



Examiners' Report June 2025

GCE Politics 9PL0 02

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Introduction

The paper performed as expected, with questions being accessible to all candidates and challenging enough to differentiate between them. Candidates and centres should be congratulated for making the study of UK Government and non-core ideas a wide-ranging, rich and rewarding experience.

The quality of work from many candidates was very high and there was much evidence of personal engagement with the big political debates raised by the questions. Candidates were confident and willing to develop a clear line of argument, utilise contemporary evidence, and employ key political terminology.

Two common issues that arose were ensuring the timing was sufficient to give each question its due consideration and the utilisation of pre-prepared essay plans that were used without being shaped to the question asked.

The key point is to address the question. If the question is that the UK constitution is not working, then candidates need to assess what it is **supposed** to do so that they can argue whether it is working or not. If the question is about whether Prime Ministers **now** have too much power, then they need to assess what has changed to make this statement accurate and why it is inaccurate. Where the question asks whether backbenchers in the House of Commons are increasingly effective at carrying out their roles, then it is vital to detail what their roles are and to address the idea of **increasingly**.

Sources

In the source questions, it was pleasing to see candidates engaging with the political information in the source to develop an argument in relation to the question set. Effective structures were used to pair-up the arguments to develop comparative analysis and work towards substantiated judgements. The judgement of the strength of the pairs of arguments saw varied approaches, with some judgement substantiated effectively and others merely stated.

Introductions were shorter and sharper, setting up the debate and establishing a clear line of arguments. Conclusions were less strong, often working as summaries, rather than conclusions.

Essays

Essay questions were generally well-structured, engaged with the question, used good political vocabulary, and looked to develop a sense of debate. Whilst it was good to see clear lines of argument emerging, there is still a need to develop judgements that are substantiated more effectively by the evidence presented and the analysis that was developed.

The line of argument needs to go beyond only being stated, to being developed effectively, to convince the reader. One area to consider is the use of evidence: too often, answers drew on historical evidence, rather than using that historical evidence as context to compare with more contemporary examples to draw out conclusions and judgements.

Non-core ideas

It was pleasing to see that the non-core political questions were answered well, overall, and there was a stronger use of key political terminology. Writing in the language of the political idea allows the candidates to write with greater depth and perception, whilst also making it possible to write shorter, more hard-hitting responses.

Most candidates did look to develop the comparative analysis around the differences and similarities between strands, supported by key thinkers, to reach judgements. Where candidates considered disagreements, they tended to show some very strong comparative analysis skills, whilst the agreements tended to be more stated than developed. In those judgements there is still a need to focus on the question stem and provide a clear answer to "extent".

Timing across the paper was an issue again this year, and the answers on non-core political ideas were typically the responses that were either very short or incomplete.

Question 1(a)

This question was the more popular of the two source questions, with a wide range of answers on display. The question was accessible, whilst offering enough challenge to differentiate.

Candidates were able to engage with the political information in the source, using the key arguments from the source to build the skeleton for their essay. Performance was more varied in terms of developing the debate from the political information in the source and selecting topical evidence to help generate effective analysis and judgements.

Engagement with the question was crucial to reaching the higher-level mark bands. Stronger answers were able to select the political information effectively from the source and pair-up the arguments from it to develop a high-level debate with a clear line of argument regarding whether the UK constitution is not working effectively. The best answers contextualised the question by thinking about what the constitution is supposed to do, and to debate whether it was working or not.

Weaker answers tended to want to turn the question into a debate about whether the UK should have a codified constitution, without focussing sufficiently on the question.

Stronger answers were able to select their evidence carefully, ensuring it was contemporary, to support their analysis and understanding. For instance, candidates were able to make a case that the UK has become an elective dictatorship due to the vulnerability of its constitutional arrangements. They utilised the way the Johnson government looked to impose its will on Parliament or the fact that the current Starmer government dominates the parliamentary system, despite not enjoying widespread support in the country as measured by the 2024 General Election result. In exploring further, candidates often looked at Johnson's prorogation of Parliament and the Cherry/Miller (No 2) ruling, or the ruling that the Rwanda scheme was unlawful and the subsequent Safety of Rwanda Act.

In terms of the constitution being out-of-date, candidates selected evidence carefully about the role of the Monarchy, the unelected Lords and the nature of the election system. In looking at the opposing view that the constitution works by addressing problems as they arise, candidates looked at the reforms to the House of Lords over the last hundred years coming right up-to-date with Starmer's proposed House of Lords (Hereditary Peers) Bill.

Structure was very important here. Answers that did not pair up naturally-competing viewpoints found it difficult to develop their analysis thoroughly, to reach logical judgments. Answers that did not use the political information in the source effectively to set up the debate – or did use the source but did not develop the arguments within it – found it difficult to build effective Assessment Objective (AO)2 and AO3. Answers that used historical evidence, evidence that did not fit with the context of the debate or hardly any evidence, also had difficulty engaging with the question. Areas where confusion arose including confusing the government and parliament, the powers of the Supreme Court and misunderstandings around the Rwanda case.

In terms of developing AO3, many candidates did have a clear line of argument in the introduction and did build in mini-conclusions at the end of the comparative analysis of a pair of arguments building to the conclusion. Often, these judgements still felt more stated than developed, and where judgements or conclusions were either unexpected or unconvincing, the AO3 was weaker.

Too often, conclusions only repeated the paragraph themes or mini-conclusions, rather than answering the question succinctly, showing why that judgement can be reached and contextualising it within the current political situation.

Chosen question number: **Question 1(a)** **Question 1(b)**

Overall, the source suggests that the UK's constitution is working effectively, while the source suggests that ^{the} conventions and common law and Act of Parliament that make up our uncodified constitution leads to a lack of clarity, ~~weak checks~~ reflects a constitution that is out of date, and does not provide sufficient checks and balances to decisions made by the executive, overall it is the constitution's uncodified nature which makes it effective. The source highlights that reforms have improved democracy as they are so as the constitution is flexible and able to evolve, meaning that it has modernised greater checks have been implemented on the executive and have received public support. Therefore the source suggests the constitution remains effective.

Firstly, the source suggests that the makeup of the UK constitution, due to its uncodified nature is "not easily accessible to all". This suggests that the UK constitution fails to engage the British public, which arguably is a source of democratic deficit. A survey

conducted by the ~~IFER~~ Institute for Electoral Reform found that 35% of British citizens reported that they know "hardly anything at all" about the UK constitution. This illustrates a distinctive problem with the nature of the UK constitution, as it, as the source suggests "discourages popular participation". ~~The~~ ~~is~~ This suggests that the vague language that surrounds conventions, the range of different sources that form the constitution and the influence of common law as well as statute law makes the UK constitution difficult to understand, undermining ^{its democratic function} ~~the democracy of the UK~~, as it leads to apathy, and therefore less participation.

However, the source also suggests that "Reforms made have been widely accepted and operate successfully". ~~The~~ ~~is~~ Devolution can be seen as an ~~example~~ example of this, as it has increased representation, participation and thus strengthened democracy, decentralised control away from Westminster, and can be seen as widely successful, due to the increase in participation via the devolved bodies. The introduction of AMS, in Wales and Scotland and STV in Northern Ireland, through the Scotland Act of 1998, Belfast Agreement and 1998 Wales Act, demonstrates how the uncodified nature of the UK constitution allows for reform which

increases participation and democracy. The high turnout at the Scottish Parliamentary elections, being 63.5% in 2021 ^{in comparison to 59% in the 2024 general election} indicates that referendums and the introduction of ~~greater~~ more proportional systems in the devolved ~~of~~ bodies has engaged the electorate more, ~~illustrating~~ rather than polarising them. This indicates that the complex and uncodified constitution, while confusing, supports participation of the electorate rather than discouraging it, due to the ^{popular} reforms it has allowed.

Secondly, the source suggests that the UK constitution is "out of date" and "quite uninvited to the social and political democracy of the 21st century". This is perhaps best indicated by the over-reliance on conventions, in particular of the Prime Minister's (PM) prerogative powers. The prerogative power, for example granted to the PM to engage troops in a foreign country is highly controversial. A convention has developed that before a PM does this they consult Parliament, as was the case with Cameron in 2013, who responded to the vote in Parliament against engaging ~~to~~ troops in Syria. However in ~~2018~~ 2018 May ~~engaged~~ engaged troops in Syria without Parliamentary approval, undermining the principle of no convention. This

illustrates the weakness of our reliance on conventions that are subject to a change in leader ~~and the~~ order, in particular with regards to the PM's prerogative powers which threaten the sovereignty of Parliament, which are arguably a relic of our "ancient past", suggesting the UK constitution is not effective as it is 'out of step' with modern democracy. However, the source also suggests that, rather than being "out of date" the UK constitution is "evolutionary and flexible". This indicates that the flexibility of the UK constitution has allowed it to modernise, ~~to~~ responding to changing times. The House of Lords for example is often regarded as an 'outdated' aspect of the UK Parliament. However due to the flexible constitution the House of Lords has evolved and will most likely do so in the future; its influence ~~has~~ ~~decreased~~ over time ~~but~~ through the Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949, the House of Lords Reform Act of 1999, removing all but 92 hereditary peers, ~~from~~ reform in 2014, and 2015 addressing the issue that arose of 'inactive' peers, and the proposed 2024-25 House of Lords Reform Bill, aiming to remove the remaining 92 hereditary peers. This demonstrates what conservatives would view as the organic and pragmatic nature of the UK constitution.

, responds to problems as they arise. Without this flexibility, supporters would argue that the government would not be able to respond to changing times and crises as effectively, such as COVID-19 or terrorism threats. This indicates that, the constitution is to a greater extent effective due to its flexible nature allowing modernisation, ~~than its~~ despite its perhaps 'out of date' foundation.

Finally, the source suggests that "there are no effective checks on the power of the Executive by Parliament", indicating that large government majorities have led to claims of an 'elective dictatorship'. Critics would argue that this problem has increased and with the current Labour ~~is~~ majority with 412 seats the government executive has passed controversial legislation despite the will of Parliament. This was the case on the vote on cutting winter fuel allowances, which passed, despite 53 Labour MPs abstaining. This indicates that the UK constitution has been ineffective in providing a check to executive power and protecting parliamentary sovereignty.

~~Furthermore~~ ^{Furthermore} the source ~~also~~ ^{also} suggests ~~that~~ "the Supreme Court is unwilling and unable to challenge the government. This is due to its limited

power in light of parliamentary sovereignty, illustrated by the 8/10 amendments to the Rwanda Act which were rejected, suggesting weak rights protection due to the entrenched constitution.

However, the source also suggests that ^{there are} "a wide range of considerable pressures exerted on ministers seeking to make controversial changes". Arguably, the Constitutional Reform Act of 2005 allowed for greater judicial independence, providing a check on executive power. The Miller ¹ ^{as 2} ~~cases~~ ~~cases~~ illustrated how the rule of law is upheld via the UK constitution, ruling the government was acting 'ultra vires' and therefore providing a check to executive power and upholding Parliamentary sovereignty. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the UK constitution in holding the executive to account. Therefore the source suggests that the constitution is effective, despite the power of the executive and the rule of law is still upheld.

Overall, although the uncodified and unentrenched UK constitution lacks clarity and could be said to be old-fashioned, without sufficient checks on government power, its flexibility has allowed it to reform and evolve, ^{ensuring} ~~improving~~ democratisation, modernisation and decentralisation ^{and greater protection} of rights.

(Total for Question 1 = 30 marks)



This answer focusses on the question, with a clear line of argument developed throughout.

It selects and deploys the key political information from the source to establish the debate with effective pairing, before building the analysis to reach supported conclusions.

It is notable that there is perceptively-selected evidence deployed to analyse and evaluate the key arguments raised in the source.

The conclusion is perhaps not as sharp as the rest of the answer, but overall this is a focussed, well-developed answer.

Level 5



Conclusions should answer the question directly; they should be succinct and justify why you have reached that conclusion.

While some may argue that the UK contribution is working effectively due to its stability and flexibility, this argument is largely misguided. The increasing dominance of the executive and, erosion of rights and lack of protection clearly demonstrates that the UK's contribution is not working well.

The more incoherent argument could be made in the vein that parliament works effectively ~~due to~~ ^{due to} ~~the~~ "success of remuneration" and the fact that there are "a wide range of considerable pressures". The idea that there is an "elective dictatorship" is no longer relevant. MP's can rebel and backbench rebellions have become increasingly common, particularly in recent years. ~~There's~~ under minority or fragile governments such as Theresa May's era, the Prime Minister is more likely to face defeat. Theresa May faced 33 defeat in parliament - her notable defeat over her EU withdrawal agreement. In addition, Boris Johnson faced significant opposition over his 'COVID passport' plan in March

ALMOST 100 CONSERVATIVE MEP'S OPPOSED WIN. THIS DEMONSTRATES NOT ONLY THE ~~REASON~~ EFFECTIVE CHECKS AND BALANCES EXIST AT THE EXECUTIVE BUT ESPECIALLY IN TANNERS CASE WHERE MANY LABOUR MEP'S VOTED IN HIS FAVOUR, ~~HE~~ EXPOSED THE SIGNIFICANT INTERNAL DIVISIONS OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, ~~RENDERING~~ ^{RENDERING} HIS INFLUENCE IN PARLIAMENT. THEREFORE, PARLIAMENT IS ABLE TO PREVENT AN ELECTIVE AUTOCRACRY, ESPECIALLY ~~TO~~ THROUGH BACKSCATCH REVELATIONS. HOWEVER, STRONG MAJORITIES IN PARLIAMENT OFTEN LEAD MEMBERS TO DICTATORIAL LEADERSHIP.

THE MUCH MORE COMPELLING ARGUMENT IS THAT THERE HAS BEEN "GROWTH OF THE ELECTIVE AUTOCRACY". THE ~~THE~~ FIRST PART THE PORT VOING SYSTEM IN PARLIAMENT RESULTS IN DISPROPORTIONATE OUTCOMES AND DISTORTS VOTE SHARE TO SEAT SHARE - AS IT ENDED, SHARED IN 2024 WITH STAMER GAINING 411 SEATS (67.2%) WITH A MERELY 33.7% OF THE VOTE SHARE. IN MANY, TURNING 80 SEAT MAJORITY ENABLING HIM TO PASS SIGNIFICANT PIECES OF LEGISLATION WITH MINIMAL SCRIBING. HE SUCCESSFULLY PULLED CONVENTIONAL ACTS FROM THE NATIONALITY AND BORDERS ACT TO THE ELECTIONS ACT AND EVEN REPEALED THE FIXED TERM PARLIAMENT ACT. THIS IS SIGNIFICANT AS IT HIGHLIGHTS HOW ~~THE~~ PRIME MINISTERS ARE RENDERED UNOPPOSEABLE AND UNCHECKABLE BY PARLIAMENT. THIS DEMONSTRATES HOW ~~THE~~ EXECUTIVE

demanded is still very much prevalent in Parliament today - rendering the UK constitution working ~~ineff~~ ^{ineffectively}.

~~Therefore~~ Although Parliament gains ~~the~~ ^{some} ~~power~~ ~~to~~ control & during minority ^{or fragile} governments, the structural crisis of parliament demonstrates that the UK constitution is not working effectively.

The erroneous argument states that the UK constitution is working ~~well~~ ^{well} despite ~~the~~ ^{the} fact that it "has never been reduced to a single document". The lack of codification in the UK is extremely advantageous and has stood the test of time historically. The Marriage Act 2014 was able to be introduced without rigid, constitutional amendments unlike in the US where ^{requirement} ~~super~~ of super-majorities. A mere act of parliament with a simple majority is able to update the constitution which allows flexibility and adaptation as seen during COVID. In addition, Brexit legislation was able to be passed through parliament ~~and our~~ ~~country~~ ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ as was significant devolution. For example, the Scotland Act 2016 ~~that~~ and Wales Act 2017, gave devolved regions autonomous power - in particular, Scotland was given significant fiscal power over income tax and welfare. The expansion of Metro mayors power -

where ~~my~~ Andy Burnham and Keir Starmer have great powers over transport, housing and education. These powers are emerging ~~to~~ necessitated can be addressed because the overall effectiveness of the UK constitution. This flexibility is vital in order to adapt to unprecedented circumstances ~~and~~ important to address the needs of the electorate. However, this flexibility surfaces severe tensions, especially in devolved regions naturally crave more power.

The much stronger argument is that the UK constitution ~~does~~ does not ~~work~~ ^{work} effectively as "parliament can make or ~~make~~ ^{unmake} my law", and "many recent reforms have created more problems than they have solved. The ability of parliament to amend the constitution through a simple majority means that power is able to be given out or revoked very easily - adding a risk of power exploitation and abuse. ~~before~~ ^{post} Brexit - as Scotland voted (62%) remain - the ~~urge~~ urge for independence has increased. English devolution too, has seen full power greed. Notably, Metro Mayor such as Burnham call for "deep devolution", urging for more power ~~by~~, ~~+~~ explaining that the asymmetry in Metro Mayor power for example Greater Manchester's transport powers compared to the lack of West of England transport powers calls for greater (English) devolution.

the lack of a codified constitution blurs lines of sovereignty and this in itself is a derived body power, significantly diminishing and undermining parliamentary sovereignty - a key principle of the UK constitution, rendering it mainly ineffective.

The flexible nature of the UK constitution makes it vulnerable to power abuse especially by derived bodies, making the UK constitution is not working effectively.

The weaker argument states that the "reforms made - operate successfully" and the UK constitution works effectively through the judiciary. The Constitutional Reform Act 2005, removed the UK Supreme Court from the Lords, enhancing its independence. In addition, judges are apolitical and are bound by protections such as not being dismissed from politically campaigning for parties and pressure groups. The Supreme Court have challenged the government many times, more recently over R (Miller) v Secretary of State and have been successful. Parliament their powers of the judicial review and their Declaration of Incompatibility with the Human Rights Act, give judicial & substantial checks on the government making that the UK constitution works effectively. However, the Supreme Court ultimately has no enforcement power, rendering

It insignificant.

The much more coherent argument is that the Supreme Court ~~is not an~~ ^{is not an} effective part of the UK constitution as "the Supreme Court is unwilling and unable to challenge the Government". The lack of enforcement powers mean that the Supreme Court relies on parliamentary good will which is not a substantial protection. The Illegal Migration Act 2023, overrode the SC ~~by~~ ^{by} and stated that ~~the~~ international law and the HRA should be put aside to allow the deportation of asylum seekers. This demonstrates how the Supreme Court's powers extend to upholding parliamentary law as shown in Miller II and cannot strike down legislation or ~~the~~ ^{the} override parliament due to Parliamentary ~~so~~ ^{sovereignty}. This places rights in a vulnerable position as governments may only "sue their own short-term political goals" and undermine democracy.

Whilst the SC has powers in theory, they are not strong enough to effectively place checks on the government. Meaning that the UK constitution ~~is~~ ^{is} not working effectively.

Ultimately, the UK's constitution ~~that~~ ^{that} does not work effectively ~~and~~ ^{and} due to the lack of ^{codification.} ~~written~~ laws are going to be increasingly blurred in future years.



There is;

- a clear line of argument developed throughout the answer with some perceptive analysis, well-selected evidence and supported judgements
- utilisation of the political information from the source to generate the debate, which remains focussed on the question
- a good use of political vocabulary. The evidence that is selected includes a number of contemporary examples

Level 5



If the conclusion can be written from reading the rest of the essay, and it matches the conclusion, then that shows generally that a clear line of arguments has been maintained throughout.

Evaluate the view that the UK's constitution is not working effectively:

The UK constitution is uncodified and unentrenched, meaning it is not contained in a single document and is easier to change than an entrenched constitution.

~~In the~~

In the source it is correctly argued that the nature of the UK constitution means it is 'not easily amendable for all'. This is accurate due to the many sources of the uncodified UK constitution, being statute law (any law passed through parliament), common law (decisions made by the judiciary), authoritative works (previous documents relating to law or government such as the Magna Carta), and conventions (unwritten procedures such as the Salisbury convention that the House of Lords shall not block government policy from their manifesto, as well as collective and ~~individual~~ ^{Ministerial} responsibility). This means for the average working person, leaving the UK constitution is extremely difficult. Just the Human Rights Act from statute law contains over 1000 pages. Despite the accuracy of this argument, it does not mean the constitution is not working effectively, as the primary purpose of a constitution

'It not to be easily understood. Also in the source, this argument goes against the previous claim with 'contrary to claims that the UK constitution is out of date, it is evolutionary and flexible in nature'. This correctly identifies the benefits of an unentrenched constitution, for example in 2020 the COVID19 Act allowed the Johnson government to respond quickly to the pandemic with greater essential powers given to the government, that not only able to be achieved due so fast due to our unentrenched constitution. While both these arguments are accurate, the second argument shows effectiveness of the constitution for governing while the initial argument only shows a potential democratic deficit caused by a complex unmodified constitution.

It is wrongly argued in the source that 'the growth of an elective dictatorship means that there are no effective checks on the power of the executive by Parliament', this is inaccurate as Parliament has several methods of checking the power of the executive. This is rightly and directly countered later in the source with 'Some are concerned about the supposed existence of an elective dictatorship and inadequate checks and balances, that if a small group of considerable power elected upon minister seeking to make controversial changes'. While the extent can be argued, Parliament has many checks and balances

including committees, the House of Lords (HoL), the legislative process and other methods of scrutiny like PMQs. The flexible nature of the constitution allowed for the creation of the Supreme Court in 2009 by the Blair government after the abolition of law lords in 2005. Due to this constitutional change, the successive Labour government to Blair under Gordon Brown was restricted by that Supreme Court over a controversial and arguably authoritarian change. Gordon Brown's Counter-Terrorism legislation was deemed ultra vires by the Supreme Court and incompatible with the 1997 Human Rights Act (HRA). This is a clear example that shows how the constitution prevents an elected dictatorship and controversial changes, as we have many checks and balances both within parliament and out.

Overall, the UK constitution is still working effectively as it allows for efficient governance and maintains checks and balances due to its flexible, unentrenched nature. While there are many critiques of the constitution such as its complexity to the wider public, this does not hinder its effectiveness.



There is:

- no clear line of argument established in the introduction although the answer does focus on the question that was set
- mostly accurate knowledge selected and deployed, with mostly focussed comparative analysis
- some generally relevant evaluation with some focussed conclusions

Level 3



Remember to establish a clear line of argument in the introduction that should act as the golden thread that runs throughout the answer.

Question 1(b)

This question was the less popular of the two source questions, but with a wide range of answers shown and a series of different conclusions. The question was accessible, whilst offering enough challenge to differentiate.

There was quite a wide range of approaches to the question, with some candidates showing breadth and others more depth: both were effective. There were some candidates who wrote a more generic devolution essay, and this limited the development of an effective answer to the question.

In general, there was a real attempt to engage with the question of whether it is now time for an English Parliament, and some clear lines of argument were developed. Stronger answers were able effectively to pair-up arguments from the source to create a high-level debate about the need for an English Parliament and were able to focus on the 'now' element of the question. This allowed candidates to show perceptive comparative analysis of the political information in the source.

The analysis was often supported by well-selected evidence, including some excellent contemporary examples such as the:

- increasing number of devolved matters being handed over to devolved bodies
- relevance of the Barnett formula and fiscal devolution
- relevance of the West Lothian Question given the failure of English Votes for English Laws and the General Election result of 2024
- success or otherwise of Metro Mayors, such as Andy Burnham, in electoral terms and in relation to policy achievements
- Labour Party's Devolution Priority Programme

Stronger answers had an effective structure. There was an introduction that established the debate and a clear line of argument for the answer. Many candidates argued strongly for their views on whether an English Parliament is now needed, whilst effectively analysing both sides of the argument. The structure used well-paired arguments to reach supported judgements before reaching strong conclusions. The strongest conclusions were often short, hard-hitting and felt part of a well-argued answer, rather than simply an add-on.

Some structures were less effective. They did not pair-up the arguments from the source effectively or attempted to write a pre-planned response rather than using the political information in the source. One such example would be candidates trying to 'shoehorn in' a wider debate about the success or otherwise of devolution.

The weakest structures rarely referred to the source and looked to develop their own arguments, which can gain some AO1, but no AO2 or AO3, marks. Others listed arguments from the source for an English Parliament and then against an English Parliament, limiting the ability to develop more effective AO2 and AO3.

Once a pair of selected arguments had been debated, it was possible for candidates to create

interim, substantiated judgements or incorporate judgements throughout. Sometimes, these judgements felt merely stated rather than argued towards, undermining their effectiveness. These interim judgements need to build towards the conclusion – where the interim judgements or the conclusion were a surprise to the reader, it was the case that the AO3 had not been developed well.

Chosen question number: Question 1(a) Question 1(b)

To a large extent, it can be inferred that the source agrees that it is now time for an English parliament due to three empiricist arguments: its introduction will ensure 'fair equal parliaments', an English parliament could address the west Lothian question and how the introduction of an English parliament will ensure national identity, thus allowing for the 'long-term growth of English identity'. Contrastingly, the source is in disagreement from the view that it is now time for an English parliament because it would be implemented as 'England would dominate the other home nations', it would 'threaten parliamentary sovereignty' and lastly how 'there is no strong desire for an English parliament with an increasing number of members a more appropriate solution to English devolution'. Therefore, it can be inferred that to a large extent the source is in disagreement with the view that it is now time for an English parliament should be introduced, because of its implications.

Firstly, one way in which the source agrees with the view is that an English parliament should be introduced is that it would deliver 'fair equal parliaments'. Therefore, the source is arguing that it would 'create the best conditions for strong democracies', thus the introduction of an English parliament would serve to correct the asymmetrical nature of the devolution settlements in the UK political sphere. This can be evidenced by the fact that England is the only country in the devolved regions without its own parliament, where the devolved regions have significant and exclusive control over key policy areas such as education and healthcare. For example, the devolved

The significance of this can be reflected by the fact that the devolved region of Scotland was the first region to ban smoking in ~~public~~ public areas in 2006, suggesting that due to the fact that England does as well as abolishing busker fees, two tax policies which Westminster has been slow to answer to. Therefore, the introduction of an English Parliament can ~~represent~~ represent English citizens' interests are sufficiently represented, ~~correctly~~ ~~and~~ quickly and efficiently, in contrast to the current devolution settlement which will do this, therefore, this indicates that the introduction of an English Parliament would deliver stability and union. Alternatively, the source is ~~disagrees~~ in disagreement with this view because if an English Parliament was introduced, 'England would dominate the other home nations if empowered through its own powers' because of its larger size. ~~This is a significant~~ ~~define~~ The introduction would be detrimental to the current devolution settlement, whereby it would deliver a more asymmetrical devolution settlement, because 85% of the UK's population is made up of English citizens. This is because it would lead to disproportionate influence over the other devolved bodies, ~~and~~ thus undermining the main aim of ~~the~~ the devolution of power from Westminster. ~~Therefore,~~ Therefore, the block grants granted to devolved bodies through the Barnett formula from the UK Exchequer, known as the Barnett formula, will severely disadvantage the other devolved bodies such as Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, who ~~are~~ remain reliant on the financial mechanism. Ultimately, this illustrates the notion that in practicality, England is far too large for its own parliament, and its introduction would ~~decrease~~ ~~the~~ ~~decrease~~ and significantly reduce the influence of the other devolved bodies. ~~Overall,~~ Overall, although the Barnett formula does provide more funding per capita to the devolved regions, the introduction of an ~~is~~ ~~to~~ ~~a~~ large extent

English Parliament would definitively diminish the status of the devolution settlement.

On the other hand, one reason why the source agrees with the view is that 'The west Lothian question could become a major issue'. The west Lothian question was posed by Tom Dulyell in the 1970's and reflects the idea that ~~Scottish and Welsh~~ ~~and Northern~~ MP's from the devolved regions can vote on legislation only affecting England, whereas English MP's do not have the reciprocal influence on matters concerning the devolved bodies. Therefore, the source is arguing that the introduction of an English Parliament can address these issues and ensure that 'Should a UK government's majority depend on their seats in Scotland and Wales', the west Lothian question ~~will not influence~~ will have limited influence. There have been recent developments to address these concerns, such as the introduction of EVEL in 2015, which was the concept that matters only affecting England would be approved or voted on by ^{only} MP's of English constituents. However, this attempt at reform is largely irrelevant due to it being abolished in 2022 because of its complexity and failure to appease those who wanted radical reform. ~~Therefore~~ ~~consequently~~ ~~this~~ ~~view~~ the west Lothian question remains unaddressed, thus establishing the idea that the introduction of an English Parliament can rectify these concerns. ~~Contrarily~~, the source counters this view because the 'west Lothian question is exaggerated because few House of Commons votes since devolution have been denied by Scottish MP's, thus undermining the polarising argument. Furthermore, the source continues to diverge from the view that it is time for an English Parliament because 'an English Parliament would break Parliamentary sovereignty'. This is essentially due to the fact that it's

Introduction will create another layer of government which is unneeded. Westminster in the UK is the Sovereign body so if a new layer of government is introduced an 'English First Minister' would directly challenge the executive, similar to the former First Scottish Minister 'Nicola Sturgeon' who has directly challenged the executive, especially over issues of Scottish Independence in 2017. Therefore, from ~~examining~~ ^{examining} the established template that the Scottish First Minister has, it is not unreasonable to assume that an English first minister would increase challenges on executive authority, thus undermining the executive. Furthermore, there is the source does not provide any ~~information~~ ^{detail} on what the composition of this English Parliament would be. Would the Parliament be elected? Who would it use a similar electoral system such as AMS in Scotland or STV in Northern Ireland? Therefore, to a small extent, it can be inferred that it is not the source disagree with the view that an English Parliament should be created.

Finally, one ^{reason} way in which the source is in agreement with the X-view is 'a clearer division of powers offers citizens clearer lines on democratic accountability, thus ensuring that national recognition would allow for long term growth of English identity. This is because in England, there has been a ~~political shift~~ ^{notable} shift on the political spectrum, whereby right-leaning parties are beginning to gain influence, which is significant because English identity and pride is at the core of these parties' ~~composition~~ ^{composition}. As a result, this suggests that an English Parliament would be popular and well received by the electorate due to the fact that many of these right leaning voters feel underrepresented. This can be evidenced by the growing influence of parties such as Reform UK who in the latest

2024 general election amassed 4.1 million votes, and later in the
on the 1st May where they ~~are~~ gained 10 seats in the 2025
where they gained 10 seats in the local council elections. Therefore,
this indicates how the electorate is becoming increasingly Nationalist, ~~being~~ thereby
suggesting that many would support the introduction of an English Parliament,
showing how it may be time ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~introduction~~, consequently, its introduction can
better represent UK citizens, as it is more democratically accountable as opposed
to Westminster. On the other hand, it can be ~~an~~ the source of disagreement
with the principle because there is no strong desire for an English Parliament
with an increasing number of metro mayors as more appropriate solution for
English devolution. This essentially means that a strong sense of regional
identity does not have to be radically ^{altered} ~~changed~~ through the introduction
of an English Parliament, rather increased regional devolution can solve this.
For example, areas in the UK with strong regional identity, such as
Cornwall have been ~~an~~ an example of success, as in 2015 it was the
first county to be given ~~regional~~ devolved powers where, then Prime Minister
David Cameron, stated it was putting power into their hands. More
specifically, the coalition government ~~has~~ in 2010 introduced city regions
where there would be directly elected metro mayors. Notably, Andy Burnham,
Mayor of Greater Manchester has experienced success in the role, being
re-elected in 2024 for the 7th year. ~~Thus~~ The success of metro mayors
can be illustrated by how Burnham was granted devolved powers over
healthcare, ~~etc~~ exemplified by the fact that there has been a moderate
increase in life expectancy in Manchester. Ultimately, this demonstrates how
more regional devolution, may be a more effective approach than an English
Parliament.

In summary, to a large extent the source is in disagreement with the view that it is now time for an English parliament, primarily based on the fact that there are alternative approaches that would be better. For example, extending devolution in England through regional devolution in order to put the power into the hands of the English citizens.



There is:

- a clear question focus
- a developed line of argument
- an effective analysis of the political information provided in the source

Arguments are paired effectively, evidence is selected perceptively to evaluate the strength of the arguments in the debate and this is used to build justified conclusions. There is a good use of political terminology and contemporary evidence.

Level 5



The ability to use key political terminology with confidence can lift the quality of debate substantially, within an essay.

The source posits the views that argue for greater devolution for England, while only convincingly arguing that the need for greater devolution to England is unnecessary. The dominance of English politics has meant that devolution is the solution to ^{the} an underrepresented electorate in devolved regions, not lying in the principle that Parliamentary governance should be further extended, ~~the~~ ⁱⁿ light of the new Labour 2024 manifesto, vowing to get rid of 'devolution deserts'. However, the redundancy of the West Lothian Question, the dominance of ^{the} English electorate and the ^{prom} ~~the~~ ^{power} of lack of a desire for an English Parliament would point towards the fact that an English Parliament is unnecessary. ~~and~~

The source convincingly argues that an English Parliament would 'prevent resentment among those who have received the least devolution'. This may be supported by ~~the~~ the fact that the ~~the~~ outdated Barnett formula, devised in 1978, had led to an unequal funding

in the UK England compared to the devolved regions. Scotland receives £14,456/person, Northern Ireland receives £14,453/person and Wales £13,967/person whereas in Great Britain, it is only £12,227/person. This shows how devolutionary measures in the past, by virtue of its asymmetrical nature have only contributed to a sense of inequality between the four regions in the UK. However, this may be rectified by the possibility of full fiscal responsibility being granted to an exclusively English Parliament as it was in Scotland (the Scotland Act having been extended to devolve more in 2016 but was not delivered). However, this could only force ^{more convincingly} ineffectual governance due to the source's arguing the possibility of 'the English First Minister would directly challenge the executive' and 'threaten Parliamentary sovereignty'. This is concretised by the ongoing tensions between Scotland and Westminster as the Holyrood 25 attempt to unilaterally call the second Scottish Independence Referendum (IndyRef2) was blocked in 2022. This was seen again in 2023 where the Scottish bill the Scottish Gender Recognition Reform Bill was blocked by Parliament under

Section 35 of the Scotland Act. Therefore, this shows how an English Parliament is still vulnerable to the defects of devolution elsewhere, and may also undermine parliamentary sovereignty. Therefore, an English Parliament is unnecessary.

The source unconvincingly argues that an English Parliament would be beneficial because of the issue of the 'West Lothian Question' could become a major issue'. This may be supported by the fact that the West Lothian Question contributes to a sense of inequality. For example in 2004, whipped Scottish Labour MPs had to vote in favour of a rise in tuition fees despite the fact that in Scotland, tuition for university students is free for Scottish individuals. This shows the vast amount of hypocrisy that is facilitated by the inequalities of the devolved system in UK. This is further worsened by the ~~decrease~~ increase of Labour seats in the 2024 General Election after ~~47~~ ~~48~~ the SNP lost 39 ~~seats~~ out of 59 total seats (9 seats in total as of 2025). This shows how the increase of partisan politics in recent years helps gaining ground in devolved regions may

were on the issue of the West Lothian Question. However, this ^{source's stronger} argument is undermined by the fact that 'that with an increasing number of metro mayors' there is 'no strong desire for an English Parliament'. This is shown by the fact that in the 2004 North East devolution referendum, ~~they~~ the vote No was overwhelming, 77.9%. This shows how many view ~~the~~ ^{the} devolution in England to be ineffectual and the redundancy of having an English Parliament when English views are already overrepresented in British politics. For example, despite all 32 councils in Scotland voting Remain in the Brexit election, ~~only~~ Scotland still had to leave the EU due to the overwhelming Bre Leave vote that was spearheaded by English voters. This trend in 2016 was seen across Wales, showing how English voters electorally and by virtue of their 'size' dominate British politics. Therefore, this shows how the West Lothian Question does not justify the creation of an English Parliament.

This is further justified by the 'source's commentary on 'metro mayors'. Labour's

commitment to get rid of devolution deserts has led to the creation of two mayoral districts, South Yorkshire and the Mayor and Greater Lincolnshire, in 2025. However, ~~it~~ This shows how devolution is already an effective method of governance and could possibly be extended ~~to~~ through an English Parliament. However, the source more convincingly argues that 'more powers for themselves' could end up leading to the 'breakup of the UK' as an 'English parliament would not really bring power closer to the people'. This is validated by the ineffective actions of metro mayors and the lack of public interest in them, proven by the ~~and~~ consistent trend of low turnout in these elections. In 2024, mayoral elections ~~were~~ turnouts were 40.5% in London, 32% in ^{Greater} Manchester and 29% in the West Midlands. This shows the electoral disinterest and voter apathy towards devolutionary measures in England. Therefore, it is inconceivable that the solution to this problem would be further devolution in the form of an English Parliament.

In conclusion, ~~it~~ the source more convincingly argues that there is no point of creating an English Parliament to solve issues of inequality as electoral apathy has permeated every corner of politics. The fact that ~~devolution~~ Holyrood, Stormont and the Senedd exist seek to rectify the issue of their dominance by England. The Constitutional Unit's 2021 report that an English Affairs select committee to be created like the Welsh/Scottish/^{Ireland} Northern Ireland select committees is a much more appropriate ~~for~~ solution to this issue.



This is a well-focussed answer with a clear line of argument. It selects and pairs key arguments carefully from the source, developing the analysis with perceptive selection of relevant and contemporary evidence.

There is a clear conclusion to the essay that is a logical output from the essay, and contextualises the issue very effectively.

Level 5



Drawing substantiated conclusions throughout the essay is an effective way to build your way logically to a clear conclusion.

Chosen question number: Question 1(a) Question 1(b)

Devolution allows all countries in the UK to have the same level of representation and more power to support their regions. An English Parliament will be able to narrow their ^{local} policy laws that may benefit the local people in certain regions in England. However some may argue that there is no need for an English Parliament as the UK Parliament is already viewed as the dominant one to help bring devolution to England, the majority of the people in the UK live in England, therefore, an English Parliament would overcome other parts in the UK increasing a risk of independence. Overall, this essay will argue that there is no need for an English Parliament to some extent.

Some would argue that having an English Parliament would provide ~~at least~~ ^{recognition} and union towards the people in England. The source states, "National recognition would allow for the long-term growth of English identity." This means a greater devolution will be able to increase representativeness in their region and more participation in policies if regional policy will be best suited for local people. The Scottish referendum has allowed more policies that benefit their people such as welfare benefits, free of tuition fees and a 50% VAT, almost receiving full 'dev-max', which demonstrates their strength of their country. As a result, having greater devolution to England

Would increase more local policies to local people to improve their economy and longing to become an English Union. Although, over 60% of England have received devolved powers meaning an introduction to an English Parliament could give more power but it can be abused due to its larger size in UK Parliament therefore wanting more policies involving the economy and their identity which would lead to wanting an independent country to themselves. Overall, setting up an English Parliament will increase their national identity but would overcome the power of other countries resulting in resentment and threats towards other regions.

Moreover, UK democracy setting up an English Parliament would provide balance and less risks in the UK. The source states that "Stability is preferable to continuously increasing devolution as it stops the threat of independence being used as a bargaining chip in devolution negotiations." Although there is a potential for wanting independence in Scotland, the Westminster Parliament has allowed to pass on more devolved powers in all UK, Wales receiving their own Parliament Act in 2014 and Scotland receiving powers to control their economy and increasing social policies benefiting younger people such as those age 16 and upwards can vote increasing voter participation. Therefore setting up an English Parliament can promote more equal stability with the rest making ^{England} more symmetric in terms of power to reform their parliament. However, having an English Parliament could threaten Parliamentary Sovereignty and weaken the power

in England further as Scotland's referendums in 2014 prove there is a potential for wanting more independence, being separated from the UK and there pressure UK Parliament to make bills to convince Scotland otherwise. An increase of power Scotland could receive will result in a breakup of ~~the~~ the UK and weaken parliament's sovereignty. Overall, wanting greater devolution for England may backfire with the amount of devolved power Scotland would receive and therefore limits England's chance of creating their own Parliament.

Finally, not many of the people in England supports the idea of having an ~~English~~ ^{English} parliament as the ~~English~~ ^{UK} Parliament is already viewed as a significant solution to increase devolution. The source states "There is no strong desire for an English Parliament, ~~with~~ Metro Mayors a more appropriate solution for English devolution." Receiving ~~more~~ devolved power in England benefited Greater Manchester and West Midlands in terms of their transport and healthcare which helps increase their life expectancy. With Mayors making their own manifestos to support their local people there is no need to further create more devolution. However, having an English Parliament can show clear lines of democratic accountability and will be able to scrutinize the Prime Minister for local issues that are being avoided and voices not being heard of. Despite this the power will ~~not~~ ultimately rely on the Executive and they can choose to ignore their offers, in addition to the increase of Metro Mayors bringing regions of England closer already.

In conclusion, UK democracy. Setting up an English Parliament will be a great devolution to England to make Parliament symmetrical and gain more devolved power to improve ~~power~~ and create more local policies that is best suited for local people. However with the risk of independence and dictatorship of wanting more money and power it is harder to challenge the Parliament which will lead to the breakup of UK, therefore it is unlikely for England to have their own Parliament.



This essay does aim to establish a clear line of argument, and does try to answer the question set by working through competing arguments to reach a conclusion.

Across all the AOs, this answer meets the Level 3 descriptors.

Level 3



Logically pairing-up arguments from the source is key to an effective structure; evidence should then be selected carefully to allow the answer to analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of those competing arguments.

Question 2(a)

This was the less frequently-answered of the two essay questions. The questions proved accessible and generated a wide array of answers as candidates took different approaches to structuring their answers.

The first hurdle for candidates was identifying correctly what 'backbenchers' were, so that they could then focus on how effectively backbenchers discharge their role. Better answers were able to define the role of backbenchers in their introduction, giving them something to measure effectiveness with, and offered a clear line of argument.

Some candidates thought backbenchers were only MPs from the governing party who did not have a ministerial portfolio. Others thought backbenchers could only be MPs from the opposition parties. While most candidates realised they needed to consider the role of backbench MPs in scrutiny of the executive, initiating or improving legislation and representation, a sizeable minority only looked at one or two of these roles.

Less-successful answers made generic comments without any real attempt to cite recent examples of the work of backbenchers or offered more historical, rather than contemporary, evidence. Most answers saw the need to provide balance, but some answers looked at MPs' work solely from a positive or negative angle, which restricted their ability to progress further in the levels-based mark scheme. Public Bill Committees remain an area that is frequently misunderstood or used ineffectively, whilst knowledge on Select Committees, the Liaison Committee and the Backbench Business Committee was much stronger.

Whilst most answers did cover whether backbenchers were effective at their roles, many omitted the importance of the word "increasingly" in the question. Better answers tried to consider whether recent developments have allowed backbenchers to become more or less effective. Answers that considered the impact of the Wright Reforms, the fragmenting of the main political parties, the role of the Speaker, the fluctuating size of government majorities since 1997 and the steady increase in the selection and election of more socially diverse candidates, could achieve high marks, particularly if they evaluated evidence of effectiveness against continuing executive domination of the Commons. This focus on "increasingly" with contemporary evidence was the key to accessing the top bands in the mark scheme.

The synoptic element was generally well-covered in this question. Candidates were able to use 'First Past the Post' (FPTP), the growing power of social media and the way in which parties have seen a breakdown of party discipline (or not) as part of their arguments.

Finally, often the A03 judgements made throughout the essay, or in the conclusion, were merely stated, rather than supported by the preceding debate. At times, they were something of a surprise, given the direction in which the essay had been going. The stronger answers had a clear line of argument throughout and looked to convince the reader why their view on the question was accurate.

There has been a controversial debate as to the extent to which Backbenchers in the House of Commons have been increasingly effective at carrying out their roles, including of representation, upholding representative democracy, and of scrutinising the government, challenging its executive dictatorship, and even carrying out its role of introducing legislation through private bill committees. However, though it is accurate to say that backbenchers have increased in their effectiveness in scrutiny, they are not entirely effective in carrying out their roles because, the government has increasingly, limited the role of backbenchers, especially given its frequent majorities derived from the First Past the Post ^(FPTP) electoral system, which favours Labour and Conservatives, allowing them a lot of power.

It is however, very accurate to say that backbenchers have in fact been increasingly effective in their role of scrutinising and holding the government to account, effectively carrying out representative democracy given their effective and increased frequency of backbench rebellion. Rebellions have been very effective

in holding the government to account because they put significant pressure on the government to withdraw legislation because they fear suffering a defeat. This could be seen during Theresa May's minority government in which she was defeated 253 times in her term, and Antismoon in 2024 in which following the threat of 44 ~~MPs~~ Conservative MPs threatening to rebel, the government withdrew its 'Criminal Justice Act'. Therefore, it is an accurate argument that backbenchers' rebellions are very effective because they put pressure on the government to resign, whilst ~~it~~ carrying out executive representative democracy by preventing harmful legislation from being passed. However, whilst the backbenchers' role of ~~something~~ has certainly increased, its effectiveness could be argued to be limited as given the government's common majority, as a direct consequence of the FPTP voting system, defeats are not common, and unsuccessful ~~especially~~ ^{backbench} because MPs are driven by attaining a seat in parliament. As such, their rebellions have not been effective for example during the 2022/23 parliamentary ~~session~~, MPs rebelled less than 2% at the time, whilst only 14 MPs rebelled more than 5% at the time. Therefore, rebellions have perhaps not been effective because political patronage means that MPs are more motivated by

attaining a seat in the government. Overall however, I agree more that although the power of rebellions has increased, it is still limited because the government can limit it through its majorities and by as MPs aim to attain a seat in the government.

However, it could be argued that the powers of backbenchers to carry out their role of scrutiny has increased because the ~~UK~~ reforms in 2010, ~~that~~ introduced the Backbench business committee, as well as urgent questions allowing for greater scrutiny of the government. For example in the 2023 parliament, Speaker Hoare increased urgent questions by 0.6 per day, holding the government effectively to account. Furthermore, the Backbench business committee is allowed to set the parliamentary agenda for 35 days a parliamentary session, and did so effectively in 2024, with the debate on 'SEND funding', which gained significant media attention and put pressure on the government to discuss SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities). Therefore Backbench powers of debates and questions have increased, allowing backbenchers to effectively hold the government to account, even utilising media attention, as the media is very important in

influencing voter attitudes and behaviours. However, despite the increase in scrutiny in parliament, backbenchers are mostly ignored because ~~par~~ the government seeks to introduce its own parliamentary manifestos, which it was elected on, thus being more democratic. Furthermore, backbenchers are ~~s'allowed~~ as ~~the~~ of the government spends far less time debating in the commons such as between 2006 - 2021 where ~~the~~ the government spent just 29% of its time in ~~par~~ the commons compared to the lords who debated for 44% of their time. Therefore, perhaps the influence of backbencher scrutiny is limited by the fact that the government operates on its own manifestos and time. Overall however, ~~as~~ I agree more that although ~~the government has spent more time~~ backbenchers now have more opportunities to scrutinise, the fact that the government makes the final decision given its authority in parliament ~~is~~, undermines backbenchers.

In addition, backbenchers have ~~so~~ been increasingly effective at performing their role of ~~representative~~ representative democracy because they have increasingly been able to effect legislative changes and implementations based through private member bills.

which have become more frequent. They were responsible for key rights based legislation such as the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, and have continued to be effective such as in the 2022/23 parliamentary session in which 16 private member bills were successful including the 'protection from sexual harassment in public' act in 2023. Therefore, it is an accurate argument that backbenchers have increased in ~~representative~~ ^{role} effectiveness by directly influencing the legislative process. However, the backbench role of legislative influence is very limited given that the government has the final decision given that it was democratically elected based on its manifesto, and as such ~~most~~ private member bills are limited in their effectiveness because they ~~require~~ depend on government approval as the government can simply whip its MPs to vote against a bill. As such, the government can be seen to pass most of the legislation success during the 2022/23 parliamentary session in which ^{out of} 56 of the government's bills, 76% received royal assent, compared to ~~100~~ 297 private member bills that only achieved 8% royal assent. Therefore it is accurate to say that though backbenchers have improved their ability to influence the

legislative process to some extent in that private member bills have become more frequent, I agree much more that their influence over the legislative process, still remains very limited, given that ~~gov~~ the government dominates the legislative programme, perhaps a ~~key~~ key contributing factor to the decline in participation given the apathy of ^{gov} failure of ~~gov~~ ~~gov~~ backbench MP's to introduce legislation relevant to constituents, which perhaps ~~added to~~ contributed to the 2024 general election turnout, which was the 2nd lowest turnout since WW2. As such, backbenchers in the commons have not been effective at increasing their roles as they are frequently outvoted, and limited by government.

Overall therefore, ~~that~~ although it is accurate to say that ~~the~~ ~~gov~~ backbenchers in the commons have increased in their powers, ~~also~~ to scrutinise, ~~to~~ and represent, ~~to~~ especially with the Wright's reforms, the effectiveness of their powers is very limited given the government's dominance over ~~the~~ backbench MP's, which has restricted their powers and influence and ^{should} ~~to~~ especially be attributed to the excess in seats and parliamentary power that the government acquires from the FPTP system.



This answer clearly engages with the question.

It develops a line of arguments and investigates the concept of "increasingly".

The essay builds to a conclusion that is:

- succinct
- answers the question
- contextualises the answer

By defining the roles of backbenchers in the introduction, this answer provides a clear roadmap of how it will test the idea of increasing effectiveness.

Level 5



If a question is focussing on effectiveness or success, it is important to define 'effective' at what, or 'successful' at what.

While some may argue that backbenchers in the House of Commons are increasingly effective at carrying out their roles, this view is largely misguided. It is much more compelling to argue that due to executive dominance, scrutiny tools and committees, backbencher effectiveness is undervalued significantly.

The much weaker argument is that backbenchers carry out their legislative influence effectively. The increase in MP backbench rebellions in recent years shows an undeniable erosion of influence on legislation. Backbench rebellions ~~start~~ as seen in Theresa May's "COVID passport" plan where almost 100 of her own MP's opposed him. Further, May was defeated 33 times in parliament - specifically over her Brexit withdrawal bill. This demonstrates that backbenchers are able to block legislation, and are especially important when a minority / fragile government is in leadership as their voice is stronger. In Theresa May's case, ~~both~~ backbenchers were able to expose the significant internal cabinet party division ^{as} ~~many~~ ^{Labour} ~~many~~ ^{MP's} backed Johnson. This shows backbencher importance and
↳ which dominated headlines

now they are increasingly + effective at + shaping legislation in parliament. However, backbenchers are not able to exert much influence under strong majorities.

The much stronger argument is that both benches are increasingly ineffective at carrying out their legislative influence function. FPTP creates disproportionate results and distorts the translation of vote share to seat share - as shown in 2024 where Starmer gained 411 seats (62.3%) but only 33.7% of the vote share. In addition, Johnson + 50 seat majority enabled him to pass controversial acts such as the Northern Ireland and Borders Act and the Electoral Act and even repeal the fixed term parliament Act with minimal scrutiny. This in turn violates rights as simple majorities are able to easily pass new legislation for example the Police, Crime and Sentencing Act, weakening protest rights and the Illegal Migration Bill 2023, removing asylum rights. This is important as executive dominance significantly + normalised ~~but~~ backbench influence, rendering the effectiveness of backbenchers insignificant.

Although backbenchers are able to deliver influence under fragile governments this is often not very common and overshadowed in the face of large majorities.

The much weaker argument is that backbenches ~~are~~ ~~significant~~ are increasingly effective at ~~carrying~~ carrying out scrutiny roles. The use of common tools such as PMQ and urgent questions can significantly impact public debate and expose ministers. In PMQ's, the opposition get to question and back benches get to learn. ~~Prime~~ PMQ's of January during party gate 2022 significantly affected his approval ratings as they ~~starkly~~ ~~and~~ ~~and~~ dropped/declined. In addition, Diane Abbott's urgent question in Andrew Rudd 2018 ~~and~~ ultimately led to her resignation as she provided misleading information to parliament. My view is that backbenches ~~can~~ can use tools to scrutinise the government and ~~expose ministers~~ ~~allowing~~ allowing public pressure to intensify and force the government to make ~~what~~ - a seen with controversial ~~u-turn~~ on free school meals, showing backbenches, although not at the ~~forefront~~ forefront are able to make groups and use lobbying effectively.

~~The~~ The much more compelling argument is that ~~that~~ backbenches are ineffective at ~~carrying~~ carrying out their scrutiny roles. Through tools such as PMQ's and urgent questions, backbencher questions are ~~not~~ put through a 'lottery' and their roles are diminished by the opposition ~~and~~ ~~and~~

the government bill and referred in the Bill. This is important as backbenches are able to ~~make a~~ ^{exert} significant ~~action~~ in policy and ~~scrutinise~~ bills, giving expert advice and recommendations. This demonstrates ^{how} backbench effectiveness in committees is undeniable and backbenches fulfil their scrutiny roles effectively. However, ~~the~~ select committees do not have ~~at~~ any ~~the~~ enforcement powers, diminishing their power significantly.

~~the latter case~~ The coherent argument is that backbenches are increasingly ineffective in the HOC through ~~the~~ select committees. Select committees (apart from the chairs*) are often not filled with loyal party MP's chosen by whips to the party line and are reluctant to challenge the government. In addition, pre-legislative scrutiny is often bypassed and post-legislative scrutiny is not enforceable and non-binding, undermining the power of backbenches. In addition, ~~the~~ the government controls ~~the~~ tabling and therefore scrutiny of bills can be overridden. The Illegal Migration Bill 2023 was passed in just 4 months, limiting committee ~~scrutiny~~ scrutiny. Further, the recommendations of this bill and that it may breach international law ~~was~~ were ignored and the bill went through. This is significant as it demonstrates how in practice

backbenchers struggle to exert meaningful influence and scrutiny in the Commons as the dominance of the executive ~~party~~ and their lack of binding powers, renders them insignificant and ineffective.

~~namely~~ whilst backbenchers have the ability in theory to be effective in select committees, this power is eroded and in practice showing that backbenchers are insignificant in carrying out their scrutiny role.

ultimately, backbenchers are not increasingly effective at carrying out their roles in the Commons due to their lack of binding, outlined authority. If this continues, reform is definitely due to ~~set~~ reinforce their ~~potential~~ power as in practice, ~~it~~ they seem ineffective.



This response is well-structured, with some carefully-selected arguments and evidence.

There is a clear focus on achieving AO3 throughout the essay to build towards the conclusion.

With a little more focus on 'increasingly,' this could be a Level 5 answer.

Level 4



Whilst the introduction matches the conclusion, in questions about effectiveness it can help to focus the answer to outline 'effective at what'.

Although backbenchers have often been dismissed as 'lobby fodder' and ignored in ~~the~~ our political system, backbenchers in many ways are a crucial ~~to~~ in their role of holding government to account, ^{especially for opposition backbenchers,} but also supporting government when needed, ^{and congressional oversight} through the ~~the~~ evaluating the merits of scrutiny, backbench legislation, and backbench factions and rebellions it is clear backbenchers are increasingly effective in carrying out their roles.

Scrutiny is a key area that shows how backbenchers can effectively perform their roles. ~~at~~ Select committees are a key example of one way backbenchers can effectively perform scrutiny, with the professionalisation of having paid elected select committee chairs professionalising the role of select committees. ~~at~~ and creating a career path for backbenchers. ~~at~~ The majority of backbenchers take part in select committees which in many ways perform the key aspects of scrutiny needed being out of the eye of the media and able to hold government accountable. However, only 40-50% of select committee recommendations are accepted, showing the ~~in many ways~~ key limitations of scrutiny provided as government fundamentally has

overly and can choose whether to implement or ignore recommendations. Despite this, examples such as Theresa May, who was able to hold government to account for slow rollout of vaccines and failures in crisis policy 2020 as head of the health select committee is a standout example of the effectiveness backbench-led select committees have in promoting government accountability through scrutiny. Urgent questions are another key example as well as urgent debates, with backbenchers having the opportunity to raise critical issues provided the speaker grants them the opportunity. While the previous speaker John Bercow allowed many urgent questions, Lindsay Hoyle is less inclined to permit showing the wider scope of impact in being dependant on the speaker's discretion. As however key issues have been historically raised by urgent questions and debates, with a debate on introducing a no deal Brexit in 2019 being an example of backbenchers raising a key issue as the commons was able to hold Johnson to account and avoid a no deal Brexit.* Finally, backbenchers also widely participate in PMQs, another area they can effectively perform scrutiny, having the rare opportunity to directly question the Prime Minister. On the other hand the whips often pose questions for expecting backbenchers to vote in favour of the government.

Despite some limitations the broad effectiveness of backbench scrutiny means it ~~is~~ on balance in terms of scrutiny backbenchers should be seen as effectively & fulfilling their role.

Backbench legislation is another area that shows the effectiveness backbenchers can have in fulfilling their role and challenging the government on a variety of issues. Private Members Bills ^(PMBs) are a key way of backbench legislation passing, giving backbenchers a rare opportunity to raise issues they are passionate about. Backbenchers can fulfill their duty to constituents by raising issues important in their constituency that government may have otherwise overlooked. This is shown through the 2003 Genital Mutilation Act, which one MP noticed female genital mutilation as a key issue prevalent in his constituency. By raising attention to the issue a backbencher was able to effectively protect constituents. On the other hand PMBs can be easily filibustered and overlooked, demonstrated by one PMB on pardoning Alan Turing being filibustered for 45 minutes. In 2022, only 1% of ~~back~~ PMBs were passed with numbers available already being limited. However in many areas ~~regarding~~ backbenchers role is not primarily legislation, so a limited amount passing is effective in addressing the issues or protecting
BBLOM

instruments which is the role of backbenchers. While other methods of backbench legislation exist such as early day motions, ^(EDMs) these are increasingly ineffective. Most EDMs are easily dismissed, with one example success an EAM supporting a plan for 70% of child endowment to be secure by 2030 receiving the support of 151 MPs and being debated. Despite this, the limited effectiveness of backbench legislation, with opportunities for important issues to break through in many ways ~~increases the effectiveness~~ demonstrates the increasing effectiveness of backbenchers who work hard presenting rare opportunities to enact ^{meaningful} legislation.

Finally, backbench factions and rebellions also demonstrate how backbenchers are increasingly effective in carrying out their roles in the Commons. The conservative party during ~~the~~ in recent years boasts particularly strong examples of the role of backbenchers and the increasingly adversarial role they have played in effectively challenging government. The European Research Group particularly demonstrates this, with Steve Baker and Jacob Rees-Mogg even meeting May at Chequers to discuss her deal and later showing backbench dissatisfaction through leading a

rebellion, with many feeling 230 MPs voting against her deal. Boris Johnson faced similarly harsh rebellions, with 55 MPs rebelling on his introduction of third tier lockdowns. Although ~~some would~~ ^{some would} argue rebellions in some ways overstep the role of backbenchers, who were elected for their party rather than personal mandate, in many ways the rare effective coordination of backbench rebellions highlights sets apart key issues holding government accountable and creating a strong stand in the face of pressure from the Whips. Rebellions ^{and now} ~~are~~ even bring down governments, ~~as~~ ^{as} shown by the chaos surrounding Liz Truss' fracking vote and her fear of backbench rebellion contributing to her resignation. Factions within parties such as the EUG and Covid Recovery Group in recent years have shown the effectiveness of backbenchers in rising up and challenging government on issues they feel passionate about. In this way it is rather than overstepping their role backbench rebellion and factions should be seen as ~~beneficial~~ backbenchers at their most effective, holding governments accountable and providing support when needed to add to the adversarial nature of our ~~parliamentary~~ system.

In conclusion, backbenchers must be seen as 'increasingly effective' in fulfilling their role, with the Wright reforms

2007 and key events in recent years empowering backbenchers to hold government accountable and perform effective scrutiny as well as raising important issues through legislation, making it clear backbenchers are now more effective than ever.

* The Backbench Business Committee (BBCOM), another product of the Wright Reforms is another way backbenchers have been able to provide crucial scrutiny. The 35 days a year given to BBCOM enriches the role of backbenchers giving them opportunities to lead in debates they vote on. The effectiveness of scrutiny through BBCOM is demonstrated by the ~~Wright~~ debate on the 1999 Hillsborough disaster, which led to a motion for government to provide information to a new enquiry into the incident. ~~Further~~, BBCOM is undermined by being held ~~off~~ in Westminster Hall, meaning it is not televised and minimal media attention is given, but backbenchers can still use it as a forum to effectively raise issues and scrutinise government, with 2019 debates on an EU referendum making Corbyn more receptive to the issues.



There is a clear question focus here, starting with an introduction that establishes a line of argument and the themes that the essay wishes to evaluate.

There is breadth to the evidence, which is selected perceptively to meet the questions.

Despite the odd inaccuracy, there is enough here to reach Level 5.

The evidence is also highly contemporary, which helps with the question focus. There is strong synopticity in this answer.

Level 5



Synopticity should be incorporated into answers, so that it is a seamless part of the argument being made.

Backbenchers in the House of Commons include everyone who doesn't hold a ministerial position in the house - from both the majority and minority parties. It can be argued that ~~the~~ backbenchers are increasingly effective at carrying out their functions due to legislative power, scrutiny and representation, however it is more common to argue that for these very same reasons they generally lack effectiveness.

One reason in which some may argue backbenchers are effective is through legislative powers. In the House of Commons a simple 50% majority vote is needed to pass a bill or act. ~~Backbenchers can~~ However in this situation rebellions can occur in which members of parliament go against their own parties*. Another aspect ~~that~~ of legislative power given to backbenchers is through the introduction of Private

Member Bills. Which allow for backbencher to gain the opportunity to offer legislative insight and suggestions.

However more convincingly it can be argued that rebellions have only been more common in the recent decade due to the growth of minority governments with Cameron and May. Before this during Blair's time as Prime Minister he only lost 4 votes in his 10 years of reign. The use of whips in ~~parliament~~ the House of Commons also reduces the effectiveness of backbencher carrying out their roles. There are those to ensure party loyalty and to limit rebellions. Whilst Private Members Bills do allow for backbenchers to offer legislative opinions it does not mean that they will pass without government support. Around 75% of government bills pass in comparison to a much more insignificant percentage of less than ten percent of private members Bills. Therefore showing the limited effectiveness of their role in legislation.

backbenches

Another ~~role~~ role of ~~scrutiny~~ ~~backbenches~~ is to scrutinise the government. ^{one way} this can be seen as a ~~aspect~~ ^{aspect} due to the use of select committees. These are smaller meetings of specialist committees in which backbenchers are able to scrutinise the government's decisions. Another area of scrutiny is through debates such as PMQs (Prime Minister's Question Time). Through this backbenchers are able to actively scrutinise policy directly to the head of the executive. This can help to raise awareness to issues, similarly through Backbencher Business committees.

However, although these measures are put in place this does not mean that they are particularly effective in creating any change or holding anyone accountable. Often the head of select committees is the governing party's minister - leading to them often leading the conversation rather than being held to account. Debates in the House of Commons are sometimes portrayed in the media, however they often are not picked up. Therefore

the backbencher's ability to scrutinise the executive is limited.

Another important role which it can be argued that backbenchers effectively fulfil is representation. MPs have a duty to represent their constituents in the house of commons as that is the sole reason they have been selected.

~~However~~ Some MPs have actually voted against their party and needed their jobs and the hands of unmps in representation for their constituency. Another form of representation is through the representation of all genders and ethnic minorities. This has led to the introduction of women only short lists to help the gender gap decrease.

However ~~unlike~~ it is more convincing to argue that although this role of backbencher to represent. This is still held back by our current system of First Past The Post simply being proportionally unrepresentative. Therefore it is impossible for backbenchers to actively be a representation of public opinion as they were elected

disproportionally. Although things may be slightly improving as the years go on, in 1997 Blair's ^{House of Commons} ~~parliament~~ ^{was made} ~~up~~ consisted of 18% women and only 9 MPs of ethnic minority. The fact that this was less than 30 years ago and is completely unrepresentative shows the long way we still have to go.

In conclusion ~~the fact~~ it is more convincing to argue that backbenches are ^{held back} ~~stopped~~ ^{by many} ~~by~~ the executive in many ways at fulfilling the role effectively, however improvements are slowly being ~~by~~ made.



The answer identifies three roles of backbenchers as three roles of Parliament: legislation, scrutiny and representation.

The knowledge is mostly accurate, although there are some errors.

The examples are not particularly contemporary but there is an attempt to engage with the question set.

Level 3



It is very important to know the different types of committees in Parliament thoroughly, when answering questions about the role of backbenchers or the House of Commons.

Question 2(b)

This was the more popular of the two essay questions. The question was accessible, offering differentiation, and had the greatest array of different approaches of all of the essay questions.

A small number of answers presented very generic answers, often focussing on an Executive versus the Legislature debate, rather than on the power of the Prime Minister (PM). Alternatively, they presented a chronological summary of the careers of PMs from Blair to Starmer, without comparing them or analysing the factors that might have enhanced or inhibited their power. It is vital that candidates answer the question that is set, rather than writing a pre-planned generic essay.

This question, perhaps more than any other, led to candidates utilising a lot of historical, rather than contemporary, evidence. It is important to be able to analyse the question by using more historical PMs to generate a sense of change over time, but they need to be compared with more recent PMs to achieve the higher levels of analysis and evaluation. This was extremely important, given the use of the word “now” in the question.

Better answers provided clearly-structured analysis of several factors that can influence a PM’s power. It was pleasing to see some candidates addressing the:

- development of 24/7 media
- changing nature of results under FPTP
- growth of a Presidential style of politics with personalised election campaigns
- claiming by PMs of a personal mandate
- rising importance of the Downing Street machine

A clear discriminator was whether candidates addressed the idea that PMs had “now” become “too” powerful. Sharper answers related this to what had changed, or indeed whether anything had changed, and what it means to be “too” powerful.

When selecting and analysing evidence, the best answers compared the most recent PMs to previous PMs and focussed on whether anything had indeed changed. A good example here would be comparing the power of Blair in his first term and Starmer, given the similar sizes of their parliamentary majorities.

Chosen question number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b) → Sunak

- Plan:
- 1- Policy - chief diplomat / commander in chief
 - majority size
 - Scouting
 - ↳ Lords
 - ↳ select comm
 - ↳ PMQs
 - 2- Circumstances - millenium dome
 - Johnson COVID
 - Hancock COVID
 - 3- Appointments - Suella Brauerman CUP
 - May (2018-19 EU - Sajid Javid
 - ↳ SC
- Sunak
- Patronage
↳ but big beasts

Overall, it is clear that Prime Ministers do not now have too much power. If we were seeing that they do have too much power, we would see that they can pass legislation too quickly / easily, they can take advantage of circumstances to expand their own power and of national events, and that they have too much power in appointing ministers and enabling their own success via the appointment processes in Westminster. When looking at policy formulation and proposal as well as appointments, the Prime Minister (PM) does not now have too much power. However arguably they have been seen to take advantage of national events and circumstances that may see them encroach upon the limits of their powers.

When looking at policy formulation, the weaker argument

is that the Prime Minister does have too much power. This is seen when looking at governments with a large majority, who thanks to a winner bonus after the general election (GE), find it easy to pass through their legislative agenda. However this was seen in the Blair government, who in his first term, did not suffer a defeat in the Commons, highlighting perhaps his large majority had granted him excessive power. However the more recent ^{conservative} government of ~~Sturgeon~~ with a large ~~79~~ 80 seat majority, found it difficult to enact their legislative agenda after being undermined by a series of scandals. Thus in more recent times it is not the case that a large majority makes the PM too powerful during the passage of policy. Additionally, scrutiny in the Commons is effective in placing a limit on the policy making and passing ability of the executive. The opposition party often provide a scrutiny of the PM at PMQs, whilst select committees have been revitalised since the 2010 Wright Report. This was seen in the select committee scrutiny of Amber Rudd in 2018 which ultimately forced her resignation after she was found to have inadvertently misled Parliament. This upholding to MR highlighted that the govt. under the PM is effectively held to account and thus is not too powerful. Therefore it is clear that in more recent times, the

PM has not been seen to be too powerful during the policy making process, as scrutiny has been enhanced so they are better held to account.

The weaker argument that PMs are too powerful is also demonstrated when looking at ministerial appointments. Arguably, PMs powers of patronage give them excessive control over who is appointed into government. For example ~~the~~ many regarded George Osborne as not ~~got~~ fit for his job in the coalition govt. as Chancellor, yet Cameron picked him as Osborne was a loyal supporter. This was similarly seen when Thatcher transformed her cabinet from 'lets' to 'ays' in 1986. It shows it became easier for them to enact their own agenda and bolster their power by being surrounded by supporters.

However in more recent times, the reality is that ministerial appointments can often be of detriment to the PM, undermining the supposed power of patronage. May's appointment of Johnson to her 2017 cabinet highlighted the idea around keeping 'big beasts' subject to CMR, however as CMR is an increasingly useless convention, this brought down her govt. as he and other ministers exposed divisions when openly discussing alternatives to her Brexit deal. This shows that the PMs own ~~power~~ powers may undermine them.

Furthermore, prime ministerial appointment power is only

limited to their own part. They have no say over the Supreme Court appointments process, which is overseen by the JAC ensuring independence and neutrality. The increasing activism of the Court has highlighted that the power of the PM in appointments is severely limited. Thus it is clear that whilst appointment power has been used for Prime Ministerial power over policy, this is limited over Parliament and has been less effective recently.

When looking at circumstances, the weaker argument is that they do not ~~then~~ grant the PM too much power. This was seen during the COVID crisis, when Johnson relied heavily on Matt Hancock in the formulation and setting of policy as well as discussing it with the media. It showed how unforeseen circumstances can force a PM to rely on their advisors rather than going to policy on their own.

However in reality, Johnson largely took control over COVID, largely using Hancock as someone to shift blame to. It was Johnson who implemented the lockdown measures etc., taking a paternalistic stance (SL - paternalism believe by conservatives) which pleased many of the New Right of the party but less so the core nation. It highlighted that circumstances do not mean the PM does not have control, just that they need

advice.

Furthermore, the turn of the millennium highlighted that the PM can make an executive decision over cabinet. Blair, largely against the Cabinet's will, made the decision to go ahead with the Millennium Dome construction, which highlighted the ability of the PM to take control of spending policy, arguably showing too much power over cabinet.

Thus evidently, circumstances often enable the PM to take a more presidential stance as people often need a paternalistic, pragmatic figure to look to to make decisions.

Therefore overall, we can see that in regular times, the PM does not have too much power. They are frequently and effectively scrutinised in the Commons as well as having severe limits to their appointment power. Both of these provide significant and effective checks to their power. However as a result of circumstances which can result in confusion and disorder, they often receive a wider remit ~~to~~ /mandate to govern, meaning that circumstances can make them too powerful. However otherwise, this is not the case.



This is a well-structured answer, that is clearly-planned and definitely focusses on the concept of "too much" power.

There is a good range of well-selected, competing arguments backed by carefully-selected evidence to underpin analysis and evaluation.

This answer has a particularly effective introduction and conclusion.

There is a clear concept of what too much power would look like.

Level 4



In order to reach Level 5, a greater use of contemporary evidence and focus on the 'now' element of the question would be required.

Chosen question number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b)

Whilst it could be suggested that prime ministers in the UK increasingly have too much power, suggesting a rise in presidentialism and dominance of cabinet and parliament, this argument is clearly misguided. In practice the power of prime ministers is increasingly in flux and they are subject to stringent checks by cabinet and parliament, thus entirely refuting claims that Prime Ministers now have too much power.

It could be less convincingly asserted that Prime Ministers have experienced a significant increase in their power ~~power~~ as a result of the increase in media focus on PMs and thus the personal mandates they are able to achieve. This was clear in the Blair years & as in 1997 Blair's landslide victory (418 seats) was undeniably due to his reformation of the Labour party and the abandonment of Clause IV of the party's constitution. This rebranding of the party under the banner of 'New Labour' was integral to the party's success, providing Blair with a legitimate electoral mandate to enact changes thus providing him with significant powers. Similarly Johnson's personal appeal to the electorate under the idea of trying to 'Get Brexit Done' was fundamental to the success of the Conservatives in 2019 with them receiving 365 seats. As a result in both instances the PMs were able to initiate significant constitutional change as seen with Blair's 1999 HOL Reform and Johnson's EU withdrawal bill, due to the

Significant powers provided to them via their personal mandate.

Therefore PMs could be seen as possessing too much power as the increase focus on them and their policies results in significant legitimacy, making it easy for them to enact change. However, this argument fails to recognise that these personal appeals are often a temporary source of power which don't persist through the whole tenure of a PM. Indeed both Blair and Johnson's power fluctuated following scandals ~~and~~ to do with the Iraq War and 'partygate' respectively. Therefore it is wholly apparent that whilst PMs may appear to have too much power, this is a temporary scenario.

This argument can be undeniably strengthened by the increasing failure of PMs to garner personal support, thus preventing them from wielding too much power. This was evident in 2017 where May only formed a confidence and supply agreement with the DUP undeniably restricting her power. ~~This could have been due to her being~~

In fact May was viewed as an electoral liability with her static media performance and unpopular 'Pementia Tax' policy², entirely refuting claims that she possessed a personal mandate. Indeed, even though Starmer received 412 seats in the election in 2024, this has not proven to be a significant source of power for him, as he has failed to instigate public support with his approval ratings dropping to 23% in May 2025.

Therefore, since PMs are clearly no longer inspire the same loyalty from the public the concept of a 'personal mandate' in providing PMs with too much power has clearly been invalidated. Therefore, it is wholly apparent that PMs do not possess too much power.

It could be ~~misleadingly~~ ~~argued~~ ~~that~~ mistakenly proposed that the ability of the PM to designate their cabinet due to their institutional powers, ~~is~~ ~~it~~ allows the PM to possess too much power. For example, PMs appear to have almost unilateral control over the composition of their cabinet utilising their patronage powers to promote loyalists, This was seen under Truss' tenure where she provided cabinet positions to allies like Coffey and Kwarteng, thus minimising cabinet opposition and supposedly cementing her power. Furthermore the power of PMs to call, chair and set the agenda for cabinet meetings can be viewed as them possessing too much power as they can effectively bypass the cabinet rendering it a 'rubber stamp' rather than an effective institution. This was evident in Blair's sofa government and Johnson's Quad during the pandemic, which both allowed the PM to dominate policy formulation whilst ~~entirely~~ negating the influence of the cabinet. Therefore since the PM can effectively minimise cabinet opposition this could be viewed as them having too much power as they can encroach on the function of cabinet which is a key part of the UK political system. However, this argument has glaring flaws that render it untenable. In practice PMs are significantly

retained in their capacity to dominate cabinet as they have to nominate cabinet members that reflect the ideological breadth of the party to attract opposition. This was evident in May's cabinet where she had to ~~pro~~ nominate both leavers and remainers and thus her powers to dominate cabinet were curtailed.

This much more nuanced argument is that PMs clearly don't possess too much power over the cabinet as they are increasingly a source of concern rather than power. This was evident under ~~the~~ Thatcher who appeared powerful at the start of her tenure in 1979 but who was effectively ousted by her cabinet. Indeed, the concept of CMR whilst theoretically providing the PM with a united cabinet has increasingly been shown to do the opposite. Cabinet resignations clearly destabilise PM's entirely undermining their governing competency as seen under Johnson with the tandem resignations of Sajid Javid and Rishi Sunak. Furthermore Starmer has also faced resignations such as Anneliese Dodds as Secretary for International Development following cuts to aid. This reduces a PM's power as they appear fundamentally incapable of controlling those within their own party despite perceived 'party loyalty'. Therefore it is irrefutably clear that claims that PMs possess too much power over their cabinet are entirely fallacious as the cabinet can actually weaken PMs.

Alternative mistaken suggestions could ~~argue~~ that the PM possesses too much power could centre around the capacity of the PM to dominate parliament. This is because a significant parliamentary majority enables PMs to operate relatively unopposed in terms of legislation as the significance of rebellions is minimised.

This is evident currently under Starmer who's party received 34% of the vote but 63% of the seats rendering them in significant control of parliament. Even when Starmer has removed the whip from MPs, such as the removal of the whip from 7 MPs who rebelled over the child benefit cap, Starmer has been able to pass legislation thus highlighting his power. Furthermore, PMs could be perceived as having too much power over parliament due to the system of whips like Alan Campbell who enforce party line voting and thus cement PMs power. However, this argument is clearly mistaken as rebellions often significantly curtail the power of PMs, even those deemed to be powerful. ~~In fact~~ This was clear in 2005 where Tony Blair was defeated in the Commons over anti terror legislation despite his perceived dominance of parliament. Therefore since even powerful PMs can be defeated, PMs clearly don't possess too much power over parliament.

The much more convincing argument is that PM's power is restricted by parliament as they are scrutinised effectively. For example the Liaison Committee questions the PM about policy 3 times a year thus holding them

to direct account. Furthermore PMQs acts as a direct and public form of scrutiny for PMs curtailing their capacity to act unopposed / thus limiting their power. Therefore the significant ~~dominance~~ opposition which the PM experiences in parliament highlights that they don't possess too much power over parliament.

This presents an irreputable conclusion. PMs cannot logically be deemed as possessing too much power as they simply fail to generate enough long term support from the public and are significantly limited by both the cabinet and parliament which can act to destabilize a PM. As such it is clear that the much more convincing argument is that PMs don't possess too much power due to the inherently variable nature of power in the UK political system.



The introduction lays out a clear line of argument.

The essay covers a good range of arguments, with evidence selected effectively, to support analysis and evaluation.

It begins to address the nuance of the word "now" in the question.

There is clear synopticity and comparative analysis, leading to mostly substantiated conclusions.

Level 5



If you are using more historical examples for context, it is very helpful to compare them with more modern examples, to draw out similarities and differences.

Chosen question number: Question 2(a) Question 2(b)

The Prime Minister, who is the main body of the executive, has the power to run the country, be the face of the country in foreign affairs, and pass legislation. However, in recent years, there has been significant cases of prime Ministers acting way above the powers which are set out to them. This essay is going to produce a balanced argument for both sides and come to the conclusion that to a large extent, Prime Ministers now have too much power.

Firstly, an argument which strongly suggests that Prime Ministers now have too much power is Boris Johnson's proroguing of Parliament. Due to the fact that the UK political system's checks and balances can sometimes fall through the cracks, Johnson was able to unlawfully prorogue Parliament, demonstrating how the Prime Minister now has too much power and ~~is~~ is free of any immediate accountability. However, following this, the case of *Miller v Prime Minister* 2019 arose, which aimed to penalise Johnson for acting way beyond his Prime Ministerial powers. In the case, the Supreme Court ruled that Johnson had in fact

acted ultra vires, as the act of proroguing Parliament is unlawful. This demonstrates that the Prime Minister does not have too much power, as they are effectively held accountable by other bodies such as the Supreme Court.

Furthermore, the view that a Prime Minister has too much power can be ^{strongly} suggested using the example of the Rwanda Bill 2023. Due to the uncodified, unentrenched nature of the constitution, the Prime Minister almost has complete freedom to implement, or attempt to implement any legislation, which they deem to fit their current agenda. A significant example of this being the Rwanda Bill 2023. Rishi Sunak introduced this Bill, and it gained much controversy due to its blatant infringements on human rights, which are extended to a person as soon as they reach British soil. This is an example of a Prime Minister having too much power as a Bill which damaged the idea of human rights was introduced. On the other hand, similar to that of Miller v PM 2019, Rishi Sunak and his legislation were held accountable by the Supreme Court. After the introduction of the Bill, it went to the justices in the Supreme Court, where it received an incompatibility verdict, meaning it could no longer be enforced, protecting the

people the legislation targetted. However, this is a weak argument as since the supreme court can only give incompatibility rulings, the Government were able to alter the wording of the Bill, ensuring it was compatible. Therefore, to a large extent, Prime Ministers now hold too much power.

Finally, a strong argument to suggest that the Prime Minister now has too much power is the overturning of a devolved body's government legislation by Westminster. Devolution was the product of an uprise in independence for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Under the Scotland Act 1998, Scotland were granted primary legislative powers. However, in 2023, Scotland introduced the Transgender Bill, which enabled people over 16 to access gender reassignment methods. For the first time in devolved history, Conservative Prime Minister Rishi Sunak overturned this legislation before it reached royal assent. Therefore, this strongly suggests that Prime Ministers now have too much power. On the other hand, _____

Ultimately, now Prime Ministers have far too much power, this can be seen in the lack of checks and balances on the executive, leading to executive overreach, the easy introduction of

legislation that infringes of human rights and the pure dominance that Westminster remains to have over devolved bodies.



This answer meets the descriptors for a best-fit in Level 3.

There is an attempt in the introduction to set a direction of travel and indicate some element of change over time to meet the question of "now".

There are some recent examples, but the arguments and evidence are not fully analysed, meaning that conclusions feel more stated than argued towards.

Level 3



In a question like this, it is worth defining what too much power would look like.

Question 3(a)

This was the more popular of the two questions and was generally well-answered, with reference to the key strands within anarchism.

Candidates were able to show both where collectivist and individualist anarchism agrees and disagrees on their approach to the state, supported by using well-selected arguments developed by key thinkers from the specification. It was pleasing to see all of the different thinkers being well-utilised.

Stronger answers were able to identify fundamental agreements over opposition to the state and clear disagreements over how this opposition emerges from the competing anarchist views on human nature. They had a clear line of argument from the start, and that argument was pursued throughout.

Paragraphs were built around the anarchist critique of the existing state, the nature of the stateless society and how it leads to a natural and spontaneous order, and how to get from the existing state to the stateless society where anarchy is order. The debate around insurrection versus revolution continued to cause some confusion for candidates, whilst a minority of answers put forward incorrect ideas that certain strands of anarchism support a minimal state.

Candidates were able to show agreements and disagreements between the strands. Thinkers were generally well-selected and deployed to support the arguments being made. The very best answers were able to have a clear focus on "extent" from the introduction, through the paragraphs to the conclusion.

Weaker answers tended to state the position of the different strands on their approach to the state or focus on the positions held by the thinkers, rather than focussing on comparative analysis to highlight agreements and disagreements between the strands. These answers tended towards being descriptive, able to achieve AO1 marks, but lacked analysis and evaluation thus limiting their AO2 and AO3 marks. There was, perhaps, a much greater tendency to leave judgements to the conclusion rather than building them into the essay, making it harder to develop a clear line of argument and develop substantiated conclusions.

Chosen question number: Question 3(a) Question 3(b)
Question 4(a) Question 4(b)
Question 5(a) Question 5(b)
Question 6(a) Question 6(b)
Question 7(a) Question 7(b)

Overall, collectivist and individualist anarchists agree on the state. Both strands are united on the key principle that the state must be abolished, although they disagree on how to do this, and on what a stateless society looks like.

The first area that anarchists agree on regarding the state is the need to abolish it. All anarchists believe this as for anarchists the state is corrupting and controlling. Thinker Emma Goldman characterised the state as a "cold monster" that limits individual freedom and suppresses true human nature, whilst exploiting people. Therefore ~~anarchists~~ individualist and collectivist anarchists agree that for human nature to thrive and for freedom to be ensured, the state must be abolished. However, there is disagreement between anarchists over the best way to do this.

collectivist anarchists would argue that this should be done via direct action or through revolution.

Mikhail Bakunin, ~~was~~ a collectivist anarchist, advocated for propaganda by the deed to overthrow the state. This would involve terrorism and violent acts against the state or members of the state, to bring it down, ~~and~~ ~~that is~~ ~~enough~~ people and that collective groups should be formed to carry out propaganda by the deed.

Individualist anarchists would disagree with this view and argue that individual insurrection would be the best way to overthrow the state. This would involve individuals refusing to obey methods of the state such as taxation and instead becoming self sufficient and ignoring the state. Individualist anarchists believe that this would eventually lead to the state withering away as its authority would have gone and it would become unnecessary. Therefore, anarchists disagree on how best to get rid of the state, but are still united on the core idea - that the state must be abolished.

Another area of agreement ~~is~~ that between collectivist and individualist anarchists is that a future utopian society should be without any

State interference and ~~the~~ will be based on freedom and autonomy. For all anarchists, in an ideal ^{utopian} society (which anarchists believe is achievable), there is absolutely no state and instead, all economic and societal decisions are made freely by the people. They reject the idea that a state is needed to maintain the law as for anarchists, human nature is overwhelmingly positive and "anarchy is order." However, anarchists disagree substantially on what this utopian, stateless society will look like in practice.

Collectivist anarchists believe that a stateless society should be based on communes that are small scale, or based on trade unions and occupation, and that run on the basis of common ownership and ~~some~~ equality of outcome. This is because collectivist anarchists believe that true freedom from the state has not been totally achieved unless people are no longer poor and have economic equality. Individualist anarchists would disagree with the collectivist model of utopian society without a state. Individualist anarchists would instead argue that society should be a collection of individuals who are completely self-seeking. Max Stirner argued this position through the Union of egoists. In this, Stirner outlined the

idea that humans are completely self interested and so should pursue their own desires and interest, and keep the fruits of their own labour, as this is the true expression of freedom. Stirner and individualist anarchists reject collectivist anarchist ideas of a utopian society as it involves people having responsibility and obligations to other people within their communes and so for individualists, it is like replacing the state with another state. Only when people are truly free to pursue their own interests has a utopian society that ensures freedom been properly achieved. Overall, both collectivist and individualist anarchists agree that future society should be without a state and based on the principles of autonomy and freedom, they disagree significantly on what this freedom looks like.

In conclusion, whilst there is disagreement between collectivist and individualist anarchists, overall they are united on views on the state. ~~Anarchists disagree~~ The strands disagree on how to overthrow the state, and how society should be run without a state, but the key principle of abolishing the state, as it corrupts and prevents freedom and human nature, is what unites

all anarchists and provides the foundation for the ideology.



This is a well-structured answer, that focusses on the question, developing the idea that opposition to the state is the foundational principle that underpins anarchism.

There is a clear debate between the strands, supported by thinkers, and good use of the key political language of anarchism.

The answer develops effectively the differences between direct action/revolution and insurrection; an area where some answers found it difficult to offer clarity.

Level 5



Using the key terminology and language of the political idea can ensure that answers can be shorter, sharper and more effective.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Anarchism is the ideological belief that the world should and can exist without state control and that the state is wholly evil. The two strands of anarchism: Collectivist Anarchism and Individualist Anarchism both agree that the state should be removed in order for humanity to flourish. However, whilst that is a basis of Anarchist belief of the state, the two strands differ ~~on~~ on aspects such as why the state is evil, how to remove it and what should replace the state. This differences heavily divide the two strands over the state even though they both share a basic belief in the evil of the state.

Both Collectivist Anarchism and Individualist Anarchism share the belief that the state is evil and must be removed in order to have an ideal society. They believe that the state is an institution that facilitates oppressive regimes such as capitalism and therefore inhibits humanity's natural expressions. Goldman an ~~anarchist~~ anarchist key thinker states that the "State is not a social safety,

it is a social menace' indicating that the state will never facilitate effective society but only aims to enforce inequality and class struggle. However, whilst both strands have a basic agreement that the state is evil and should be removed they differ on why the state is considered to be evil. Collectivist Anarchism believes that the state is a mechanism for inequality and disrupts the natural cooperative nature of humanity. In contrast, Individualist Anarchism sees the state as a way to inhibit egoism and the human need for individualistic behaviours. Stirner believes that the state is a 'spook' intended to stop humans from acting egoistically. Therefore, whilst they do agree on the nature of the state the two strands have developed opposing reasoning as to why the state is evil as collectivism favours the optimistic view of human collaboration and need for a collective society whereas individualism supports an egoistic nature and that the state acts to force morals and values onto people that shouldn't be subject to enforced beliefs.

As said in the previous paragraph, both Collectivist Anarchism and Individualist Anarchism agree that the state should be removed as without its removal society will continue to foster inequality and oppression. Tucker says that "capitalism is a state

protected monopoly" this emphasizes that the removal of ~~the~~ a corrupt state would lead to freedom and equality. However, both strands differ in the method of removing the state as Collectivism believes in violent uprisings and revolutions to ensure that equality is achieved on all levels especially for the working class. They believe this is the only way to achieve a truly anarchist society. In contrast to this belief, Individualism focuses more on passive withdrawal from the state and a belief that if individuals decide to act outside capitalist forces or state governed markets an individualist free-market society will arise ~~to~~ where no-one is subject to the monopolies enforced by the state. Stirner's belief emphasizes this as he states that "I am everything to myself, and do everything for myself" indicating that the current state doesn't support the society envisioned by Individualist anarchists and therefore needs to be removed. So they both agree on its need for removal yet fundamentally disagree on how this occurs as they are conflicting over violent or passive action.

Largely, both Collectivist anarchism and Individualist Anarchism both believe that the society created out of the removal of the state is a stateless society that supports the free liberty of all citizens to act as they please. They believe that a natural order will occur once

the state has been removed. However, both strands disagree on what a society will look like after the state has been removed. Collectivist Anarchism believes in collectivist society that focuses on mutual aid and cooperation. Kropotkin argues for federations of communes that act together. He argues that "everything is for everyone" and that all resources are shared and therefore there is equality. Individualist Anarchism differs in their approach to how society will develop without the state as they argue that a true anarchist state will be ~~an~~ ^{an} individualistic society that allows for egoism and voluntary ^{cooperation} ~~cooperative~~ derived from self-interest. Stirner believes that all moral standards should not be forced in an anarchist society and that once the state is removed a free-market and private property (based on use) society should be allowed to function. Therefore, again whilst they both have a fundamental belief that a new society will exist and be better once the state has been removed they differ largely on how that society will look like, as it is heavily based on their own ideological beliefs especially surrounding human nature. So they evidently disagree on their approach to a stateless society.

In conclusion, it can be argued to a larger extent that whilst both strands of Anarchism have a pillar of

believe that their approach ~~the~~ to the state is negative as it is seen as evil and coercive. They disagree too much on the nature, removal and future approach to the state. These differences are due to their underlying ideological views and since these are vastly different such as collectivism and cooperation and Individualism and egoism it would be untrue to say that they both have a wholly cohesive agreement on the state. Rather it can be argued that Collectivist Anarchism and Individualist Anarchism do disagree on their approaches to the state.



Here, there is a clear line of argument, a sharp focus on extent, and an ability to analyse and evaluate the key similarities between strands supported by thinkers.

Rather than only identifying thinkers within a particular strand, stronger answers use the key contributions of thinkers like Goldman and Stirner to explain the similarities and differences within anarchism.

The use of the key terminology is very strong.

Level 5



Question focus, and the nature of extent, are crucial to the higher mark levels.

Question 3(b)

This was marginally the less popular of the two questions and was very well-answered with reference to the key strands within anarchism.

Candidates were able to show both where collectivist and individualist anarchism is united and divided in its views on society, supported by using well-selected key thinkers from the specification. There was a very pleasing use of the political terminology and vocabulary of anarchism, allowing candidates to write shorter, more focussed and effective answers. The best answers used the language of anarchism confidently, to answer the question.

Paragraphs were built around the critique of the existing society and its impact on human nature, the nature of an anarchist society and the idea that liberty is the mother, not the daughter, of order. Candidates were able to show agreements between the strands and disagreements both between and within the strands.

Thinkers were generally well-selected and deployed to support the arguments being made. A key strength was the ability to develop a debate about how liberty is to be achieved in an anarchist society.

The very best answers were able to have a clear focus on “extent” from the introduction, through the paragraphs to the conclusion.

Weaker answers tended to state the position of the different strands on the nature of society. Alternatively, they focussed on the positions held by the thinkers, rather than focussing on comparative analysis to highlight agreements and disagreements between the strands.

There was perhaps a much greater tendency to leave judgements to the conclusion rather than building them into the essay, making it harder to develop a clear line of argument. It is important that candidates answer the question set, rather than delivering a pre-planned essay that looks to cover the state, the economy and human nature, without linking these debates back to society.

A further area of confusion was that a minority of candidates put forward, incorrectly, the idea that some strands of anarchism support a minimal state.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Anarchists all fundamentally believe that humans should be free from state control and, as a result, society should be ordered on the basis of liberty. Yet, this essay will contend that anarchists largely disagree on what society will look like in a post-state context, ~~and disagree along two key dividing lines~~ ~~materialist~~ with a clear division between individualists and collectivists.

Firstly, Anarchists all accept that society should be stateless and that human beings should be completely free to self-organise. Max Stirner suggested in 'The Ego and its Own' [1844] that humans would freely associate and even cooperate as a 'union of egoists'. The collectivist Proudhon suggested that ~~order was the~~ 'liberty was the mother not the daughter of order'. For all anarchists

it is quite clear that there need not be a centralised authority. In order society, both Stirner and Goldman suggested that the state was little more than a 'spook' that prevented individuals from realising their own freedom. Indeed Mikhail Bakunin argued with Marx regarding the issue of a temporary dictatorship of the proletariat by a 'vanguard class' disputing such an illegitimate use of authority. Hence, on some level all ~~anarchists~~ anarchists agree on society in that they believe it should be stateless.

However, anarchists disagree significantly on what such a society stateless as it is would look like. Collectivists thought that factors of production would be commonly owned. Kropotkin stated in 'mutual aid' [1902] that 'all is for all'. This is antithetical as a notion to Stirner's 'might is right,' and as such collectivists and individualists have an entirely separate conception of what society looks like which is predicated upon an entirely distinct conception of human nature. The anarchist-primitivist ^{Kropotkin} argues

in 'The Conquest for Bread' [1892] that self-interest is a feature but not the defining feature of human nature and consequently, that under anarchism society would order itself into primitive social tribes where the 'ultimate aim is leisure'. Conversely Stinner thought that the only time he was himself was when he was alone. In the while anarcho-capitalists such as Stinner thought that some cooperation was possible in the pursuit of self-interest ('union of equals') he fundamentally rejected the collectivist suggestion that we would be capable of 'mutual aid' and arrange ourselves in big commune-type groups to live.

There is even further disagreement in anarchism regarding the work pursued in anarchist society.

There is a clear distinction between individualist anarcho-capitalists such as Murray Rothbard who in 'Ethics of Liberty' [1983] outlined an industrial society and a free-market for children and collectivists who - to greater and lesser extents support some form of collective ownership. Yet, even

within collectivist anarchist thought there is further disagreement. Proudhon espoused a form of mutualism where firms would all, essentially, be workers cooperatives. Proudhon thought that while property was theft, 'communism was the ~~weak~~ stealing from the strong,' which is in stark contrast to the society that Bakunin envisioned which was also classless but most accurately reflected the socio-economic analysis of Marx. Moreover, there is further disagreement in that while both Bakunin and Proudhon envision an industrial society (one where production is directed by need rather than profit) Kropotkin as an anarcho-primitivist envisions a return to pre-industrial times where just enough is harnessed from the world to sustain our large social groups given the 'ultimate aim is leisure'.

To conclude, while all anarchists envision a stateless society in which the social order is determined by the free actions of individuals who are no longer under the false consciousness of authority, there is significant disagreement between collectivists and individualists on the sociability of

man and thus the way in which we will choose to co-exist - for individualists extracting only what benefits us from other and for collectivists as inherently social beings. There is further disagreement on whether society will be materialist or primitive and this ^{disagreement} exists even within collectivist thought. Thus, it should be said that anarchism is largely divided on its view of society.



This is a well-structured answer that focusses on the question and develops the idea that the strands within anarchism largely disagree.

There is a good debate, although the answer perhaps needs greater clarity and accuracy in developing the point about anarcho-capitalism.

This answer reflects a very strong focus on the concept of extent, measuring the level of division or unity within anarchism. This is a key part of the question, and in achieving stronger AO3 scores.

Level 5



The use of the language of anarchism allows for shorter, more focussed and effective answers.

Question 4(a)

Ecologism remains one of the non-core political ideas that is less popular. However, generally candidates engaged well with the questions regarding whether there is more agreement than disagreement within ecologism over post-materialism and anti-consumerism.

There was a wide range of different themes developed, all strands were generally covered, key thinkers were well-deployed and, perhaps most pleasingly, there was a stronger use of the key vocabulary and terminology of ecologism. This meant that candidates in general could demonstrate more knowledge, analysis and evaluation in shorter, more focussed and effective answers. A clear understanding and ability to define the core principles of post-materialism and anti-consumerism was vital to the stronger answers.

Most answers were clear that there was fundamental agreement over their critique of the existing world that the current levels of consumerism and materialism are not compatible with 'Limits to Growth'(1972). They argued that change needs to be made in society and/or lifestyles, whilst identifying the splits between the more reformist approach of shallow greens and the radical approaches of deep greens and social ecology.

Stronger answers were more effective at looking at the differences between the strands in what a post-materialist and anti-consumerist society/economy would look like and how it is to be achieved. They had a clear direction from the start, and that argument was pursued throughout.

The very best answers were able to have a clear focus on 'extent' from the introduction, through the paragraphs to the conclusion.

Chosen question number: **Question 3(a)** **Question 3(b)**
Question 4(a) **Question 4(b)**
Question 5(a) **Question 5(b)**
Question 6(a) **Question 6(b)**
Question 7(a) **Question 7(b)**

All ecologists believe that current consumerism and materialism is not sustainable and action must be taken however they disagree on the extent of action that must be taken with all but Shellen arguing for a removal of capitalism. While the degree of social ecologists differ in their reason for the removal of capitalism and hence a rejection of consumerism and materialism they all agree that it is harmful and needs to be removed. Shellen has ~~not~~ while there is disagreement most strands agree on anti-consumption of anti-materialism.

All ecologists agree that unregulated capitalism is bad as it inherently exploits the Earth's resources which there is a limit amount of. This leads to an concern over a need for limited growth and sustainability. They all stand there is a consensus that the current state of economic and consumerism is bad for the environment as it fosters a materialistic society which hence damage the environment as capitalism drives on firms have workers to exploit which to do so it needs material and resources which are taken from the earth like wood or diamonds. All ecologists agree that the current state of consumerism is harmful and action need to be taken to combat this. Rachel Carson is an influential thinker who influenced all strands. Her research on DDT pesticide is a characteristic that all strands ~~stand~~ that the extent of human consumerism is industrial agriculture has

Damaging ecosystem hundreds of million and hence shows how all strands agree that excess consumerism and materialism in society is having a negative effect on the environment and hence action must be taken to combat it. This therefore shows a broad agreement on sustainability. All strands agree that for society to continue we must be sustainable and make the most out of everything and ~~not~~ to be able to survive on what is already available instead of pursuing non growth and exploiting the limited resources of the earth. All strands support the idea that Capitalism negatively affects human nature as it enhances an explorative side and hence entrenches consumerism and a materialistic lifestyle which is harmful to the environment because it leads to a continuation of an attempt at unlimited growth which is not sustainable. Overall ~~there~~ there is more agreement than disagreement despite significant variation. This mainly comes from Shallow who don't reject consumerism and materialism but want to limit it but deep green and socioecology want a complete rejection of it. Deep thus the ~~consumer~~ deeps and socioecology a largely middle being anti-consumerism and anti-materialism with Shallow being the outlier.

However there is significant disagreement on the extent of change that needs to happen with Shallow green being the only strand calling for reforming change with all other strands advocating for radical. Shallow green like Leach believe in green capitalism and that works sustainably. Shallow green argue that green capitalism does for machines which will help the China crisis hence materialism and consumerism are to be an extent sufficient in the long run as the China crisis shows clear disagreement with the rest. Deep green like Leopold and Schumacher are both firmly anti-capitalism and favour the land ethic (Leopold) and Buddhist economics (Schumacher). They believe that Leopold

believes that people need to treat the world around them as sacred and view
an animist consciousness. The belief in biocentric egalitarianism illustrates how deep
greens are anti-consumerist and again materialism as once one views the world
around them as equal they will not see the land as there to exploit and
consume. Social ecologists are also anti-capitalists, sharing an anti-consumerist view.
Eco-anarchists like Bookchin believe in decentralisation and are anti-state and capitalistic, believing
people should live in small communities as this is more sustainable. Eco-socialists are
like Bellamy. Feminists are anti-capitalism as they believe the system is going to
be hit hardest by the climate crisis, hence a reversal of capitalism. Therefore
a rejection of consumerism and materialism is needed. Eco-feminist like Madsen
are anti-capitalist as they believe to reinstate the patriarchy, men hinder, the combat against the
climate crisis is an essential woman, who they believe are actually more nurturing than
men and will be better at combating the crisis, hence a reversal of capitalism and therefore
consumerism and materialism is needed. Deep greens are social ecologists, believe in
strong sustainability, while shallow believe in weak sustainability. When you highlight disagreements
over consumerism and materialism as deep and social ecologists would argue that
consumerism and materialism is not sustainable and weak sustainability, whereas for them
is not enough change. While there is disagreement amongst the strands,
this mainly be shallow greens and the other strand, while their exact
reasons differ, they agree that consumerism and materialism is harmful and
must be removed.

Overall while there is significant disagreement there is more agreement, the
disagreement is mainly for the shallow who advocate for reformist change while the
deep advocate for radical change including a reversal of capitalism and hence a rejection
of consumerism and materialism. Shallow greens support for reformist change and

Not a complete rejection of capitalism is an outlier with all other strands of ideology.
A complete rejection of capitalism and hence ~~the~~ a rejection of consumerism and materialism.



This response is tightly-argued, with a strong use of key political terminology and a clear question focus.

Level 5



Political ideas can often be thought about in terms of:

- the criticisms of the existing world
- what the future world should look like
- the route to get from the existing world to the future world

Question 4(b)

This was the more popular of the two questions and focussed on the key term "anthropocentrism/anthropocentric". The question was accessible and provided a good range of answers.

Most answers were able to identify the key unity within ecologism in its opposition to anthropocentrism, and stronger answers could identify that the key term refers to the idea of humanity being above, and outside of, nature. Building on that, most answers made the case that the opposition to anthropocentrism emerges from the lessons of the science of ecology and the concept of holism, which reject the idea that nature is purely a commodity for human consumption. Most answers argued effectively that shallow greens want to replace anthropocentrism with enlightened anthropocentrism, and could define what that meant and its implications, whilst both deep greens and social ecology were fundamentally split from shallow greens.

There was some confusion around the differences between deep greens and their ecocentric approach (although stronger answers were able to develop this concept with Leopold's Land Ethic). and the ideas of social ecology. The latter opposes anthropocentrism, seeing enlightened anthropocentrism as hierarchical, and ecocentrism as spiritual nonsense. Stronger answers were able to expand on these concepts, identifying areas of similarity and difference between the strands.

Weaker answers tended to position the views of the different strands side-by-side, or only focus on thinkers, not strands, or were confused about the terms anthropocentrism, ecocentrism and enlightened anthropocentrism. An area for further work is to ensure candidates have an effective understanding of the key political terminology of ecologism so that they can write shorter, more focussed and analytical answers.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Ecology is fundamentally united in the belief that in the science of ecology and they are all opposed to the anthropocentric notion that man is above and outside of nature. Despite this principled agreement, ultimately ecology is deeply more divided than united in its approach to anthropocentrism due to fundamental disagreements in the process of replacing it and what it should be replaced with.

All ecologists are fundamentally opposed to the current system of anthropocentrism which sees humans take primary over the natural world. Shallow green ecologists are advised by Rachel Carson who wrote in the 'Silent Spring' that the use of DDT pesticides in crop production represents the principle

that 'man's war against nature is inevitably a war against himself', as the pesticides pollute water sources like rivers. Deep green ecologists would fundamentally agree that man is not above nature that anthropocentrism suggests, but that man is rather ~~the~~ part of nature as the mechanistic world view sees the natural world as reductionist and only for human use. However, deep greens do slightly differ in their opposition as they do not just view nature as instrumental, but rather that it has intrinsic value away from human use, unlike shallower greens. Social ecologists have their opposition to anthropocentrism in opposing any form of hierarchy and domination, hence all things are equal. Therefore, while ecologism is fundamentally united in opposing anthropocentrism, it differs on how that conclusion is made.

Ecologism is completely divorced in the alternative value structure to anthropocentrism. Deep greens take a radically holistic approach and are advised by

Aldo Leopold's 'Land Ethic', which extends that which is worthy of moral consideration to include "plants, soils, animals, water, or collectively: the land". Hence, deep greens take a more ecocentric approach rather than anthropocentrism, and to achieve this goal there must be strong sustainability where humanity embraces an environmental conscience.

Shallow greens somewhat differ in their alternative values to anthropocentrism as their belief in intergenerational equity still places humanity as steward of nature but ultimately embrace the wide consideration of human past, present and future to sustain the environment.

Ultimately, social ecologists fundamentally disagree and oppose both alternatives to anthropocentrism, as any remaining form of domination is indicative of exploitation and hence the rooted problems in social structures must be made equal in order to foster a true relationship of cooperation and complementarity with nature. Hence, ecocriticism is fundamentally divided in

the alternative values to anthropocentrism.

Deep green ecologists offer a process of replacing anthropocentrism

which is completely rejected by social ecologists. Arne Naess outlined a process of self-realisation in humanity which will lead to

biocentric egalitarianism where humanity will spiritually connect itself to the natural world. However,

social ecologists see this view as not practical and completely fanciful and "Eco-la-la" as coined by Murray Bookchin. As an

eco-anarchist Bookchin proposed that in order to truly replace anthropocentrism, the state must be replaced by a system of

'libertarian municipalism' which integrates society with nature and bases policies and decisions on

cooperation and complementarity between humanity and the natural world. Hence,

deep greens and social ecologists are principally divided on the practical

reality of opposing the anthropocentric system.

Ecologists are only fundamentally united on opposing the anthropocentric society of the modern world. However, the extent of the discrepancy between the stances in relation to alternative values of anthropocentrism and how that would operate in a practical system, means that ecologists are significantly more divided in their approach to anthropocentrism.



This answer has a sharp understanding of what anthropocentrism means, and this provides the foundation for a strong answer to the question.

There is a laser-like focus throughout on "extent", and a full development of the differences and similarities between the strands supported by the thinkers.

The use of key language from the political idea of ecologism is excellent.

Level 5



The ability to define and use core principles and key terms of each political idea is crucial to achieving the highest marks.

Question 5(a)

Candidates were generally able to identify agreement and disagreement between the strands and many showed good knowledge and understanding of differing feminist perspectives on sex and gender (listed in the specification as part of the core ideas and principles).

Almost all answers included the required two key thinkers, with many going above and beyond to reference other thinkers, such as Friedan or Wollstonecraft, to support their responses. It was pleasing to see a strong understanding of the key terminology and vocabulary of feminism being deployed, making for shorter and more effective answers.

The best answers recognised the differences between sex and gender, exploring how gender is a social construct and that most feminists are equality feminists. Key differences between difference feminism and equality feminism, plus disagreements over how gender is socially constructed (socially, politically, economically) and what strategies should be adopted to address these issues, provided rich areas to be explored.

The strongest answers were well-structured, analysing a range of themes and showing deep knowledge of the views of thinkers associated with the four main strands. They explored fully why the strands of feminism agree by looking at common beliefs, whilst weaker answers tended to state this agreement rather than explain it. The exploration of differences tended to be stronger than those on agreement.

Better answers drew these out to make meaningful comparisons and informed judgements regarding the extent of unity or division. The very best answers were explicit about the “extent” of unity, supporting their judgements with perceptive, comparative analysis and well-selected political information.

It was pleasing to see more candidates using post-modern feminism, more accurately using the ideas of intersectionality and bell-hooks, although often a paragraph on post-modern feminism was 'tacked-on' at the end rather than woven into the answer.

Weaker approaches tended to be more descriptive, only laying out the ideas of the different strands or different thinkers, rather than focussing on the extent of unity. This approach sometimes saw a more narrative, historical approach that was very descriptive rather than analytical or it veered off into areas not covered by the question or the specification. There was a tendency to want simply to label key thinkers by strand, rather than focussing on how the ideas of the different thinkers have contributed to the views of feminism, and the thinking of the different strands.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Although it can be argued that feminists agree largely that ~~sex~~ gender is a social construct ~~to~~ used to subordinate women, they are overall more disunited than united due to their differing approaches on how to achieve sex and gender equality and the main source of ^{the idea of} women's subordinate ideas 'sex'.

On the one hand feminists are arguably united to a high extent over the belief that gender is a social construct. For example, all strands agree that women are socialized into gender roles from a young age that enforce the idea of them being subordinate figures with a maternal 'nurturing' biological nature. Liberal feminists argue this is reinforced through women having less opportunities for education and the workplace whereas socialists argue this homemaker nature is key for capitalism as it allows men to focus on their role in the workplace. This unified view is well illustrated by Gilman, who found that both children's clothes, such as girls wearing dresses that restricted their freedom to explore, and toys, such

as girls being encouraged to play with dolls, socialises ^{girls} children into taking similar roles as adults. As a result feminists arguably are united on the idea of gender being a social construct. However one area of disagreement within feminists is on the ~~idea~~ concept of essentialism, which difference feminists strongly believe in. For difference feminists they see women's biology and 'nature' as naturally different to men's and believe it has been exploited but ultimately should be embraced by women. This leads to difference feminists differing from equality feminists in the social construction of women's 'core nature' and instead advocate for separatism - where women live entirely separately from men so their natural, feminine, nurturing can flourish as a community. As a result although ^{most of} the key strands are united that gender is a social construct, difference feminists (some of which are radical) dissent too far in their beliefs, for therefore feminists arguably united to a lower extent over gender as a social construct.

A second area of agreement in feminism is between radical and socialist feminists in their view of how to liberate women from their subordinate, gendered position in society. Both radical and socialist feminists argue that there are pervasive structures that inevitably push women to maintain a subordinate position in society and thus both agree that revolution needs to occur in order to liberate women. This

can be shown by Sheila Rowbotham who called for a 'revolution within a revolution', suggesting both the capitalist system and beliefs in the private sphere need to be fundamentally removed. This aligns with the radical feminist view that feminism is too deeply entrenched for ~~radical~~ ^{evolutionary} simple reforms to occur, demonstrated by the names of ~~killers~~ ^{murderers} who saw women as portrayed as inanimate sexual objects in ancient literature. As a result, the two strands are united to a high extent arguably over using revolution to liberate women. However, there is disagreement with these two strands to a high extent with liberal and ~~postmodernist~~ socialists who using the works of figures like Mary Wollstonecraft argue that women are rational creatures that thus merely need greater freedom in society to unleash their rational skills, such as equality of opportunity, which Friedan was a strong advocate for. Thus liberal feminists merely advocated for evolutionary means to free women from gendered expectations. As a result feminists are arguably divided to a high extent over how to ~~not~~ release women from constraining gender norms.

A final area of disagreement between feminists comes from postmodernist feminists who criticise the other strands for ignoring gender fluidity and the different experiences of women. Although socialist feminists do generally agree with postmodernists that different factors,

such as social class may interact with their oppression, it is largely only postmodernists who criticise the other strands for seeing women as one homogenous group.

This has been demonstrated by the work of bell hooks and her concepts of intersectionality and solidarity illustrating the postmodernist strand's beliefs that we need to look at the separate ways women's class, gender, race etc influence their experiences. Therefore postmodernists argue that gender is more of a fluid structure rather than a thing all women experience and advocate for more insight into different women's gender and sex experiences, showing they dissent from the other strands to a high extent.

In conclusion feminists are arguably united to a lower extent over gender also as they don't agree on how to achieve freedom from gender subordination but also they disagree on whether gender and sex is the same universal experience for all women.



This essay focuses on the question, drawing out similarities and differences between strands supported by thinkers.

There is a clear line of argument throughout the answer, although some of the conclusions could benefit from being supported more effectively.

Both the introduction and conclusion work well here.

Level 4



Try to weave post-modern feminism into the main themes and debates in the essay, rather than exploring it in isolation in a paragraph of its own.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Feminism is fundamentally divided over their views of sex and gender. This is because, although there is an agreement between feminists that gender is a social construct, this is superficial and ~~that~~ they fundamentally disagree on whether sex and gender is linked and ~~that~~ the solutions to eliminating these gender stereotypes. Therefore, feminists are divided over their views on sex and gender, to a full extent.

There is a superficial agreement on the idea that gender is social construct and is not a result of biological differences. This can be seen by liberal feminists as they believe that cultural norms have gotten rid of women's potential of self-realisation so they are unable to see new themselves as perfectly rational beings capable of

reason. This is emphasised by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (1949) where she states "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman". This indicates her view that ~~through~~ society has made women into girls and forced their thoughts ~~them~~ into thinking that their gender is fit in domestic roles. This can be agreed with by socialist feminists because they state that capitalism has forced women into thinking they need to pursue domestic roles in order to exchange with the financial support from men. This is emphasised by Charlotte Perkins Gilman when she states "There is no female mind". She indicates that women-through social conditioning, has been made to believe they hold nurturing identities. ~~However~~ This portrays the view that both liberal and socialist feminists believe that social constructs have pushed the female gender into more domestic roles; in order to exploit them. However, this is only a superficial agreement as it ultimately leads to different solutions to fix this overarching problem.

Feminists are fundamentally divided in their views over sex and gender being linked. This is because, difference feminists believe in essentialism - when a biological sex holds certain characteristics and behaviours which leads to their view that differences between the male and female sex should be acknowledged and respected. Mary Daly emphasises this when she states "our strength is not in conformity, but the courage to be different". She emphasises that women's biological sex ~~has~~ inherently holds more nurturing and holistic approaches over men who are inherently more aggressive. This ~~that~~ strongly contrasts with equality feminists - which encompasses liberal, socialist, post modern and most radical feminists. This is because they fundamentally believe human nature is androgynous and linking sex and gender is dangerous and it what led to gender inequality in the first place. This is emphasised by Simone de Beauvoir in the second sex (1949) as she mentions patriarchy was formed ~~that~~ this 'mysterious feminine nature' with more ~~not~~ nurturing, motherly abilities; however, this is critical to the

evolution of feminism. And only when this link between sex and gender is removed, females will gain gender equality. Therefore, difference and equality feminists fundamentally disagree on their views on whether sex and gender is linked as difference feminists believe they are, while equality feminists criticise this view.

Finally, feminists are fundamentally divided over their ~~views~~ solutions to ~~erase~~ gender stereotypes in society and the economy. This is because liberal feminists are fundamentally reformist and they strongly argue that through ~~reforms~~ state-led reforms such as the Equal Pay Act, or maternity leave rights, women can gain financial independence. Through this independence, stereotypes of women only flourishing private spheres can be removed. Simone de Beauvoir emphasises this by stating that "her wings are clipped and then she is blamed for not knowing how to fly". This conveys her belief that with sufficient intervention by the state, women will gain the

equality of opportunity ~~them~~ they need - and become able to "fly". This is strongly disagreed by radical feminists as they criticise state led reforms for being too weak to remove gender stereotypes. They believe that these stereotypes are so deeply ingrained into the fabric of ~~set~~ the patriarchy, only through a cultural revolution, women can be emancipated. Kate Millet in "Sexual Politics" (1970) emphasises this, offering solutions such as separation, and women-only spaces, in order to allow women the space to become liberated from all the stereotypes pulling her back. Therefore, feminists are fundamentally ~~disunited~~ ^{divided} over their views of sex and gender as they offer different solutions to be emancipated from the socially constructed gender stereotypes.

The argument that feminists are fundamentally ~~disunited~~ ^{divided} over their views of sex and gender is more convincing because they hold fundamental agreements over sex being linked with gender, and thus the different solutions to solve this problem of gender inequality. Granted, there is a superficial argument that gender is a social construct; however, this is outweighed by the significantly different solutions that feminists offer.



This essay starts with a convincing introduction that sets up the debate and offers a clear line of argument, which is maintained through to the conclusion.

Each paragraph has a theme, focusses on agreements and disagreements and offers an answer to the question of extent.

Level 5



It is really important to plan; this will ensure that the direction of travel you establish in the introduction can be woven throughout the essay, leading naturally to the conclusion.

Question 5(b)

Candidates were able generally to identify agreement and disagreement between the strands, and many showed good knowledge and understanding of differing feminist perspectives on the public and private sphere (key terminology from the specification). The ability to explain the difference between the public and private sphere provided a firm basis for the more effective answers.

Almost all answers included the required two key thinkers, with many going above and beyond to reference other thinkers, such as Friedan or Wollstonecraft, to support their responses.

It was pleasing to see a strong understanding of the key terminology and vocabulary of feminism being deployed, making for shorter and more effective answers.

The best answers recognised the differences between the public sphere and the private sphere. They explored how oppression operates in the different spheres, and how this is central to constructing gender roles and central to the political action that is needed.

Clear differences between liberal feminism and the more radical strands, as well as division within the more radical strands, provided rich areas to explore the extent of division. Again, it is worth noting the importance of candidates having a strong understanding of the core principles and ideas, as well as the key terminology of feminism.

The strongest answers were well-structured, analysing a range of themes and showing deep knowledge of the views of thinkers associated with the four main strands. The best answers explored why the strands of feminism agree by looking at common beliefs, whilst weaker answers tended to state this agreement rather than explain it. The exploration of differences tended to be stronger than those on agreement.

Better answers drew these out to make meaningful comparisons and informed judgements regarding the extent of unity or division. The very best answers were explicit about the "extent" of unity, supporting their judgements with perceptive, comparative analysis and well-selected political information.

It was pleasing to see more candidates using post-modern feminism, more accurately using the ideas of intersectionality and bell-hooks although often a paragraph on post-modern feminism was 'tacked-on' at the end, rather than woven into the answer.

Weaker approaches tended to be more descriptive, only laying out the ideas of the different strands or different thinkers, rather than focussing on the extent of unity. This approach sometimes saw a more narrative, historical approach that was very descriptive rather than analytical or veered off into areas not covered by the question or the specification. There was a tendency to want simply to label key thinkers by strand, rather than focussing on how the ideas of the different thinkers have contributed to the views of feminism, and the thinking of the different strands.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Feminism is an ideology that, at its core, aims to progress the rights and cause of women. On the one hand, there are some superficial agreements among all feminists over the roles that the public ~~and private~~ sphere (society, the state, education, the workplace and similar areas) and the private sphere (the family and household) play in the oppression of women and the necessary reforms. However, it is more convincing to argue that there are fundamental differences that have feminists, ~~divorced~~ to a large extent, divided over their approaches to the public and private spheres!

Firstly, ~~then~~ all feminists agree that women suffer oppression and inequality in the public sphere. Liberal feminists like Friedan argued that societal attitudes and institutional barriers prevent women succeeding. Radical and

socialist feminists would agree with this, ~~with~~ pointing out the discrimination that women suffer. However, the similarities end there. For liberal feminists, there is a radical feminist, the patriarchy is oppressive and inescapable. Kate Millet argued that it is impossible to have a male-female relationship that did not exhibit a patriarchal power imbalance. This has even led to some radical feminists calling for separatism and political lesbianism. For them, the personal is political. Contrastingly, liberal feminists reject the idea and language of a pervasive patriarchy. While they understand that women can face oppression privately, they believe that the root cause is inequality in the public sphere. For post-modern feminists like bell hooks, these views fail to ~~ack~~ For socialist feminists like Rowan Rowbottom, ~~the~~ women suffer from a 'dual oppression' - both under a male-dominated ~~world~~ a world ~~is~~ and under capitalism. For post-modern feminists like hooks, none of the other strands recognise the importance of other factors that affect ~~the~~ the oppression of women in the public and private sphere. Overall, the superficial similarities over the role of the public and private sphere in the oppression of women, their

differences in approach significantly outweigh them.

There is also some agreement amongst all feminists that reform to both the public and private sphere is necessary. The All feminists, by definition, observe discrimination and inequality. There is further agreement amongst all but liberal feminists that a revolutionary method of change is required. Millet advocated for a "sexual revolution", and Rowbottom argued for a "revolution" within a [socialist] revolution". bell hooks also argued for revolutionary change in both system and mindset, ~~with~~ through the development of ~~solid~~ solidarity. Then However, significant differences do remain. With respect to the public sphere, liberal feminists find themselves at odds with the other strands over their more gradual, reformist approach. Meanwhile, socialist feminist and post-modern feminists link women's oppression in the public sphere to other forms of oppression - a concept known as intersectionality. For these strands, a wider reform is necessary than a purely "sexual" revolution as radicals like Millet ^{or} Millet propose. In the private sphere, liberal

feminists do not tend to advocate any major reform beyond legal protections for women, whilst radical feminists do not believe that anything short of ~~as~~ a form of revolution could liberate women within the private sphere. In this ultimately, these fundamental differences over ~~off~~ the necessary reforms ~~on~~ ~~slow~~ seriously outweigh the similarities.

In conclusion, feminists are divided to a large extent in their approaches to the public and private spheres, despite the few agreements that do appear on the surface. Fundamentally, there are serious and irreconcilable differences between all four strands.



There is a very clear question focus right from the introduction, with an explanation of the public and private sphere.

The answer:

- focusses on the question of extent
- demonstrates carefully-selected knowledge
- shows consistent comparative analysis

Level 5



To build an effective answer, it is important to:

- know the key terminology
- use key terminology in context
- be able to define the key terminology, where appropriate

Question 6(a)

The question allowed candidates to explore whether multiculturalism is divided over its core principles of culture and identity.

The most effective strategies looked to shape the essay in terms of areas of agreement over the multiculturalist view on the importance of culture and identity to human nature; that society can marginalise and discriminate through stereotyping; and that society should respect and celebrate minority cultures and identities before exploring the disagreements. Within this, the most effective answers were able to explore the differences between liberal, pluralist, and cosmopolitan multiculturalism over why culture and identity should be supported, how far support should extend and some looked at the conservative criticisms of culture and identity.

The very best answers were able to make substantiated judgements about the depth of the agreement or disagreement within multiculturalism, over their view on the protection of minority cultures. One area to focus on is structure: it is vital that both agreement and disagreement are covered, with some candidates only developing a debate on disagreement or not using all three main strands and tensions within multiculturalism.

It is also important to use the ideas of key thinkers to back-up the debate between the different strands/tensions, rather than focusing on a debate between thinkers or simply stating that Parekh is a pluralist multiculturalist.

One area of confusion that did develop was the confusion of liberal ideas with those of liberal multiculturalists. In terms of culture and identity, what is needed is recognition and positive accommodation of minority group practices - for Kymlicka, this is about group-differentiated rights based on the liberal principles of autonomy and justice. However, liberal multiculturalists like Kymlicka, cannot accept that any group would have the legal right to restrict the basic civil liberties of its members.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

Multiculturalism is more divided than united in its views of ~~minority~~ culture and identity. Multiculturalism is the ideology that centres on unity through diversity. Though they broadly agree that in the principle, that culture is fundamental to individual, that diversity helps to develop culture and identity and that minority rights is necessary to preserve certain cultures, they fundamentally disagree on how these should be realised. Therefore, there is more diversity overall.

There is some agreement among multiculturalist in how culture and identity are fundamentally intrinsic to each other. Liberal multiculturalist can draw on ~~the~~ ~~high~~ ~~to~~ ~~Michael~~'s idea of a 'culture of choice' to argue that culture is simply people the framework to develop their own sense of individuality. Similarly pluralist can draw on ~~the~~ Taylor's 'communitarianism' to argue that individuals can only be understood through their

cultural communities whilst cosmopolitans ~~can~~ can look at Appiah's claim that 'culture, matter to people' to reach a similar conclusion. Therefore, all cosmopolitans would broadly agree that individual identity is fundamentally shaped by culture and can only be understood in relation to culture, rejecting methodological individualism as a result. However, ~~there~~ there is greater diversity overall due to fundamentally different views on how the relationship operates. Cosmopolitans typically argue it to be a reflexive relationship where we self-construct our identities by engaging with others, departing from the liberal and especially pluralist views of culture as unchosen, and furthermore the liberal view of 'private' and 'public' identities as possible would be seen by the pluralist as both impossible and dangerous as individuals can drawing on Macneil's idea that no state is separate from culture to argue a public identity for an individual or institution fails to align with human nature. So, we see how these disagreements on the relationship between culture and identity exposes fundamentally conflicting assumptions on human nature itself with the reflexivity of cosmopolitans and the separation of liberals viewed as mostly impossible by pluralist and both opposing cosmopolitan ideas of cultural identity as self-constructed. Therefore, there is clearly more diversity here than unity.

due to this fundamental disagreement.

Furthermore, ~~now~~ there is some unity in how multiculturalist accept diversity as necessary to develop culture and identity. Liberals can look to the 'free market of ideas' to argue that a diversity of cultures is beneficial for helping different groups to debate with and learn from each other. Similarly pluralist can draw on Berlin's idea of 'value pluralism' to argue a diverse range of legitimate conceptions of the good life help us develop our own conceptions, whilst cosmopolitans argue diversity helps facilitate cultural exchange & giving us a better understanding of humanity's ^{as} ~~significantly~~ ~~the~~ and develop hybridity. Significantly, this means all strands broadly agree then that diversity is necessary for cultural benefit and gives us a more complete vision of our identity as humans. Yet, there is greater diversity through different realisations of this principle. For example, liberal 'shallow diversity' - where cultures permitted must work in a liberal framework would be dismissed by pluralist as prohibiting the development of cultural diversity by shutting us off from legitimate ideas. In contrast, liberals would attack pluralist 'deep diversity' as threatening liberal democracy, the only model able to facilitate the

grow of culture and identity, effectively. Furthermore, the cosmopolitan vision of diversity as instrumental to develop of the single hybrid culture and identity would be dismissed by the liberal as threatening individual freedoms and by the pluralist as dangerously diluting culture. Therefore, we are exposed to fundamental differences as strands dismiss each other's approach as a threat to one's cultural development. So, there is more diversity.

Finally, there is agreement that minority rights are needed to preserve culture and identity. Liberals can draw on Kymlicka's 'group-differentiated rights' to justify this whilst pluralist similarly argue the 'recognition' that comes from minority rights is needed or else risk 'self-hatred' using Fat Taylor for this. Cosmopolitans agree, seeing minority rights as important for allowing individuals to exchange cultures on an equal playing field. So, we see broad agreement in the need for minority rights to stabilize and empower minority cultures and identities for a flourishing multicultural society. However, there is greater unity on recognition. Pluralist can

draw on the Church's reports claim that human rights should be applied with 'cultural sensitivity' to argue that minority rights must extend to these considerations to protect identities. This fundamentally contrast the other strand, views of the human rights as universal regardless of identity. Furthermore, the cosmopolitan view of minority rights as temporary to help bring the global identity would be dismissed by the other strand, at getting at stake the very survival of minority cultures and risking the pain of misrecognition. Therefore, we see how their is greater diversity overall due to fundamentally different realisations.

Overall, there is more diversity than unity on cultural and identity in this ideology. This is because, though there is broad acceptance of the principle of culture as judgemental in need of diversity to develop and rights to prior service, there is overwhelming difference on how to realize these principles.



There is a clear line of argument, a strong comparison of the different strands supported effectively by the thinkers leading to substantiated conclusions.

There is a very high level of political language here, that engages with the key terminology of the specification.

The "extent" is explored.

Level 5



Knowing the key terminology of the specification is an excellent way to ensure that answers can be sharp, focussed and written in the language of the political idea.

Question 6(b)

This was the less popular of the two choices on multiculturalism. The question proved to be accessible and allowed for differentiation.

Stronger answers had a clear direction from the start, and that argument was pursued throughout. The very best answers were able to focus on extent from the introduction, through the paragraphs to the conclusion. They tended to build the structure around a variety of different themes such as:

- agreements around the importance of culture to human nature
- the rejection of assimilation
- support for minority rights
- disagreements over how far to support minority rights
- the reasons for protecting minority rights
- how minority rights fit within a liberal framework

It is also worth noting that there is no cosmopolitan multiculturalist in the specification, although some answers did use Jeremy Waldron here, as an additional thinker.

Weaker answers tended to position the views of the different strands side-by-side, rather than analysing them comparatively, to build up judgements on the extent of agreement or disagreement. They also tended simply to name thinkers as part of a strand, rather than using the key ideas of the thinkers to support the debate between the strands. Answers should focus on the main contributions of the key thinkers to multiculturalism.

One area of confusion that did arise was in liberal multiculturalism, which was often mistaken for liberalism. Liberal multiculturalism argues that the liberal idea of the neutral state is not supportable in practice. It can grant freedom of speech but as soon as it specifies the language for official documents or to be used in schools, it is no longer neutral. Therefore, group-differentiated rights can be supported based on the principle of justice, as well as the principle of autonomy.

Chosen question number: Question 3(a) Question 3(b)
 Question 4(a) Question 4(b)
 Question 5(a) Question 5(b)
 Question 6(a) Question 6(b)
 Question 7(a) Question 7(b)

The fundamental premise of the ideology that is multiculturalism is the achievement of unity through diversity. To achieve this unity, diversity should be protected and strengthened through effective minority rights protections. Fundamentally, all multiculturalists agree that some degree of minority rights provisions should be afforded to in society by the government, and that minority rights promote a cohesive society. However, they disagree over the extent and over the extent and longevity so far to which rights should be protected. In this essay, it shall be argued that there is overall more agreement than disagreement.

All multiculturalists agree on the basic idea that minority groups in society should be protected by being afforded specific rights protections, on the grounds that they promote a cohesive society. Liberal multiculturalists recognize

minority rights as a vital policy tool for a functioning
settled liberal democracy, as they believe that affording
ethnically marginalised and oppressed groups the ability
to maintain some degree of cultural distinctiveness.

The end result of this is strengthened vibrancy of
the market place of ideas, which enables cohesive coexistence
of society through rights allowing recognition. Will Kymlicka,
a liberal multiculturalist, highlights the importance of
minority rights through establishing 3 types of rights protection,
self government rights, polyethnic rights and
special representation. Each of these 3 types of minority rights
is designed to aid in the ^{calculated} ~~gradual~~ integration
of minority groups, creating a mutually beneficial society.
Similarly, pluralist multiculturalists would agree that
minority rights are important in achieving ^a cohesive

society in which minority groups are not forced into
unconsensual assimilation into the majority culture.

This view can be seen through the likes of Modood,
who believed that minority rights are essential to
achieving the best mode of the 4 proposed integration
methods (individual integration, assimilation, multiculturalism
and biculturalism), multiculturalist integration,
as this mode allows minorities to ~~truly~~ maintain
their cultural distinctiveness, omitting the fragmentation
arising from oppression. ~~It holds that multicultural~~
Charles Taylor also ~~but~~ supports this pluralist
multiculturalist view as he agrees that

aid the existence of deep diversity, in which it is important for group identity to thrive freely.

However, multiculturalists are divided over the extent to which minority rights should be implemented, and over how long they will need to be in place. For Liberal Multiculturalists ~~they~~ tolerate ^{and uphold} minority rights within a liberal framework, which is grounded in beliefs about shallow diversity. ~~Thus~~ ^{and} above all, liberal values take priority. For example, liberal multiculturalists like Kymlicka would not tolerate ~~practices or~~ illiberal cultural practices such as FGM or forced marriage, because this directly contradicts the core liberal principle of individual autonomy. Conversely, pluralist multiculturalists like Modood believe minority rights protections have not gone far enough, as multiculturalism should "go beyond Jais, Steel bands and samosas" denoting that rights need to go deeper than mere surface level recognition. This is in line with their ~~other~~ ideas and beliefs around deep diversity: the view that diversity should be promoted above all else. Cosmopolitan multiculturalists differ enormously, as they do not see minority rights as an end. Instead, they believe that minority rights will ~~eventually~~ become largely unnecessary.

When the question is the pursuit of an eventual hybridised global cultural identity. Figures such as Imah Berlin and Gaspard reject liberal universalism, instead arguing for value pluralism reflected in cosmopolitan multiculturalist ~~fact of~~ ^{fact of} ~~dispute for~~ ^{term} long ~~term~~ minority rights.

To conclude, multiculturalists are fundamentally united over the need for minority rights ~~without the~~ to ~~provide~~ obtain an increasingly interconnected and cohesive society, ~~within~~ in which individuals can accept and exercise their cultural distinctiveness. They are divided in the extent to which they should tolerate minority culture, rooted in different views over diversity (LM - shallow, PM - deep, CM - cultural mélange & hybridisation) and acceptance of liberal universalism (LM) vs ~~plus~~ value pluralism (PM & CM) but they fundamentally agree.



There is good coverage of the question here, with excellent depth, balance and debate about the strands supported by the thinkers.

The slightly weaker area is the AO3, although it remains to a good standard because it is generally relevant, with some focussed conclusions.

Level 5



Ensure that the line of argument is maintained throughout, and that mini-conclusions about "extent" are substantiated throughout the essay, leading naturally to the conclusion.

Question 7(a)

This question was the less popular of the pair, but proved to be accessible with clear differentiation between answers.

The question allowed candidates to explore whether nationalism has a common view of the nation-state, although occasionally some weaker answers reverted to a pre planned answer on the state. The most effective strategies looked to shape the essay in terms of the commonalities. The agreements within nationalism on the nation-state, including the right to self-determination, the importance of the nation-state as a key component of political organisation and building block of politics, were discussed, before exploring the disagreements.

Within this, the most effective answers were able to explore the differences between the various strands on the role of the nation-state and what constitutes the nation-state. They introduced much of the key terminology around progressive/regressive, inclusive/exclusive and rational/romantic. The very best answers were able to make substantiated judgements about the extent of the divisions within nationalism over the nation-state.

One area to focus on is structure: it is vital that both agreement and disagreement are covered, with some candidates only developing a debate on disagreement or not using all the main strands and tensions within nationalism. Discussions around unity or agreements tended to be stated, not explored. It is worth noting that unity can be between two or more strands; it does not need to always be the case that all strands agree.

It is also important to use the ideas of key thinkers to support the debate between the different strands/tensions, rather than focussing on a debate between thinkers or simply stating that von Herder is a conservative nationalist. Higher levels of knowledge and analysis can be gained by looking at the contributions of the key thinkers to the debate, rather than stating of which strands they are a part.

One area that needs to be thought about is clearer understanding of the similarities and differences between conservative nationalism and expansionist nationalism.

Chosen question number: Question 3(a) Question 3(b)
 Question 4(a) Question 4(b)
 Question 5(a) Question 5(b)
 Question 6(a) Question 6(b)
 Question 7(a) Question 7(b)

7a)

Nationalism as an ideology broadly encompasses the importance of a sovereign nation state that has the rights to self govern. Different strands of the ideology such as liberals, conservative, expansionist and post colonial nationalists all share slightly different ideas over the nation state and, whilst there are areas of agreement between strands, this essay will argue that overall nationalism is divided in its views of the nation state.

liberal and conservative nationalists are divided to a large extent over the nation state. Liberal nationalists, such as Rousseau have an inclusive and open view on the state. Rousseau would suggest that in order for reduced conflict, nations must be able to cooperate as free sovereign states.

Hessmer believes that in order for one to become a member, one must simply subscribe to the nation's culture and characteristics, thus creating an open and tolerant nation. Individuals make rational decisions and elect a government that governs based on the collective will of that nation state. On the other hand conservative nationalists such as Von Moltke believe in the idea of the Volkgeist. This is the spirit of the nation that is formed through tradition, culture and heritage. Conservative nationalists such as Von Moltke have a more inward view on nation states therefore they believe every unique state has its own Volkgeist and therefore membership is not attained instantly and one must study the Volk (people) of a nation to gain the shared experiences needed to become a member. A small area of agreement is that both strands believe in individual self governing nation states with their own unique identities however the larger disagreement lies in that where liberal nationalists emphasise the importance of nation states working together and being interdependent through organisations such as the EU, conservative nationalists are more inward looking and focus on the importance of their own culture rather than other nation states. Culturalism is therefore a large part of Von Moltke's philosophy because it takes time for one to understand a

nation states culture and gain membership. Overall the disagreement outweighs the agreement because liberal nationalists have a much more outward view of the nation state than conservatives who place greater importance on the value of their own state rather than working with others.

Liberal and expansionist nationalists are divided to a large extent over the idea of a nation state. The liberal view focuses on interdependent equal nation states working together because this will reduce conflict and yield economic benefits. This is pioneered by Mazzini, who focused on Italian unification and the fusion of Italian states to create one individual, free Italian nation state. On the other hand, expansionist nationalists have a much more irrational view on the nation state. They believe that nation statehood is not deserving to all and that ones own nation is superior to others. They do not believe in cooperation and believe that military might and expansion is the only way to express a nations greatness. A smaller area of agreement is that both strands place importance on the the need for a nation state to unite communities and the fact that the government should reflect the nations will. The much larger disagreement however is that liberal nationalists believe in free, equal

and interdependent nation states working together however expansionist nationalists believe some nations are better than others and deserve nation statehood however others would be better off being imperialised and having culture imposed on them. The government is also totalitarian, see Mussolini's Italy, because the people of the nation submit totally to it whereas in liberal nation states the government is elected as this is the most effective way to reflect the nation states collective will. Overall the disagreement outweighs the agreement because liberal nationalists believe in independent nation states equally working together whereas expansionist nationalists are irrational and proud and believe their nation is superior.

Conservative and post colonial nationalists divided on the idea of the nation state. Conservative nationalists believe that the nation state is gradually crafted from the shared experiences, history and culture of that society. They place great importance on the history of the nation as this is what determines its Volkgeist and spirit. Conservative nationalists are also proud looking and place importance on their own culture compared to others. Post colonial nationalists however focus primarily on abolishing all historical and cultural ties to colonial oppressors and therefore wish to form new

societies and states free from colonial oppression. They however are also inward looking and also place importance on their own cultures as anti colonial nationalism forms from the colonies developing a passion and belief for their own culture. This creates a small area of agreement where both strands believe that their own culture is important and that the creation of a unique nation state is needed to embody the spirit of the people. The larger disagreement however, is that conservative nationalists believe the nation state is founded on tradition and heritage whereas this is what post colonial nationalists seek to destroy as they wish to rid themselves of all colonial remnants and form a new nation state. The disagreement outweighs the agreement and therefore they are divided on the idea of the nation state.

Overall nationalism is divided on the idea of the nation state. Whilst there is coherence over the fact that a nation state is the main way for communities to express themselves, there are deep divisions over how membership of the nation state is gained and also how nation states should exist together with liberals taking a much more outward and inclusive view than the other strands.

Overall, it is clear that nationalism is divided to a large extent over the nation state.



This is a very thorough, focussed answer with a clear line of argument throughout.

The essay concentrates on the comparative analysis, making coherent and convincing connections between the strands and thinkers within nationalism.

There is a strong use of the political vocabulary of nationalism.

Answers do not need to be perfect to reach the top of the mark scheme but must meet the criteria of the Level 5 descriptors across all three AOs.

Level 5



The AO2 skill is effected by making connections, for example, common beliefs across some or all strands, or looking for core differences between two or more strands over a particular idea or concept.

Chosen question number:

Question 3(a)

Question 3(b)

Question 4(a)

Question 4(b)

Question 5(a)

Question 5(b)

Question 6(a)

Question 6(b)

Question 7(a)

Question 7(b)

I'm doing 7A.

Nationalism is a set of political ideas based on the concept and advancement of the nation-state. A key area of nationalist thought is in regards to the nation state. Overall, this essay will argue that whilst there is agreement between liberal and conservative nationalists they agree that nationhood is the key to the realisation of freedom and the realisation of human potential, this is overshadowed by the disunity they share over their interpretation of what the nation state should be based on, leading to further disunity regarding who should be included in the nation state and how ethnic minorities should be treated. Therefore, I agree that nationalism is divided in its view on the nation state to a large extent.

One area in which nationalists agree is in regards to Nationalists agree that nationhood/the development of the nationhood is the key to freedom and the realisation of human nature. Liberal nationalists believe that humans are moral and social creatures. In Romantic liberal thinker Giuseppe Mazzini's most famous work 'On nationality' (1852), he argued that humans were powerless without a nation being in a nation. He therefore saw the development

of a nation-state as the key to allowing humans to realise their human nature and communicate a shared will. Conservative nationalism agrees that the nation-state is therefore imperative. Conservative nationalist thinker Gottfried von Herder expressed this similar view towards his home country Germany (pre-unification in 1871), arguing that the German language and history could only be celebrated after they formed the basis of a nation state. ~~This~~ Overall, both branches are strongly united in the idea that the development of a nation state is imperative to fulfill the moral and social potential of humans, challenging my argument that they are ~~divided~~ divided.

Despite this agreement, these branches are strongly divided between a culturalist and pessimistic view of human nature and a rational, optimistic view of human nature, influencing who they believe should be involved in the nation state. Conservative nationalists saw common language, history and ~~culture~~ tradition as the three most important aspects of the nation state. In his 'Origin of language' von Herder expressed that the common German language should be the basis of a nation the nation state. ~~This~~ therefore von Herder ~~therefore~~ saw 'national identity' as the center of the nation. This therefore represents a pessimistic view of human nature as he believed humans were irrational and needed a shared 'national identity' linked to race in order to flourish. Liberal nationalism starkly rejected this view that the nation state should be exclusive and centered around language. Instead, Rousseau's Civic nationalism argued that anyone who shares the values of the nation should be

Included in the nation; ~~reflect~~ This reflects a view that ~~the~~ nation state should not be ~~not~~ constructed more optimistic view of human nature and that the nation state should be inclusive and not constructed around. Overall, it is clear to see that nationalism is starkly divided on ~~the~~ how the nation state should be ~~formed~~ constructed, supporting my argument that they are divided. ~~Corroborate~~

~~This division is corroborated by nationalist's.~~ ~~The differ~~ A key corroborating this disagreement, nationalism is strongly divided over the topic of racialism: 'whether humans should be meaningfully into races within the nation state. Regressive nationalism supports racialism and uses it to justify nativism within the nation state. For example, Charles Maurras ~~the~~ argued that nationalism superiority ~~is~~ more valuable than the worth of individuals any individual and that this can only be achieved by purging the nation state of any 'internal enemies' such as ethnic minorities. Post-colonial nationalists similarly support racialism however did not believe in the encouragement of racial superiority. For example, pan-nationalist ~~the~~ thinker Marcus Garvey wanted all black people to reject the colonial mentality that viewed them as inferior and instead all return to Africa, as can be seen ~~to~~ with his 'Back to Africa' plan in 1920. These branches are therefore in regards to ~~the~~ ^{whether} racialism should encourage racial superiority. ~~Cor~~ To add to this, Liberal nationalism did not support racialism and instead proposed that anyone who shares the values of the nation state should be included. Overall, not only are the branches divided between those who



This answer demonstrates accurate knowledge, which is carefully selected to underpin analysis and evaluation.

There is consistent comparative analysis and mostly relevant evaluation.

There is a good focus on "extent".

Level 4



It is really important to explore why different strands agree, looking for common beliefs.

Explore why they disagree, rather than just placing different strands side-by-side, stating this strand believes this and this strand believes the other.

Question 7(b)

This was the more popular of the two questions, and was generally answered where candidates had left themselves enough time. It was accessible and provided for a wide range of different responses.

This is a broad question, so planning here was crucial to establish a clear essay structure and line of argument. Stronger answers tended to pick key themes to explore, looking at agreements and disagreements between strands over that theme. A good example here would be using the theme of self-determination or the nation to draw out the comparative analysis and reach a judgement about the nature of extent. Stronger answers tended to utilise the key terminology of nationalism to great effect, using a high level of political vocabulary to write shorter, sharper and more focussed answers.

A more problematic approach was essentially to work a way through the different strands/tensions within nationalism. This tended to lead to knowledge-heavy answers that did not provide much in terms of analysis and evaluation. Some answers were distracted by investigating historical examples, rather than focussing on the comparative analysis of ideas within nationalism. It is also key that the answer does provide coverage of both agreement and disagreement.

Weaker answers tended to position the views of the different strands side-by-side, rather than comparatively analysing them to build up judgements on the extent of agreement or disagreement. Weaker answers also tended simply to name thinkers as part of a strand, rather than using the key ideas of the thinkers to support the debate between the strands. There was also a tendency not to include all the strands in the debate, limiting the ability to develop the breadth of argument and draw out comparative analysis to build clear conclusions.

Chosen question number: **Question 3(a)** **Question 3(b)**
 Question 4(a) **Question 4(b)**
 Question 5(a) **Question 5(b)**
 Question 6(a) **Question 6(b)**
 Question 7(a) **Question 7(b)**

Nationalists focus their political ideology on the nation, and how individuals interact with their own nation. To answer this question, the following points must be considered: their views on the nation, human nature and self-determination. Having considered the extent of nationalists' agreement on these points, it is clear that they in fact disagree more than they agree.

There is fundamental agreement between all nationalists that the nation is the centre of the political community. They believe that a nation can be defined by its culture, history, language and religion, and that every individual inherently belongs to a nation. They also believe that nations are a timeless phenomenon, with each nation forming its own government and defining its own territorial borders over time, becoming a nation state. Mazzini argued that it is a people's love and affinity for their culture that 'creates' a nation - this idea is known as romanticism. Nationalists believe that a nation will develop common experiences that allow it to progress and

develop, but this is where some tension emerges. Liberal nationalists favour an inclusive nationalism, whereby any individual can join a nation as long as they subscribe to its shared values and principles, whereas some conservative nationalists follow ^{an} ~~integral~~ nationalism where this integration does not happen as easily. As such, they tend to restrict the membership of a nation to those who are part of its common culture and identity (its *Volksgeist*, as defined by von Herder) - but they are open to people who are willing to immerse themselves in this culture. Therefore, there is very strong agreement between all nationalists over the primacy of the nation and nation state, with some limited disagreement between liberal and conservative nationalists over who is able to join and be part of a nation.

There is, however, significant disagreement over human nature. Liberal nationalists and anti/post-colonial nationalists both favour a positive, progressive view of human nature. This is based on a belief in rationalism, where each human is capable of independent, abstract thought - and is therefore capable of making the best decisions for themselves. As such, these nationalists believe that the state should limit itself to simply providing its citizens with their fundamental rights. This links to Rousseau's social contract, where individuals accept the rule of a government to protect rights; Rousseau believed that it

was this social contract which acted as the fundamental bond between all the members of a nation. This informs a view that all humans should cooperate in order to allow society, and the national identity, to flourish. Therefore, there is strong agreement between liberal and anti/post-colonial nationalists over a progressive human nature. However, this is in strong conflict with conservative and expansionist nationalists, who believe that humans are naturally flawed and irrational, and seek the emotional security of tradition. von Herder believed that this meant that humans were not entitled to free will, and that there should be an authoritative state to provide citizens with the comfort they desire. Regressive and expansionist nationalists diverge further as they believe their nation is superior to that of others, therefore exemplifying a negative, regressive human nature of other nations. Consequently, there emerges a clear chasm between nationalists, as they are divided on human nature between a progressive and regressive view.

There is similar disagreement over self-determination. Liberal and anti/post-colonial nationalists build on their progressive view of human nature by arguing that each nation has the inherent right to decide its own future. Rousseau felt that a nation was based on the 'general will' of its people, therefore declaring that a nation

was free to pursue whatever form~~s~~ it wished, as long as this was compatible with the view of the majority.* Garvey agreed with this theory as he believed that all black people in the world should self-determine and form a pan-African nation, therefore supporting the view that it is down to the people to determine their destiny. However, regressive nationalists build on their chauvinistic views by arguing that only their (superior) nation has the right to self-determine, at the expense of others. As such, this would justify the desire of expansionist nationalists to use their military power to colonise other nations, as they wish to rekindle their own nation's past glories (or their distorted impression of what they were). As a result, this demonstrates that regressive and expansionist nationalists are in significant conflict with liberal and anti/post-colonial nationalists, as they fundamentally reject the rights of other nations to self-determination due to their flawed perception that they are superior. Therefore, it is clear that there is more disagreement than agreement between nationalists over self-determination.

To conclude, there is clearly more to divide nationalists than there is to unite them. While there is unity in the fundamental principle that a nation is the core of the political community, there is considerable deviation over

self-determination and the rights of nations to exist. This stems from deeply different views of human nature, ~~or~~ in particular between progressive and regressive views of this. Therefore, due to the entrenched differences that this produces it can be concluded that there is more disagreement than agreement between nationalists.

* But Mazzini shows there is some tension between liberal nationalists, as he believed that there had to be some real-world limitations on what constitutes a nation, such as size and volatility, which would restrict how many there could be. But overwhelmingly it can still be said that there is agreement within this strand, as they accept nations have a right to self-determine their futures.



The introduction here sets up the themes of the debate and offers a clear direction of travel.

The nature of extent is focussed on throughout the answer, which is a key element of the AO3 descriptor.

The answer has selected knowledge effectively, with perceptive comparative analysis that makes cohesive and coherent connections between ideas and concepts throughout.

There is a very strong use of the political terminology of nationalism.

Level 5



Remember AO3 is worth one third of the marks, and it is important that AO3 does not only appear in your conclusion.

Chosen question number: **Question 3(a)** **Question 3(b)**
Question 4(a) **Question 4(b)**
Question 5(a) **Question 5(b)**
Question 6(a) **Question 6(b)**
Question 7(a) **Question 7(b)**

The statement that there is more disagreement than agreement within nationalism can be seen as true as states like Liberal nationalism is in heavily disagreement as expansionist nationalism, but conservative nationalism and expansionist nationalism are somewhat in agreement on matters, similarly with liberal nationalism and Post-colonial nationalism.

Some experts may argue that there is more disagreement than agreement within nationalism due to states views on human nature, while their still is an aspect of agreement. Both conservative nationalist and expansionist nationalist agree on a pessimistic view on human nature and that humans are irrational and seek security in nation hood. Conservative nationalist's like von Mises ~~believes~~ ~~that~~ rejects the idea of individualism as humans are irrational and strongly believe in patriotism due to people seek to nation still for security. Similarly expansionist's like Maurer ~~is~~ wants to completely destroy individualism as it

i) Once again putting individuals above the nation state and as Macrao believes the nation state is above all people. But on the other hand liberal nationalist and post-ethnic nationalists have a much more positive view on the human nature this attributes to a much nicer society. Liberal nationalist like Rousseau has a strong belief in the government serving the people not the people serving the gov as people are rational. Liberal post-ethnic nationalists like ~~And~~ Morley Gurney also believe that people are rational and has a positive view on human nature this can be seen with his views and support of Burke's pride. These while some aspects of nationalism agree on human nature. Substantively they disagree on 2 strong beliefs ~~that~~ people are irrational while 2 have a very positive view on human nature.

Some critics may argue that there is more disagreement than agreement in nationalism due to the strong views on other nation-states. Expatriate nationalist like Macrao believe in a very deterministic view on other nation states, a view that his nation state is better and other people have no right and ~~to~~ should his nation state should

rate are them. While fundamentally disagree with this (i) Liberal nationalism and post-colonialism as both strands believe in self-determination. Liberal nationalist (like Rousseau strongly believe in self-determination of nation states and that as the people of nation they should choose if they want their nation state to interact with others or both nation states gain. While post colonial nationalisms like Nancy Grey also believe in self-determination while also believe in Pan-Africanism as one nation states should cooperate to ~~to~~ create a safe haven against colonial rule. There are other significant (ethical disagreements on the view of other nation states as well.

2) Strands are in agreement on self-determination the matter of whether it is, different and central strand vastly disagree with the other two. Seeing readers about others.

Furthermore there is more disagreement than agreement in nationalism as strands also fundamentally disagree on the viability of their nation states. Conservatism nationalism like von Mises believes that culture and language only people together which is the both sides, but he also wrote that if you are a non-german speaker then you are

completely excluded from the Volkstaat, those with
conservative nationalist like can't be any exclusive.
Strongly expansionist like Maxrod can be any exclusive
as they see other nation states as having no
right and being below them and wanting to
dominate them for their nation-state goals, as also
national expansionists like Maxrod can be any exclusive. But
on the other hand Liberal nationalist like Rousseau
are any inclusive believing in civic nationalism they
can individual party their nation state based
on shared right and values already agreed to join
any nation state. While post-colonial nationalism are
inclusive they are not as inclusive as Liberal nationalism
as ~~the~~ post-colonial nationalism do believe in
inclusivity but only if the individuals or other
nation states are also anti-colonial. These
groups that fundamentally strands do agree but
even when they do agree on matters the extent
to which they agree vary, so only even small
disagreement

In conclusion ~~so~~ fundamentally their is more
disagreement than agreement in nationalism, as
there is such a vast range of opinions, this
can be seen with expansionist like Maxrod and
Liberal nationalist like ~~the~~ Rousseau and so on

a large range of views on ~~the~~ matters like human
rights they suddenly massively disagree, but if
you're inside of nationalism we see somewhat of
agreement between groups like conservative nationalism
and expansionist on matters like internationalism but they
even disagree to the extent of internationalism so
what we see agreement that is still a significant
level of disagreement. Therefore the view that
that it may disagree more than agreement within
nationalism is probably correct due to strands
being on two opposite ends, being expansionist and
liberal nationalism.



This answer is structured thematically. It looks at agreement and disagreement within nationalism, over three different themes, allowing for a high level of comparative analysis.

Political terminology is selected effectively and utilised, allowing for a sharp and focussed answer.

Level 5



A strong understanding of the core principles and ideas of nationalism, as well as the key terminology, is so important because it allows candidates to write with confidence about the key debates raised by the questions.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Timing is crucial: leave enough time to do justice to the non-core ideas section. Essays on non-core political ideas can be shorter and more effective by deploying the key vocabulary and terminology of that political idea.
- Planning remains vital in source-based essays; the better answers were able to pair-up arguments from the source and use them to generate a sense of debate and clear line of argument throughout. Planning is vital if your introduction is going to deliver that clear line of argument from the start.
- Select relevant evidence carefully, in particular contemporary evidence. This is vital to building effective analysis and substantiated judgements in all questions on UK Government. Contemporary evidence can be placed in context by comparing it with historical evidence.
- Focus on the key words in the question; it might be worth highlighting them or underlining them to ensure that you remain focussed on them throughout your answer.
- Write short introductions and conclusions to frame the essay. Conclusions should be the 'post-match review', taking in the entire picture to outline succinctly the key answer to the question, why that answer is justified and why that answer is true now but might change depending upon....
- Be able to define and utilise key political vocabulary, including key terminology from the specification.
- In essay questions, focus on answering the question, not reproducing a pre-planned answer.
- Build effective evaluation throughout essays. This relies on arguing to a conclusion, rather than merely stating a conclusion; convince the reader why your view defeats the opposing view.
- In non-core ideas, it is vital to focus on areas of agreement and disagreement, and build up a sense of the 'extent' of those agreements and disagreements. Utilise all of the strands, where appropriate. It is better to support the debate with the key contributions of the thinkers than simply to state that a thinker is from one strand or another.
- Candidates need a strong focus on the core principles and ideas of non-core ideas, and the ability to define and use the key terminology from the specification.

Grade boundaries

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