

Specimen Response for Study Theme 1C

STUDY THEME 1C: POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR POLICIES (INCLUDING THE SCOTTISH DIMENSION)

Question

With reference to at least **two** political parties:

To what extent do their policies on **two** of the following differ?

Education Law and Order Taxation

(15 marks)

Response

The policies of Labour and the Conservatives have both similarities and differences. Even Labour and Scottish Labour have similarities and differences. Their policies on law and order and the similarities and differences between them are more apparent.

There is a major difference between Labour in Scotland and Labour in England and Wales. Scottish Labour believe there should be no city academies whereas Labour in England wish the creation of 200 state funded city academies. However there are similarities between the two. Scottish Labour believe the curriculum should be broadened and that head teachers should decide how to spend the money. Similar to Scotland Labour in England propose to give schools greater freedom to change the curriculum, borrow money and set teachers pay. So even between the same party there are differences and similarities in policies.

Similarly with the Conservatives in Scotland and England there are lots of similarities between them. For example Conservatives in Scotland wish to empower head teachers to exclude violent or disruptive pupils. This is similar to Conservatives in England and Wales where they want to abolish appeals panels for disruptive pupils. Another similarity is that they both want to promote specialist schools or make extra school places, 600,000 in England, to give parents more choice. However there are differences as in Scotland for example they wish to give schools greater freedom to set their own priorities whereas it doesn't say that it wants to do this in England and also in England they want every school to be given grant maintained status but that is not wanted in Scotland. So in the Conservative party in Scotland and England there are both similarities and differences.

However between Labour and Conservatives as a whole there are some similarities and some differences. Labour wish to spend £77 billion by 2009/10 whereas the Conservatives aim to spend £62 billion on education by 2009/10. This is the first main difference between the two parties. Apart from spending the Conservatives believe that their 'right to choose' package will work but Labour do not believe in this kind of choice but they would let good schools expand if they don't do anything to harm other schools. However there are similarities between the Labour and Conservative parties in that they both support independent schools. Labour wish to set up 200 state funded city academies as a way of improving schools that have 'failed' whereas the Conservatives wish to give state funding of about £5500 per pupil to independent schools. These are different ways of trying to help schools to help the pupils. As you can see there are major differences but some similarities between the Labour party and the Conservative party as a whole.

Another area where the Labour party and the Conservative party have differences but some similarities is Law and Order.

One similarity between the two parties is that Labour is increasing the number of police officers and community wardens who work in the community and focus on specific local priorities. The Conservatives aim to do much the same but in a different way. They back Zero tolerance with more police officers to enforce a 'more visible' crime fighting presence. However there is a few differences between the parties. Conservatives would wish to introduce stiffer sentences for drug dealers and they will ensure that criminals actually serve the sentence given by the courts. Labour however wish to extend electronic tagging and restriction of liberty orders with the extension of Anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOS).

As you can see there are lots of similarities but even more differences between the Labour and Conservative parties in Education and law and order. They both want to improve education and tackle crime but go about it in different ways.

Marking Instructions for Study Theme 1C

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Developed, exemplified, balanced and analytical answers may refer to:

Many areas of agreement, with a general consensus over extra funding for schools, reducing crime and keeping taxes for most about the same.

Areas of difference include:

Education – England and Wales

Labour

- ◆ schools given greater freedom to change curriculum, borrow money and set teachers' pay
- ◆ creation of 200 state-funded independent city academies; good schools can expand as long as they don't harm others
- ◆ local authorities recast as quality controllers, not direct suppliers; Labour to spend £77 billion by 2009/10.

Conservative

- ◆ up to 600 000 extra school places created to give parents more choice ("Right to Choose" package)
- ◆ independent schools to get state funding to about £5500 per pupil; every school would be given grant-maintained status; schools able to set their own admissions policies and appeals panels for expelled pupils would be abolished; Conservatives to spend £62 billion overall by 2009/10

Liberal Democrat

- ◆ higher spending on education; smaller class sizes; scrap tuition fees

Education – Scotland

Labour

- ◆ no city academies; schools to remain under local authority control although more spending devolved to head teachers; curriculum to be broadened and made more flexible to cope with individual needs; school expansion plans and budgets still to be governed by local authorities; possible new "experimental" schools to try out new ideas such as different school days or non-professional teachers

Conservative

- ◆ empower head teachers to exclude violent or disruptive pupils; encourage more choice of specialist schools; give schools greater freedom to set their own priorities

Liberal Democrat

- ◆ extend childcare schemes; increase out-of-school activities

SNP

- ◆ guarantee nursery place of at least 16 hours per week for every 3 and 4 year old; progressively cut class sizes; greater specialisation within comprehensive system; abolish Graduate Endowment Scheme and replace student loans with student grants

Law and Order

Labour

- ◆ community policing with dedicated policing teams of officers and community support officers focused on local priorities; increase the number of police officers; extend electronic tagging and restriction of liberty orders, parental orders to make parents responsible for their children

Conservative

- ◆ stiffer sentences for drug dealers and fast track prosecution; back zero tolerance; a “more visible” crime fighting presence; take persistent young offenders off the streets; ensure criminals actually serve the sentences given out by courts

Liberal Democrat

- ◆ oppose ID cards; 1000 extra police officers; more resources to crime prevention/reduce re-offending

SNP

- ◆ oppose ID cards; more community policing; encourage alternatives to prison; fairer fines regime

Taxation

Labour

- ◆ no rise in personal taxation; increased public expenditure to be paid from efficiency savings

Conservative

- ◆ overall commitment to reducing tax burden but review of taxation and scope for tax cuts if possible

Liberal Democrat

- ◆ higher taxes on wealthiest (over £100 000 pa); local income tax to replace Council Tax

SNP

- ◆ replace Council Tax with local income tax; introduction of a more progressive tax system

- ◆ other relevant points.

‘Achieve’ answers must feature both knowledge and understanding and analysis.

Comments on Specimen Answer to Study Theme 1C

This is an excellent answer – even although the last sentence in the opening paragraph is a bit confused! The candidate has clearly addressed the question and has a very strong input on the Scottish dimension, detailing the extent to which the UK and Scottish parties differ as well as the extent to which the parties differ from each other.

The policies are current – at the time of writing – and the examples given are accurate and developed. There is evaluation and analysis.

There may be a lack of balance in that the candidate has concentrated more on education but the compensation is the strong input on the Scottish dimension.

15/15