

Possible conclusion material for pressure group essays

Typical questions:

- In what ways do pressure groups strengthen democracy?
- Why have pressure groups been criticised for hindering the democratic process?
- Why are some pressure groups more powerful than others?
- To what extent do pressure groups promote political participation in the UK?
- Is pressure group politics in the UK better described as pluralist or as elitist?

Consider the possible concluding statements below:

- i. Do you agree with the statement?
 - ii. Do you have the evidence in your notes to back up the assertions made?
-
- Pressure groups strengthen democracy by making up for the lack of consideration of issues not central to political parties' re-election plans through their lobbying and campaigning activities
 - Pressure groups are more representative of the UK population than MPs and can therefore rebalance the lack of representativeness of parliament through their political campaigning and influential activities
 - Only the powerful, rich and well organised pressure groups (typically insider groups), and the professional lobbyists who typically represent them are truly influential and they are usually made up from the same demographic groups as MPs, therefore they do not truly create a much less elitists or much more plural national politics
 - Pressure groups are not always very democratic in their internal structures and are certainly not accountable to the electorate; they are therefore a highly undemocratic addition to our democracy, lacking accountability, representativeness and legitimacy and therefore detract from both representative democracy and parliamentary sovereignty.
 - Large, rich and well organised pressure groups are clearly more powerful than the reverse; this does not always break down easily into an insider-outsider distinction as the governing party, political context, public opinion and economic situation can all alter the opportunity of pressure groups to have an influence on policy.
 - Pressure groups add to the UK democracy by representing the widest range of groups and opinions and by allowing individuals to concentrate on political issues that are of direct interest to them. This means that individuals can participate in politics without having to take part in party politics which may be seen to cover too wide a range of issues and entail subjecting oneself to the party system and party discipline which may put off many participants.

Questions to be completed by you today and then marked by another class member by ~~next lesson.~~

Monday's lesson

1 What are the key differences between a pressure group and a political party?

(5 marks)

Marking guidance:

- Roughly 1 mark per point
- Points may include facts, names of PGs, question-relevant information about types of pressure groups; methods used by PGs and PPs; quotes, results of activity of PPs compared to PGs, aims of PGs compared to PPs.

2 Using examples, explain why some pressure groups are more successful than others?

(10 marks)

Marking guidance:

7 marks for knowledge (as for 5 marks question above)

- Content should include real-world examples of actual methods used by actual pressure groups. Weaker answer will list methods without real examples.
- Answers should recognise the importance of the insider/outside distinction in the answering of this question
- Answers should recognise the importance of money/membership/organisation of PGs
- Answer should demonstrate policy change or other successes / influences on government

3 marks for analysis

- The response can't get more than 2 marks without a conclusion which ATQD. The conclusion should attempt to give a two line direct answer to the question
- Analysis could include problems with the insider/outsider distinction
- Analysis could show relative importance of change of government on different types of PGs
- Analysis marks will also be awarded for effective use of real-world up-to-date examples

AS Government and Politics mark-sheet.

Name: Isabel L. date: 30/12

Question / topic areas covered: PG's.

Personal pride in your essay, please circle your mark out of 10:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

based on before marking.

The skills you demonstrated (for 25 / 40 mark questions)

Effective writing	1	2	3	4	5	Ineffective writing
Effective planning / coherent structure of longer questions				X		Poor structure suggesting lack of full understanding
Marks gained from line one of essay					X	Ineffective start
Sufficient content			X			Insufficient content
All relevant political debates addressed				X		No political debates included
Key examples / data utilised				X		No examples / data utilised
Effective use of academic writers and quotations					X	No use of writers or quotations
All key debates related back to question				X		Debates not applied to the question
All theories/studies/ideologies evaluated				X		No evaluation
Clear explanation of key ideas				X		Poor interpretation
Examples are used to show similarities / differences between the UK and other systems					X	No drawing of connections, similarities and differences
Relevant political terms used				X		No use of political terms
Conclusion flows from arguments in essay.				X		No conclusion
Comprehensive use of items (Unit 2)						No use of items
Good use of paragraphs				X		No use of paragraphs
Evaluative links/ flow between paragraphs				X		No evaluative flow between paragraphs
Good spelling using sophisticated terminology			X			Lots of spelling errors
Good punctuation and grammar			X			Poor punctuation and grammar

Your overall performance:

It seems that you are determined now to answer the question set... from now on I MUST see 2 plan for your C question before submission.

-quotes + international comparison even if not relevant on NotW. test at the end of May for international comparisons - find country and compare stuff on syllabus.

Your actions:

Pick up to three areas from the skills box to the left and identify what you will do to improve your work below:

What you will do differently in planning / writing your next essay?

IMPORTANT:

WHEN YOU SUBMIT YOUR NEXT ESSAY HIGHLIGHT THE IMPROVEMENTS MADE SO YOUR TEACHER CAN SEE YOU HAVE ADDRESSED YOUR TARGETS

Do you need guidance from your teacher on how to achieve this?

writers, quotations, international comparisons.

Y N

highlight in essays

Y N

+ AOTD

Y N

Your marks:

Grade boundaries

A = 23
B = 20
C = 18
D = 15
E = 13

question	Assessment Objective marks			totals
	Knowledge	Analysis	Clarity	
(a)	4 / 5			4 / 5
(b)	4 / 7	2 / 3		6 / 10
(c)	4 / 8	2 / 9	3 / 8	9 / 25
Paper 2 essay	/ 20	/ 12	/ 8	/ 40
Total: 9 / 40				

You are working BELOW AT ABOVE your target grade

C

Answer any TWO questions.

Write your answers in the spaces provided.

It is advised that you divide your time equally between both questions.

- 1** (a) How does a referendum differ from an election? (5)
- (b) Explain the arguments in favour of making voting compulsory. (10)
- (c) How effectively does representative democracy operate in the UK? (25)

(Total for Question 1 = 40 marks)

- 2** (a) Outline **two** ideas associated with liberalism. (5)
- (b) Explain **three** policies of the modern Labour Party. (10)
- (c) To what extent have the parties involved in the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition remained faithful, since 2010, to their traditional principles and ideas? (25)

(Total for Question 2 = 40 marks)

- 26/01/12
③ (a) How do pressure groups promote functional representation? (5)
- (b) Explain **three** factors which may restrict the influence of a pressure group. (10)
- (c) Are pressure groups becoming more powerful, or less powerful? (25)

(Total for Question 3 = 40 marks)

- 4** (a) Outline the workings of the Party List electoral system. (5)
- (b) Explain **three** criticisms of the 'first past the post' electoral system. (10)
- (c) Make out a case in favour of retaining the 'first past the post' electoral system for the House of Commons. (25)

(Total for Question 4 = 40 marks)

TOTAL FOR PAPER = 80 MARKS



How do pressure groups promote functional representation?

Pressure groups promote functional representation by representing a cause, or a section of society, with regard to particular issue. They often campaign around a very small issue, such as the League of Cruel Sports which campaigns against animal abuse and the existence of cruel sports such as fox hunting. As a result, society feels more in touch with a specific issue and people can choose which granular issues to support rather than the gigantic political parties which deal with everything from health to education.

Explain three factors which may restrict the influence of a pressure group.

Three factors potentially restricting the influence of a pressure group are funds, membership, and position. In order to function, pressure groups need to have money to carry out duties and campaign. In order to have money, they need to either have rich donors, or many members, or a high membership charge, or all three of these things. In order to gain a strong following and eventual membership, the pressure groups need a decent, accessible cause. The more money they have, the more influence they can have by engaging in campaigns and potentially lobbying MPs and Parliament.

A point has to be made also about insider and outsider pressure groups. Generally it is thought that insider groups have more influence, as they are inside governmental walls, so to speak, and have risen to that position through a potential multitude of ways, whereas outsider groups are less likely to influence government. However, this distinction is not much of a distinction, because groups drop in to and out of favour depending on the governing political party of the time, and some outsider groups have managed to be successful, such as Friends of the Earth who successfully mounted an appeal against the solar feed-in-tariff rate reductions.

Are pressure groups becoming more powerful, or less powerful?

The number of pressure groups that exist in the UK is quite substantial. As a result, their powers as a form of expression in general, and individually, can be called into question.

Pressure groups allow the people to have a greater say in issues that affect them, be these issues traditional (animal rights with the RSPCA), or more obscure such as CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale. Pressure groups do not have defined leaders, as such: being not as restricted as political parties in their movements, their members quite often support everything the group does and get involved. Therefore, they are powerful if members actively participate.

Another helper for pressure group success is the insider-outsider status distinction. This distinction is not always clear, however it is usually said that

real-world
examples are
vital
here

$K = \frac{4}{7}$ $A = \frac{2}{3}$
6/10

your
engagement
is too
complicated
here.
Just 3 paragraphs
+
conclusion
needed

This is NOT
an answer to
the question

11

insider pressure groups do have more influence, and therefore power, than outsider groups. However, the insider and outsider status of a particular pressure group may change depending on whether a particular group needs to be insider for the government to hear its views, depending on the political party that is in power. Some pressure groups become redundant when the political parties already support and have in their manifestos and plans for governing what the pressure group campaigns for, and when the political parties do not, or the leadership/direction of the Party changes, a particular pressure group may need to become active again and push for change, if they do not have the particular policy implemented. This applies mainly to insider pressure groups, however outsider pressure groups may not need to be so forceful in terms of gaining insider status or lobbying if the Party already recognises their cause.

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Lobbying is another way in which pressure groups can be seen as powerful. Lobbying is paying for influence, basically. Lobbying can cost billions, so it requires a very monetarily powerful pressure group to carry it out, or special lobbying firms. There have been scandals surrounding lobbying, however: paying MPs personally to ask questions is one notable one. This has called into question the ethics and, indeed, the efficiency of lobbying. Some may argue that why shouldn't MPs ask certain questions anyway, if these questions have been raised by pressure groups but have not been asked due to the MP not thinking them worthy, even when from the general public, who MPs are supposed to represent, or these questions have been asked at constituency surgeries by concerned or interested constituents.

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The choice of pressure groups has appealed to the electorate, with pressure group membership numbers rising while political Party membership numbers dwindling over the last few years, according to various figures.

ok, but
evidence / ?
why not.

A dampener on success of various pressure groups is the negative publicity that—having no defined leaders or accountability—they are prone to. Greenpeace became quite anarchic when they took over boats to oppose whale fishing, hanging signs and apparently kidnapping people, and Fathers for Justice's members, the rights for fathers group, some of whom dressed up as batman and scaled buildings, again extreme measures that painted them in a bad light in the media.

In conclusion, pressure groups have broadly become more powerful in terms of membership numbers and the number of issues represented by all of the groups.

✓

$$k = \frac{4}{8}$$

$$A = \frac{2}{9}$$

$$C = \frac{3}{9}$$

2

$$\frac{9}{25}$$