: The Changing Relationship Between Federal and State Government: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies one use, e.g. regulating drugs across state lines or civil rights enforcement under interstate commerce powers	**B1**
links to a policy area, e.g. drug trafficking or civil rights legislation	**B1**

Answer: For example, the Commerce Clause has been used to justify federal regulation of drugs that cross state lines and to support federal civil rights laws affecting businesses engaged in interstate commerce.

Question 2

identifies New Federalism as devolution of responsibilities to states and a preference for state-level solutions	**B1**
identifies a policy instrument, e.g. block grants	**B1**
explains how block grants work, e.g. federal funds given with fewer strings attached allowing state discretion	**B1**
gives a brief example or effect, e.g. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) replaced AFDC in 1996 as a block grant example	**B1**

Answer: New Federalism refers to a late 20th-century trend of returning responsibilities to the states and using instruments that increase state discretion. Block grants are a key tool: the federal government provides lump-sum funding with fewer conditions so states can set policy, as exemplified by federal welfare reform in 1996 when AFDC was replaced by the TANF block grant.

Question 3

one way: federal initiatives like the Affordable Care Act use conditional funding and federal standards to shape state policy	**B1**
development, e.g. federal Medicaid expansion incentives under ACA	**B1**
second way: states use waivers or reforms to resist or reshape federal policy, e.g. Section 1115 Medicaid waivers or state-level public option proposals	**B1**
development/example of state pushback or innovation, e.g. states declining Medicaid expansion or implementing their own programmes	**B1**

Answer: One example is the Affordable Care Act, which expanded federal influence via Medicaid expansion incentives and federal standards; states could accept or decline expansion, illustrating federal leverage through conditional funds. Another example is states using Section 1115 waivers or their own innovations to resist or adapt federal policy, demonstrating that states retain tools to reclaim policy space or tailor implementation to local priorities.

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