2.1 Prime Minister and Executive: 10-minute Pack

EDEXCEL 9PL0 · about 10 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions. For levels-marked questions, write a well-structured, developed response using accurate political knowledge, named examples and precise terminology. This pack forms part of Edexcel Paper 2 (9PL0/02), Section A: UK Government.

1 This question is about the Prime Minister's patronage powers.

(a) Explain two patronage powers available to the Prime Minister. **(4)**

(b) State one constitutional constraint on the Prime Minister's patronage over senior judicial appointments. **(3)**

(Total for Question 1 is 7 marks)

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2 This question is about individual ministerial responsibility.

(a) State the constitutional convention that holds a minister individually accountable to Parliament for the conduct of their own department. **(2)**

(b) Give one historical example of a minister resigning under individual ministerial responsibility, with the date. **(3)**

(Total for Question 2 is 5 marks)

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Mark scheme · 2.1 Prime Minister and Executive: 10-minute Pack

Question 1

(a) identifies one accurate patronage power, e.g. appointing and dismissing ministers, including Cabinet ministers **B1**

(a) brief development of that power **B1**

(a) identifies a second accurate patronage power, e.g. nominating individuals for life peerages in the House of Lords **B1**

(a) brief development of that power **B1**

(a) Answer: The Prime Minister can appoint and dismiss ministers, including Cabinet ministers, giving them significant control over who holds senior government office and can be a powerful tool for rewarding loyalty or removing dissent. The Prime Minister can also nominate individuals for life peerages in the House of Lords, allowing them to shape the membership of the upper chamber over time.

(b) identifies the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) as the body that recommends senior judicial appointments **B1**

(b) correctly identifies the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as the Act that established the JAC and the modern appointments process **B1**

(b) explains the effect, e.g. this significantly reduced the direct discretion the Prime Minister/Lord Chancellor previously had over who becomes a senior judge **B1**

(b) Answer: The Constitutional Reform Act 2005 established the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC), an independent body that recommends candidates for senior judicial appointments; this significantly reduced the direct discretion the Prime Minister (and Lord Chancellor) previously had over senior judicial appointments, since ministers now act largely on the JAC's recommendations rather than exercising free personal patronage.

Question 2

(a) identifies individual ministerial responsibility cao **B1**

(a) brief accurate development, e.g. ministers may be expected to resign for serious personal or departmental failings **B1**

(a) Answer: The convention of individual ministerial responsibility, under which a minister may be expected to resign for a serious personal failing or a serious failure within their own department.

(b) names an accurate example, e.g. Lord Carrington **B1**

(b) correctly identifies the role/office and issue, e.g. Foreign Secretary, resigning after the Foreign Office failed to anticipate the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands **B1**

(b) correctly dates the resignation, April 1982 **B1**

(b) Answer: Lord Carrington resigned as Foreign Secretary in April 1982, accepting responsibility for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's failure to anticipate Argentina's invasion of the Falkland Islands.

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