
A-LEVEL POLITICS

7152/3

Report on the Examination

7152

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General

As was the case in 2019, the vast majority of students answered all sections of the paper and students generally managed to allocate an adequate amount of time to each question. As in previous years there was an imbalance in the optional ideologies answered by students, with Nationalism and Feminism being popular topics and Multiculturalism and Ecologism being answered on a small proportion of papers.

Students generally had well-structured answers, providing 3 clear points in their 9 mark answers, on the vast majority of occasions setting them out in individual paragraphs. In both the extract questions and optional essay questions, stronger answers balanced their arguments appropriately and came to sustained conclusions, typically using a discrete final paragraph to set out their evaluation.

Question 1

This question was the least convincingly answered of the three shorter answer questions. Those students that scored high marks were able to provide clearly distinct points, such as the optimistic view that socialists held, the rationality and equality of humans, the extent to which capitalism corrupted them and how well some social democrats and third way thinkers thought humans could harness capitalism. Students were able to cite the full range of key thinkers as examples to illustrate their points. Weaker answers tended to either repetitively explain points that they had made (for example all socialist ultimately think humans are fraternal in their nature), or explained socialist (especially Marxist) theory at length, meaning that their answers lacked the focus required to access higher marks.

Question 2

Students were able to raise a wide range of points, typically referring to Locke's social contract theory and the state's role in protecting natural rights, the concept of negative rights and Mill's harm principle, more modern conceptions of positive freedom and the works of Wollstonecraft and Friedan with regards to women's liberty. Responses that obtained higher marks were able to reflect how these forms of liberty were protected or advanced by the state. Responses at lower levels tended to identify different types of freedom with some confusion as to what they entailed.

Question 3

Students gave a wide variety of points such as Burke's conception of an organic society, often quoting 'A partnership between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born'. Answers that scored highly typically explained and analysed the institutions that conservatives defend, such as the monarch, the established church and the nuclear family. Responses that got lower marks either repeated points about Oakeshott and Burke's defence of tradition or did not provide examples as to how this could manifest itself in society and the state. Hobbes and his defence of hierarchy in the name of order was sometimes explained and analysed effectively in relation to the monarchy, though weaker answers often failed to explain how Leviathan could be related to tradition.

Question 4

Most students who answered this question identified that the arguments presented by Rand were from the new right strand of conservative thinkers of the late 20th century, and that Oakeshott's arguments were from a more traditional strand of conservatism that had the support of many one-nation conservatives at the time. A far smaller proportion reflected on the influences that led to these views discussing the historical context at the time, such as Rand's experience of

communism in Russia or Oakeshott's experience of inter-war and post war Britain. Most students were able to identify that there was general agreement in both extracts regarding the need for the state to provide order, and that there was disagreement regarding the extent to which the state should have a wider role in society and the economy. Responses that achieved the higher levels were able to accurately analyse why, as presented in the extracts, often using parallels with other conservative thinkers. Responses at lower levels either did not utilise information provided by the extracts or tended to drift into explanations of other thinkers that were not directly relevant to arguments in the extracts. Some of the most sophisticated answers also reflected on the differences for the basis for the state; identifying that Rand was advocating for a "social contract", whereas Oakeshott viewed the state as an ongoing, more pragmatic entity in maintaining order.

Question 5

This answer was a popular optional question, and elicited a wide range of responses. Almost all students were able to identify that the concept of a nation would often be supported by culture or tradition, with many students citing Von-Herder's ideas of shared language. More successful students explained the concept of Volksgeist in more detail, citing modern examples such as Welsh nationalism. Many students were also able to refer to the work of Mazzini and similarly were able to explain how the creation of a nation required a shared identity based often on culture and traditions. Students were also often able to reflect on how Maurras' analysis of the French state required a chauvinist view of the cultural superiority of one nation over another, with stronger responses applying this logic to Russian motivation and justifications for the war with Ukraine. A common weakness in responses that scored less well was a lack of balance in their answer. In the higher levels, there was often discussion of the republican goal of nationalism, and its role in removing Monarchical and aristocratic elites. This often led to interesting discussions around civic nationalism and pride in the institutions of governmental systems such as the US constitution.

Question 6

This was the most popular option. Students were often able to reflect on ways in which the feminist movement had sought to advance the rights of women. It was notable that a number of students cited the work of Wollstonecraft as an example of this, which demonstrated a synoptic approach as she is categorised as a liberal thinker in the specification. Students were able to access a wide range of thinkers. Answers in higher levels often reflected that feminism has increasingly moved beyond foundational equality and that societal change was required at the expense of patriarchal norms. Answers at lower levels tended to simply assert key thinkers' ideas without reflecting the impact this had on gender difference or women's rights. A frequent issue with responses that achieved lower marks was a lack of balance. Answers that scored highly were able to challenge the premise of the question, often citing the works of Rowbotham and bell hooks, discussing the effects of capitalism and intersectionality on inequality.

Question 7

This was by far the least popular option. In a minority of the answers, it was not clear if the students had undertaken study of the topic. Lower level responses for this question did not address the key thinkers with confidence, if they were mentioned at all. Stronger answers were able to reflect the tensions between key thinkers, with many citing the work of Isaiah Berlin in contrast to the ideas of Parekh.

Question 8

A wide range of responses were elicited by this question. Answers at higher levels were able to give detailed accounts as to how the key thinkers in the specification expected the state to be replaced, reflecting that the communalism of Proudhon was peaceful in its nature. This was often contrasted with the more explicitly revolutionary path proposed by Kropotkin and Bakunin. Answers that scored less well at times tended to become overly focused on the ideas of Marx to the extent that it precluded the use of the key thinkers mentioned explicitly in the specification for this topic. The majority of students concluded that anarchists did advocate revolution as a method for removing the state, with those at higher levels additionally considering if it was the only method that could achieve success.

Question 9

This question was rarely attempted although it was notable that numbers have increased since 2019. The majority of students were able to identify that there were differing views between light and dark green thinkers. At higher levels, students were often able to identify the criticisms of sustainability as a concept. Responses that scored less well tended to work through each key thinker and explain their attitude to sustainability. At times, some responses in middle and lower levels focused less on sustainability as a concept and tended to give a narrative account of each key thinkers' ideas.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.