



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED

General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit A2 1
Comparative Government



* AGP11*

[AGP11] Assessment

TIME

2 hours 15 minutes.

Assessment Level of Control:

Tick the relevant box (✓)

Controlled Conditions	
Other	

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Write your Centre Number and Candidate Number on the Answer Booklet provided.
Choose **either Option A**: The United States of America and the United Kingdom
or Option B: The Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

From your chosen option answer **all six** questions, the **four** in Section A and the **two** in Section B.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

The total mark for this paper is 100 marks.

Quality of written communication will be assessed in Questions **3, 4, 6(a)** and **6(b)**.

Figures in brackets printed down the right-hand side of pages indicate the marks awarded to each question or part question.

ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

You are advised to take account of the marks for each part question in allocating the available examination time. Study the Source before attempting to answer Questions 2 and 4 and refer to the Source in your answers.

Option A: A Comparative Study of the Government and Politics of the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK)

Answer **all six** questions, the **four** in Section A and the **two** in Section B

Section A: The Government and Politics of the USA

Read the Source below and refer to it in your answers to Questions 2 and 4.

Source

Critics of Congress argue that it has become a negative influence within the US political system. Congress was intended to act as a check on executive power, under the system of checks and balances. Critics argue that Congress now exceeds this role, preventing presidents from taking necessary and desirable actions. For example, President Obama's attempts to extend gun controls were defeated, despite widespread popular support for reform. One reason for Congress acting to frustrate presidential aims is the alarming growth in the power of lobby groups which are able to "buy" Members of Congress. On the other hand, there are those who argue that presidents have an enormous range of powers to overcome Congressional opposition.

- 1 What is meant by the term "split-ticket voting"? Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]
- 2 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, identify and explain **two** ways in which lobby groups can influence Members of Congress (Source, lines 7 and 8). [10]
- 3 Explain how the Senate can influence Presidential appointments. [15]
- 4 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, assess the view that Congress prevents the President from taking "necessary and desirable actions". [30]

Section B: A Comparative Study of the Government and Politics of the USA and UK

5 Identify and explain **two** differences in the scrutiny powers of the House of Commons and the House of Representatives. [10]

6 **Either**

(a) Assess the view that American Presidents face fewer constraints on their powers than British Prime Ministers. [30]

Or

(b) "In the US, the executive has little or no control over legislation. In the UK, the executive has total control." Assess the validity of this statement. [30]

Option B: A Comparative Study of the Government and Politics of the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK)

Answer **all six** questions, the **four** in Section A and the **two** in Section B

Section A: The Government and Politics of the Republic of Ireland

Read the Source below and refer to it in your answers to Questions 2 and 4.

Source

It has long been the case that the biggest threat to any Taoiseach comes not from other parties but from within their own. One illustration of this is that when Varadkar became Taoiseach he moved swiftly to appoint Simon Coveney, his main rival within Fine Gael, to a senior Cabinet position. This was widely interpreted as an example of collective responsibility being used to silence potential opponents. The power of appointment remains a major weapon that enables any Taoiseach to control their government. However, others believe that this power is severely constrained in circumstances of coalition government. Modern Taoisigh are more often controlled by their governments rather than the reverse.

- 1 What is meant by the term “Independent TD”? Support your answer with a relevant example. [5]
- 2 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, identify and explain **two** ways in which the Taoiseach’s power of appointment can be used to control members of the government (Source, lines 5 and 6). [10]
- 3 Explain the mechanisms by which the judiciary can have an impact on government policy. [15]
- 4 With reference to the Source and any other relevant material you have studied, assess the view that the Taoiseach is controlled by the government rather than the reverse. [30]

**Section B: A Comparative Study of the Government and Politics of the
Republic of Ireland and the UK**

5 Identify and explain **two** reasons why TDs spend more time performing their representative role than MPs. [10]

6 Either

(a) “In the Republic of Ireland, the executive has little or no control over legislation. In the UK, the executive has total control.” Assess the validity of this statement. [30]

Or

(b) Assess the view that, while the Oireachtas has become a more effective scrutiny body, this is not true of the UK Parliament. [30]

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTION PAPER

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