

Making Synoptic Links

EDEXCEL POLITICS A-LEVEL

What is synoptic assessment?

- Synoptic assessment requires students to work across different parts of a qualification and to show their accumulated knowledge and understanding of a topic or subject area.
- Synoptic assessment enables students to show their ability to combine their skills, knowledge and understanding with breadth and depth of the subject.
- Not making synoptic links in your answers can limit the number of marks you are able to achieve.

AS Paper 2 (UK Government)

- This paper assesses synopticity in Section C in the essay questions, which require students to draw on relevant knowledge and understanding from Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. Marks are limited to 24/30 without synoptic links.

AND EITHER

- 2** (a) Evaluate how far Parliament retains sole sovereignty within the UK political system.

In your answer you should draw on relevant knowledge and understanding of the study of Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.

(30)

OR

- (b) Evaluate the extent to which the UK government's control over Parliament has reduced in recent years.

In your answer you should draw on relevant knowledge and understanding of the study of Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.

(30)

(Total for Question 2 = 30 marks)

AS Paper 2 (UK Government)

- Within your answer you should reference any ideas of Political Participation (electoral systems, political parties, participation and voting behaviour).

- **“Prime Ministers are able to successfully control the political agenda.” How far do you agree with this view of Prime Ministerial power?**
 - Where there are divisions within a party, a Prime Minister can bring forward legislation that may be different to the party’s traditions, such as Cameron and the legislation of gay marriage. (link to Political Parties)
 - Prime Ministers are able to call referenda whenever they want to, showing their control of the political agenda (link to Electoral Systems).
 - If a Prime Minister has a large majority, they will be able to exercise more control in parliament. (link to Voting Behaviour)

A-Level Paper 2 (UK Government)

- This paper assesses synopticity in Section A in the non-source questions, which require students to draw on relevant knowledge and understanding from Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. Marks are limited to 24/30 without synoptic links.

AND EITHER

- 2** (a) Evaluate how far Parliament retains sole sovereignty within the UK political system.

In your answer you should draw on relevant knowledge and understanding of the study of Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.

(30)

OR

- (b) Evaluate the extent to which the UK government's control over Parliament has reduced in recent years.

In your answer you should draw on relevant knowledge and understanding of the study of Component 1: UK politics and core political ideas. You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.

(30)

(Total for Question 2 = 30 marks)

A-Level Paper 2 (UK Government)

- Within your answer you should reference any ideas of Political Participation (voting systems, political parties) and/or core ideologies (Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism).

- **“Evaluate the extent to which the Executive’s control over Parliament has reduced in recent years.”**
 - the voting system for Westminster elections means that minority governments are very rare, meaning that the Executive is more likely to hold absolute control. (link to Voting Systems)
 - Increasing scrutiny of the Executive by Parliament can be an example of ‘limited government’ as written by John Locke. (link to Liberalism)
 - The way in which the Executive and Parliament interact has remained mostly the same over the years, due in part to the usual majority government that is elected, which reflects traditional values of society as written by Edmund Burke. (link to Conservatism)

A-Level Paper 3A (Comparative Politics: USA)

- This paper assesses synopticity in Sections A and B as students are required to draw on relevant knowledge and understanding from Component 1: UK politics and Component 2: UK government. Marks are limited to 9/12 without synoptic links.

EITHER

1 (a) Examine the ways in which the US and the UK Constitutions are similar. (12)

OR

(b) Examine the factors that create a two-party dominance both in the US and in the UK. (12)

(Total for Question 1 = 12 marks)

A-Level Paper 3A (Comparative Politics: USA)

- Within your answer you should reference any relevant comparisons between the UK and US political systems and ideas.

- **“Examine the factors that create a two-party dominance both in the UK and US.”**
 - MPs and Congressmen are simply re-elected as people tend to know the party they are voting for, rather than the individual. (link to Paper 1: Democracy and Participation)
 - Both countries use a First Past the Post system which usually collapses to a two-party system after several electoral cycles. (link to Paper 1: Voting Systems)
 - Increasing powers of third parties are reflected in major parties changing their policies, such as the Conservatives reacting to UKIP and Republicans reacting to the Tea Party. (link to Paper 2: Political Parties)

A-Level Paper 3B (Comparative Politics: Global)

- This paper assesses synopticity in Section B as students are required to draw on relevant knowledge and understanding of core political ideas from Component 1. Marks are limited to 9/12 without synoptic links.

2 Analyse the divisions regarding human nature that exist between realists and liberals.

In your answer you must discuss any relevant core political ideas.

(12)

A-Level Paper 3B (Comparative Politics: Global)

- When answering Question 2, you should refer to both Realism and Liberalism (if relevant) and any other relevant ideologies from Paper 1 (Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism).
- **“Analyse the divisions between realists and liberals regarding human nature.”**
 - Hobbes’ view on human nature, which is developed by realists who believe that states reflect human nature in that they are selfish and have a restless desire for power. (Conservatism).
 - Liberals would support Socialist thinking, as humans are co-operative and work for the common good. (Socialism).
 - Mutual co-operation in both economic and practical terms, as John Locke wrote about limited government which could result in more co-operation between states. (Liberalism).

Your Turn! (USA Politics Option)

Write down any links to UK Politics/Core Ideas for the following questions from Paper 2:

- Evaluate the view that Parliament is a democratically representative establishment.
- Evaluate the extent to which the Supreme Court has become too powerful in recent years.

Write down any links to Paper 1 for the following questions from Paper 3A:

- Analyse the similarities between the powers of the UK Prime Minister and US President.
- Analyse the similarities and differences between the effectiveness of pressure groups in the UK and USA.

Your Turn! (Global Politics Option)

Write down any links to UK Politics/Core Ideas for the following questions from Paper 2:

- Evaluate the view that Parliament is a democratically representative establishment.
- Evaluate the extent to which the Supreme Court has become too powerful in recent years.

Write down any links to Core ideas for the following questions from Paper 3B:

- Analyse the areas of agreement between realists and liberals about the likelihood of war.
- Analyse the arguments presented by liberals and realists about the anarchical society.