H

National Qualifications 2023 MODIFIED

X858/76/12

Politics
Paper 2

WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Total marks — 28

Attempt **BOTH** questions.

Write your answers clearly in the answer booklet provided. In the answer booklet you must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

Use **blue** or **black** ink.

Before leaving the examination room you must give your answer booklet to the Invigilator; if you do not, you may lose all the marks for this paper.

A/HTP

Total marks — 28

Attempt BOTH questions

1. Study **Sources A** and **B** then attempt the question which follows.

SOURCE A

The premiership of Tony Blair

Tony Blair became leader of the Labour Party in 1994 after easily defeating two other Labour MPs. He then led Labour to power by winning the general election held on 1st May 1997. He stood on a manifesto that promised a 'New Labour' and many of the traditional policies that Labour had previously offered in the 1970s and 1980s were replaced. Blair offered new policies that focussed on crime, education, employment, the NHS and the economy that were more popular with voters. These policies persuaded the electorate to give Blair a massive majority of 179 MPs. Blair's victory in 1997 and his victories in the next two general elections enabled his government to implement radical policies such as the reform of the House of Lords and the introduction of the national minimum wage. Indeed, the scale of his victory in 1997 provided the legitimacy for many of the changes that Blair introduced.

During his time as Prime Minister, Blair was viewed as a successful leader and strong Prime Minister. The term 'presidential' style of government was strongly associated with him. As well as the rational legal authority of winning elections, he was also viewed as a very charismatic politician. His great charm when dealing with an audience in person or through the media contributed significantly to his success in dominating his cabinet. The Blair government only suffered four defeats in the House of Commons in the ten years that he was in power. Blair knew that he could get controversial bills, such as the introduction of university top-up fees, through both his cabinet and parliament. Many political commentators have identified Blair's personal authority as a significant feature of his premiership.

The Blair years showed that the power of the Prime Minister is not as clear cut as its formal powers might indicate. Blair extended the power of the Prime Minister when he took office in several ways. This included a reliance on the use of the Prime Minister's office to coordinate government policy and make decisions rather than going through the full cabinet. A Chief of Staff was brought in to manage the ever-increasing number of appointments that Blair was making. This was a difference from the previous Prime Minister John Major who had 110 staff to Blair's 150. The number of special advisors used was also increased from 8 to 25. Blair made significant use of his own advisors, often taking advice from them rather than members of the cabinet. His relationship with the cabinet was much more than just being a 'first amongst equals' it was often characterised as a 'sofa' style of government as he excluded members of the cabinet from the formal decision-making process. Blair is seen in an historical context as a particularly strong Prime Minister.

1. **(continued)**

SOURCE B

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The premiership of Gordon Brown

Gordon Brown replaced Tony Blair as the leader of the Labour Party in 2007 and as a result became the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. Brown was asked by her Majesty the Queen to form the next government. Brown was Prime Minister for under three years and in this time his government was defeated on three occasions in the House of Commons. In 2009, even with a similar majority as the previous Prime Minister, he could not assert his authority over twenty-seven Labour MPs who voted with the opposition. This was Labour's first defeat on an opposition day debate since 1997. Brown could not get many of his own legislative plans through parliament. Brown's apparent lack of charisma was seen in his lack of media skills and poor performances in parliament. The leader of the opposition, David Cameron, often dominated him at Prime Minister's Question Time and this undermined his authority with his own MPs. Brown's authority was further weakened by a leaked email which showed 120 Labour MPs had signed a Commons motion opposing the cabinet's plan to privatise Royal Mail.

When Brown became Prime Minister he held the same formal powers as his predecessor. For example, he appointed Jacqui Smith as the first female Home Secretary and appointed many members to his cabinet who were not elected MPs. These members were to be known as the 'government of all talents'. They included Digby Jones as Minister of Trade, the former Deputy Secretary General for the United Nations George Malloch Brown and retired Admiral from the Royal Navy Alan West. These appointments displayed that Brown attempted to use the powers of the Prime Minister to strengthen his government. However, he was also forced to appoint former rivals such as Peter Mandelson to attempt to boost his government's declining popularity. As a result Brown had to accept a more collective cabinet system of government and he was seen as being in a weak position during his time in office.

During his premiership Brown was constantly attacked by the opposition for lacking legitimacy. David Cameron frequently pointed out that he became Prime Minister but did not come to power as a result of a general election. His legitimacy was further undermined as he was accused of becoming Labour leader in a coronation, not a competition. There was no challenge to him on the ballot paper. Then Shadow Minister for Women, Theresa May MP, said Brown was 'running scared of the people's verdict', whilst Boris Johnson, MP for Henley, said that Brown becoming Prime Minister without a general election was a 'scandal' and 'nothing less than a palace coup'. He argued that Brown was 'without a mandate from the British people. No one elected Gordon Brown as Prime Minister'. This accusation followed Brown until his party's defeat in 2010.

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Use only the information in Sources A and B.

Compare the premiership of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown.

In your answer you **must** make **three** points of comparison and reach an overall conclusion   **8**
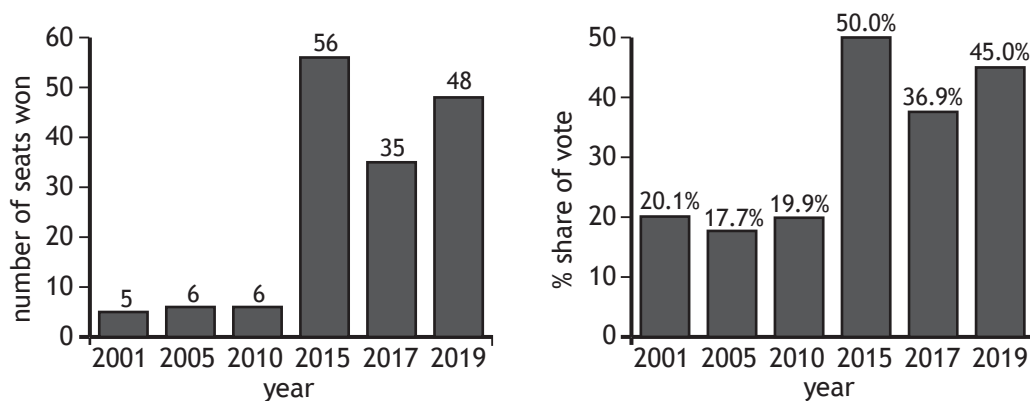
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2. Study **Sources A–F** then attempt the question which follows.

SOURCE A Seats won and percentage share of the vote by selected party in Scotland, 2015–2019 general elections

	2015		2017		2019	
	Seats won	% share of vote	Seats won	% share of vote	Seats won	% share of vote
SNP	56	50.0	35	36.9	48	45.0
Conservative	1	14.9	13	28.6	6	25.1
Labour	1	24.3	7	27.1	1	18.6
Lib Dems	1	7.5	4	6.8	4	9.5

SOURCE B SNP general election trends, 21st century, Scotland 2001–2019

SOURCE C Lost deposits in Scotland for selected political parties, 2017–2019 general elections

	2017	2019
Conservative	0	0
Labour	0	7
Lib Dems	46	13

SOURCE D General election trends for Conservative and Labour Parties, 2001–2019

Conservative election trends (UK overall)						
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019
% share of vote	31.7	32.4	36.1	36.8	42.3	43.6
Seats won/total seats available	166/659	198/646	306/650	330/650	317/650	365/650

Labour election trends (UK overall)						
	2001	2005	2010	2015	2017	2019
% share of vote	40.7	35.2	29.0	30.4	40.0	32.1
Seats won/total seats available	412/659	355/646	258/650	232/650	262/650	202/650

2. (continued)

SOURCE E 2019 general election data for Conservative and Labour Parties, by nation and English regions

Conservative					
Nations of the UK	Votes (000s)	% share of vote	% change in share of the vote 2017–2019	Seats won	Change in seats 2017–2019
England	12,711	47.2	+1.8	345	+49
Wales	557	36.1	+2.5	14	+6
Scotland	693	25.1	-3.5	6	-7
N. Ireland	5	0.7	+0.2	0	0
English regions					
North East	478	38.3	+3.8	10	+7
North West	1,321	37.5	+1.3	32	+12
York & Humber	1,097	43.1	+2.6	26	+9
East Midlands	1,281	54.8	+4.0	38	+7
West Midlands	1,449	53.4	+4.4	44	+9
Eastern	1,754	57.2	+2.5	52	+2
London	1,205	32.0	-1.1	21	0
South East	2,513	54.0	+0.2	74	+2
South West	1,612	52.8	+1.4	48	+1

Labour					
Nations of the UK	Votes (000s)	% share of vote	% change in share of the vote 2017–2019	Seats won	Change in seats 2017–2019
England	9,125	33.9	-8.0	179	-48
Wales	632	40.9	-8.0	22	-6
Scotland	512	18.6	-8.5	1	-6
N. Ireland	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
English regions					
North East	532	42.6	-12.9	19	-7
North West	1,638	46.5	-8.4	41	-13
York & Humber	990	38.9	-10.1	28	-9
East Midlands	741	31.7	-8.8	8	-7
West Midlands	918	33.9	-8.6	15	-9
Eastern	750	24.4	-8.3	5	-2
London	1,813	48.1	-6.4	49	0
South East	1,030	22.1	-6.5	8	0
South West	713	23.4	-5.8	6	-1

2. **(continued)**

SOURCE F Lost deposits, 2019 general election

Party	Candidates retaining deposit	Candidates losing deposit	
		Number	Value
Conservative	631	4	£2,000
Labour	619	12	£6,000
Lib Dems	475	136	£68,000
Brexit	111	164	£82,000
Green	32	465	£232,500
UKIP	0	44	£22,000
SNP	59	0	£0
Plaid Cymru	26	10	£5,000
DUP	17	0	£0
Sinn Fein	13	2	£1,000
Other	63	437	£218,500
Total	**2,046**	**1,274**	**£637,000**

The 2019 general election in Scotland was a fantastic victory for the SNP and was clearly their biggest ever improvement on a previous general election in the 21st century. In Scotland, Labour performed dreadfully in 2019 compared to the previous election. The UK results in 2019 were the biggest disaster for the Labour Party and they suffered significant losses across every part of the country. On the other hand, the Conservatives secured a resounding victory and very large increases in every single area. The performance of the UKIP candidates in the 2019 general election was the worst performance compared to all other parties' candidates.

Using only the information in Sources A–F.

To what extent does the evidence contained in these sources support the viewpoint above?

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