



A-level POLITICS

Paper 2 Government and politics of the USA and comparative politics

Thursday 5 June 2025

Afternoon

Time allowed: 2 hours

Materials

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is **7152/2**.
- Answer **all** questions from Section **A** and Section **B**.
- Answer **either** Question 5 **or** Question 6 from Section **C**.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- Do **not** tear out any part of the book. All work must be handed in.
- If you use more than one answer book, check that you have written the information required on each book.

Information

- The marks for questions are shown in brackets.
- The maximum mark for this paper is 77.

Section A – US Government, Politics and Comparative Theory

Answer questions 1, 2 and 3.

0	1
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Explain and analyse three informal powers of the president.

[9 marks]

0	2
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Explain and analyse three factions within the Democratic Party.

[9 marks]

0	3
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Explain and analyse three ways that rational theory could be used to study the relationships that US presidents and UK prime ministers have with their respective legislatures.

[9 marks]

Section B – Extract Question

Read the extracts below and answer question 4 that follows.

Congress; the broken branch of government?**Extract 1****Is Congress broken?**

The idea that Congress is 'broken' is misleading. Congress is the national government's most democratic political institution. Some may wish to award this distinction to the president, who, of course, can claim to be the only official elected by the people as a whole. Nevertheless, it is Congress that collectively reflects the diversity of the nation. At its core, the congressional policy-making process and its committees and subcommittees hearings are open to the public and to the press. In the contemporary Congress, floor debate is not an empty exercise.

Many of the characteristics of Congress with which Americans are so impatient stem directly from the institution's democratic nature. Members of Congress are elected individually and are likely to bicker, delay, and compromise because they represent a variety of different groups and interests that demand that their perspectives be voiced.

Extract taken from the website Yale University Press blogs, December 2019.

Benjamin Ginsberg and Kathryn Wagner Hill are academics from Yale University.

Extract 2**Our democracy can't work without a functioning Congress.**

Congress is broken. In the Senate, filibuster abuse has repeatedly allowed a minority of senators to frustrate congressional efforts to address the serious issues facing our country. At the same time, Congress as a whole has fallen short in providing strong oversight of the executive branch. When Congress is controlled by the president's party, it often fails to use its authority, looking the other way in the face of potential abuses of power. And when it is controlled by the opposition, partisan investigations often focus more on scoring political points than on uncovering the truth.

The Brennan Center for Justice is urging reforms to create a Congress that works. Senate dysfunction undermines the proper operation of our government – which was meant to function with three branches, not two. We promote reforms to the filibuster rule so that legislative minorities can't paralyse the Senate indefinitely. And we urge Congress to bolster its over-sight role.

Extract taken from an article that appeared on the website of the Brennan Center for Justice, published in October 2020. The Brennan Center is an independent, non-partisan law and policy organisation.

0	4
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Analyse, evaluate and compare the arguments in the above extracts regarding the extent to which Congress is broken.

[25 marks]

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

Section C – Comparative Government and Politics Essay Questions

Answer **either** question 5 **or** question 6.

In your answer you should draw on material from across the whole range of your course of study in politics.

Either

0	5
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'Both the US and UK constitutions are outdated and in need of significant reform.'
Analyse and evaluate this statement.

[25 marks]

or

0	6
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'US pressure groups are more effective than those in the UK in promoting and protecting civil rights and liberties.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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