



2009 Politics

Higher – Paper 1

Finalised Marking Instructions

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Higher

Paper 1

Question 1

Award up to 3 marks for arguments for and up to 3 marks for arguments against introducing compulsory voting into the UK.

For full credit candidates must make use of both sources A and B to provide arguments for and against. If source B is not used a maximum of 4 marks may be awarded.

For

Source A

- Introducing compulsory voting would make the results more representative of the population and enhance the legitimacy of the government.
- It might encourage the electorate to pay more attention to the issues and raise the level of political awareness and enable the political parties to concentrate on engaging the electorate.
- Voting is a responsibility and compulsory voting would ensure voters carry out their civic duty to vote.

Source B

- Turnout rates for countries using compulsory voting in parliamentary elections (especially Australia and Belgium) are generally higher than those who do not use compulsory systems (France, Germany and the UK.)

Against

Source A

- It removes the right of citizens not to vote which should be as much a right as the right to vote.
- It would pose practical problems such as difficulty to enforce and which groups should be exempt, as well as what should be the level of any fines imposed so that they do not unduly penalise the poor.
- It could result in ill-considered ballots being cast by apathetic voters who may not have considered the issues.
- Low turnout may be caused not by the voters but as a result of a cynical media and a failure of the political parties to sufficiently motivate the electorate.

Source B

Turnout in Greece where voting is compulsory is only 76% whereas in Germany it is 77%

Question 2

Award up to 14 marks from the following

For full marks candidates must refer to all sources and say to what extent the evidence supports the statement made.

“The 2007 elections to the Scottish Parliament were a triumph for democracy and also witnessed a marked increase in voter participation.”

For full credit candidates must make use of both sources C and D for this part of the statement.

Source C

It is not correct to say that the results represented a triumph for democracy as there was a substantial increase in spoilt ballot papers which was attributed to voter confusion caused by holding local council elections on the same day. In 15 constituencies the spoilt ballots could have altered the outcome.

More inclusive Parliament with the election of first Asian MSP.

Source D

Candidates may agree that there has been an increase in voter participation compared to the 2003 election and this increase has occurred in every region but there is little evidence of a significant increase in turnout. Overall turnout has risen by only just over 2% since 2003 (in some regions it is much smaller) and it is still well below the turnout levels recorded in 1999.

The evidence does not appear to support this part of the statement. Candidates who identify that there was an increase in participation though not a marked increase should also be credited.

“The election represented a significant victory across all parts of Scotland for the SNP whilst Labour and the Liberal Democrats emerged as the night’s biggest losers.”

(note: some candidates may choose to break the above statement down into two parts)

Candidates may agree to some extent with this part of the statement and use the following to support:

Source C

The elections were a major blow to Labour as it was the first time it had not won a Scottish election since 1955 so supporting the view that they were the night’s biggest losers.

Source E

The results were a significant victory for the SNP- the SNP ‘won’ the election as it emerged as the largest party in the parliament and made important gains amongst both the constituency MSP’s (more than doubling its numbers from 9-21) and in the regional list sections (up 8 from 18 to 26).

Source F

The SNP saw significant increases in its share of the vote in both the constituencies and regional lists. It was also the only party to increase its votes in both sections.

Labour was the only one of the top 5 parties to see a reduction in its vote in both constituency and regional sections –confirming that they were the main losers.

Candidates may **disagree** to some extent with this part of the statement and use the following to support:

Source E

Labour and the Liberal Democrats did not lose a large number of seats in total – Labour lost only 4 and the Lib Dems only fell by 1- the smaller parties were the night’s biggest losers in terms of seats lost – the SSP lost all 6 of their seats, the Green lost most of their seats (down from 7 to only 2) and only 1 ‘Others’ was returned (down from 4).

Labour was still only 1 seat behind the SNP therefore the SNP victory was narrow rather than significant.

Source F

The Liberal Democrats actually saw an increase in their share of the vote in the constituency section whilst in the regional lists the Conservatives and Greens lost a higher percentage of the votes than either Labour or the Liberal Democrats so challenging the view that it was Labour and the Liberal Democrats who were the night’s biggest losers.

Source G

The results by region did not show a significant victory for the SNP across all parts of Scotland. Although the SNP was the largest party in 3 regions, in a further 2 regions they were level with Labour and Labour had the most MSPs in a further 3 regions.

In Glasgow and West of Scotland the SNP was significantly behind the numbers gained by Labour. So they did not achieve a significant victory across all parts of Scotland.

There is some evidence to support the view but only to a limited extent.

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]