

POLITICS I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. If the way for liberal states to handle religious diversity is to have no established religion, what policy should they follow for linguistic justice?
2. 'It is a safe assumption that any term that can be embraced as warmly by the Clinton administration and the European commission as "civil society" has been, threatens no important vested interests in the rich world' [DAVID RIEFF]. Is it?
3. If transparency has to be traded off against other values, how and by whom should it be decided when transparency should give way to secrecy in a democratic state?
4. On what principles should a state found its policy on the scope of choice in public services?
5. What are the proper rewards for politicians in a democracy?
6. 'Core voter' or 'activist' theories of party competition hold that parties place themselves closer to the ideological positions of their core supporters than median voter theory would predict. Are these theories predictively superior to the traditional Downsian model of party competition?
7. 'The Good Friday Agreement was a way of institutionally entrenching sectarianism in Northern Ireland rather than a way of weakening sectarianism.' Discuss.
8. Does New Public Management accentuate or diminish democratic accountability?
9. Why did European communism collapse when it did, and why did Asian communism remain intact?
10. Would an essay on why some governments redistribute more than others have arrived at the same conclusions irrespective of whether it was written in the 1930s, the 1960s or the 1990s?
11. Does climate change improve the prospects of global governance?
12. If suicide terrorism has achieved relatively modest goals (in the form of major concessions by the states at which it is aimed) over the past two decades, why has its incidence grown over that period?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. If in experimental settings the vast majority of subjects rejected Rawls' maximin principle, what bearing would that have on the validity of his 'veil of ignorance' approach?
2. 'I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being' [J.S. MILL, *On Liberty*]. Is this view consistent with Mill's principle of liberty?
3. Evaluate the rational choice critique of the state.
4. If subsidiarity is a valid principle for organizing public services, how should its lower bounds be established?
5. What risks should the state try to equalize?
6. What difference does the proportion of female officeholders make to the conduct of public affairs?
7. Is the United States less democratic than Britain for allowing paid political advertising on television?
8. 'Distrust may be the problem [of governance], but trust is not the solution' [MARGARET LEVI]. Discuss.
9. Does the pursuit of integrity in government by formal rules and bureaucratic procedures contribute to government inefficiency rather than corruption-free government?
10. Are countries at greater risk of civil war when the state is controlled by an ethnic minority?
11. 'Far from showing the irrelevance of realist approaches to international relations, Africa's post-Cold War international relations show the strong predictive power of such approaches.' Discuss.
12. Why is American military power not decisive in international relations?

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1. Are transparency and accountability Siamese twins, matching parts or an awkward couple?
2. How should liberal states respond to individuals who refuse the political, reject the politics of citizens' rights and actively choose to be second-class citizens?
3. If cultural theory is political science, what kind of 'science' is it?
4. 'Lattice-point analysis cannot explain how coalitions hold ministers accountable.' Discuss.
5. If Britain is Lijphart's paradigm case of majoritarian democracy, why have its policy networks been found to be as fragmented as those of the textbook cases of consensus democracies?
6. 'Contrary to the presumptions of much of the literature on European integration, the EU's largest member-states have no more bargaining power than the average member state in treaty negotiations.' Discuss.
7. 'It will not do simply to exclude valence issues from the discussion of party competition. The people's choice too often depends on them' [STOKES 1963]. Explain and discuss.
8. Why do some international economic negotiations lead to major policy changes while others end in deadlock?
9. Need capitalism lead to democracy?
10. How can we determine the legitimacy of non-governmental organisations?
11. Should I be forced to make provision for my retirement pension?
12. What is meant by juridification of politics and to what extent is the UK now experiencing it?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Is Bernard Grofman correct to call the failure of rational choice theory to explain voter turnout 'the paradox that ate rational choice'?
2. Charles Lindblom claimed in 1965 that democratic systems could be trusted to produce policy outcomes that respect common sense and do not violate important values. Have developments in the last forty years borne out Lindblom's expectations and if so, have these outcomes been produced by the mechanism he specified?
3. 'There is no European country whose church-state arrangements would not be struck down if they were required to meet the non-establishment standards as operated until recently by the US Supreme Court.' Is this statement true and if so how do you account for it?
4. What effect, if any, do social modernization and urbanization have on clientelism in politics?
5. Does federalism limit welfare state development and if so, how and why?
6. Why did Richard Katz writing in 1980 (*A Theory of Parties and Electoral Systems*) argue that democratic states were unlikely to embark on major electoral reform, and why was he so wrong?
7. If the United States emerged as the world's major superpower after the collapse of communism, why did so few 'democratizing' countries emulate the major features of its constitutional model?
8. Why are some member states of the EU keener on further integration than others?
9. What should the state do about hate speech?
10. 'Taken to its logical conclusion, the principle of self-determination would lead to six governments in every street.' How can we avoid this conclusion?
11. When is direct action in pursuit of political ends justified?
12. Can we make a viable distinction between radical and extremist political parties?

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1. How much must libertarians value equality?
2. Are the principles of international justice different from those of justice in the nation state?
3. Of Machiavelli and Hobbes, which is more appropriately described as a political realist?
4. Is collective self-determination a coherent aspiration for communities?
5. 'Ending Communist rule has only rarely involved a major change in political and economic elites.' Is this true? If so, why?
6. Do theories of institutional design rely on motives in politics that explain the behaviour of institutional designers?
7. 'Changes in levels of stated trust in political institutions are of little significance. What matters are changes in levels of revealed trust.' Discuss.
8. 'Blame avoidance by politicians and bureaucrats gets a bad press. But it may do more good than harm.' Discuss.
9. 'International technology regulations and capacity initiatives fail to acknowledge the ungovernability of technological developments in the developing world.' Discuss.
10. Why and how do elements of constitutional government develop in autocracies?
11. Why do systemic theories of international politics so rarely predict conflict short of cataclysmic wars?
12. 'Analysis of cases of suicide terror tells us little or nothing about the association between military occupation and suicide attacks.' Discuss.

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Has a conception of freedom as an absence of dependence on external goods anything to recommend it?
2. When ought we to disobey the law?
3. Are language and culture matters of option luck for immigrant communities?
4. Is the case for humanitarian intervention always an entirely consequentialist one?
5. Why do democratic countries vary considerably in the extent of gender equality achieved in their legislatures?
6. 'Increasing rationalization ... means ... the knowledge or belief that ... one can, in principle, master all things by calculation.' Does Weber's dictum apply to political science and if so, what are the consequences of this knowledge or belief?
7. Why do NGOs and government authorities repeatedly over-estimate victim numbers (especially numbers of orphaned children) by orders of magnitude in natural disasters such as the 2008 Chinese earthquake?
8. Has the distinction between rational choice and other approaches to decision-making fallen apart and if so, does it matter?
9. 'The social position of women in the Middle East is better explained by oil than by religion.' Discuss.
10. Why does parental turnout often emerge as one of the strongest predictors of electoral turnout in young adults?
11. 'Despite the popularity of "swing justice" models, there are good reasons to doubt the applicability of median voter theory to supreme courts.' Discuss.
12. Is partition always worse than the alternatives as a solution to nationalist wars?

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1. Does the United Kingdom now have a written constitution?
2. What do you consider the three most important discoveries in political science in the past hundred years? What are your reasons?
3. Does the Greek financial crisis demonstrate that it was a mistake to institute a currency union in Europe without political union?
4. How has the end of the Cold War affected doctrines of deterrence?
5. Can immigration controls be defended by appeal to freedom of association?
6. How, if at all, does the legitimacy of a state depend on the consent of its citizens?
7. Why has social inequality been increasing in advanced industrial societies?
8. Would public funding for political parties ensure cleaner politics?
9. Are all plausible theories of distributive justice egalitarian?
10. Is political philosophy a branch of ethics?
11. To whom should bureaucrats be accountable?
12. What is wrong with selective education?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Pure majority rule may produce perversely unmajoritarian electoral politics' [DOUGLAS RAE, 1967]. Was he right?
2. Is there a law of unintended consequences?
3. Should I be forced to make provision for my retirement pension?
4. Account for the decline of Social Democracy in Europe.
5. Is judicial review of legislation undemocratic?
6. Do human rights need a philosophical foundation?
7. What effect has the recent financial crisis had on the role of the state?
8. What do terrorists hope to achieve?
9. Is it possible to measure the extent of a person's freedom?
10. Are we obliged to rectify the injustices that our ancestors have committed?
11. Does multiculturalism undermine citizenship?
12. What are the implications for international relations theory of the increasing role of non-state actors in armed conflicts?

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1. Can secularism be defended as a neutral ideal?
2. International law recognizes a right of self-determination. But who should have this right?
3. Is green political ideology conservative or revolutionary?
4. 'Little more than wishful thinking.' Is this a fair comment on international law?
5. 'The final nail in the orientalist coffin.' Is this an appropriate view of the 2011 'Arab spring'?
6. Is hereditary monarchy compatible with the idea of a meritocratic society?
7. Why have reforms aimed at reducing the role of the state in the economy been successful in some cases but not others?
8. 'Five years of Wikileaks have done more for transparency than decades of freedom of information laws.' Discuss.
9. Existing theories of coalition formation focus mostly on the relative size of parties and their ideological compatibility. What outcomes can such theories not explain?
10. 'Those who were bent on transforming bureaucracy have...reinvented it' [ROBERT GREGORY]. Should that be the epitaph for 'New Public Management'?
11. Does the evidence support the argument that ideological factors are much more powerful than economic changes in shaping party-political preferences in Britain?
12. Political science has a long history of importing ideas from other disciplines. What if anything can it export?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. 'Since they have violated the social contract, prisoners should lose the right to vote.' Is this a helpful use of the idea of a social contract?
2. Is 'dignity' a meaningful term? Does it add anything to our understanding of 'respect for autonomy'?
3. 'Laws are always useful to those who possess and vexatious to those who have nothing' [JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU]. Do you agree?
4. Is there such a thing as 'Britishness'?
5. Can we make any useful generalizations about political leadership?
6. Does 'Blue Labour' offer a helpful prospectus for the Labour Party's renewal?
7. 'In a world of sovereign states, humanitarian intervention can only be the exception, not the norm.' Discuss.
8. If party positions on electoral system reform are determined by calculations of seat-maximization, why do changes in electoral systems so often not produce the expected effects?
9. If the 'nudge' approach is normally applied by governments and corporations to shape mass behaviour, can it be usefully applied to increase public control of ruling élites?
10. 'The idea of a "logic of appropriateness," central to the March/Olsen version of new institutionalism, has little value as a theoretical claim.' Discuss.
11. 'Far from bringing Europe's peoples closer together, the EU is driving them apart.' Discuss.
12. 'The regulatory state model can often prove more of a hindrance than a help in the study of regulation, at least in the developing world' [NICOLA PHILLIPS, 2006]. Discuss.