



National
Qualifications
2021 ASSESSMENT RESOURCE

X858/76/12

**Politics
Paper 2**

Duration — 1 hour 15 minutes

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.



Total marks — 28
Attempt BOTH questions

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

SOURCE A

Party election broadcasts in the UK

Party election broadcasts (PEBs) have been a regular fixture on UK television since the 1950s. The Communications Act 2003 prevents political parties from advertising on TV or radio so PEBs allow political parties to put their message across to a wide audience. The wider the audience the better the potential outcome for a political party. Viewing figures have declined in recent years for PEBs with the largest viewing figure in 2017 only being around four million people. Even when adding in the number of people who view PEBs online the figures are relatively low for the main political parties. Smaller parties such as the Green Party could claim to have had some success with its 2015 PEB which was viewed online over one million times. They were commended by advertising agencies for their 2017 attempt, but the electorate were not so complimentary with just over 32,000 online views.

Winning elections is the main objective of political parties, so getting votes is a clear barometer of effective campaign strategies. PEBs target both the loyal party member and the possible floating voter. They can have a positive impact on support for some political parties but when drilling down, surveys suggest that those with little interest in politics do not pay attention to PEBs. Those with a higher interest in politics are more likely to pay attention but even then one-fifth of these respondents said that they pay little or no attention to them.

In the digital age PEBs can have some influence through the number of views they attract online. However the impact of this may be limited to a minority as they may be viewed by pre-existing party supporters. It could also be the case that they can have a negative impact. This was seen with UKIP's Paul Nuttall 'walking on the spot' PEB in 2017 that went viral and some argue that this lost the party support as many viewed this to ridicule the party.

PEBs have evolved over the years from lengthy summaries of a party's manifesto to slick, professional media pieces. Starting in the 1980s both Labour and the Conservatives employed advertising agencies and top directors to put their message across in the most accessible way. Parties can control the content and reach out to the electorate in unique ways. This can enable them to set the agenda during an election campaign allowing a party to dictate the issues that the election is fought on. One such example was the Conservative PEB in 1992. This concentrated on attacking Labour's tax policies and was highly effective in influencing public opinion during the campaign. This significantly contributed to the Conservative victory in 1992.

1. (continued)

SOURCE B

Televised leaders' debates in the UK

The first full televised leaders' debate took place in the UK in 2010. The three largest parties at the time got a chance to debate the central issues in the election. Subsequent elections have all had some variant on the leaders' debate with more parties added and top politicians taking part. The leaders' debates allow the main political parties to answer questions from the public and from the presenting journalist who can direct the course of the debate. Some have argued that politicians are not keen on allowing journalists to have this much control over the political debate. For example, in 2017 Theresa May said that her time was better served on the campaign trail rather than participate in the leaders' debates. It was thought that Theresa May avoided participation as she would not be able to control the issues discussed. She preferred to concentrate on what her party wanted to focus on during the campaign.

The debates are a relatively new feature of the political landscape in the UK. After the initial hype surrounding the first debate the viewing figures showed people were interested, with the debate on ITV1 being the most watched programme of the day. 9.4 million people tuned in to see the three leaders debate issues such as tax, education and crime. The following debates never matched this high and the 2017 debates were beaten in the ratings by TV talent show 'Britain's Got Talent'. However overall the 2015 and 2017 debates still attracted 7 million and 6.5 million viewers respectively.

The impact of the debates is a contested issue. Politicians have started to question whether they are useful to participate in. For example, whilst the 2010 debates definitely had moments that boosted Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg's popularity, this 'Clegg mania' proved to be a boost for him and not necessarily his party. However surveys suggested that a majority of people thought the leaders' debates helped them decide who to vote for and over one million people said that they changed their voting intentions after watching these debates. Therefore it is unlikely that the televised leaders' debate will be disappearing from the TV schedules any time soon. They are destined to be longer lasting than the leaders that appear on them.

Use only the information in Sources A and B.

Compare the effectiveness of party election broadcasts and televised leaders' debates in UK elections.

In your answer you **must** make **three** points of comparison and reach an overall conclusion.

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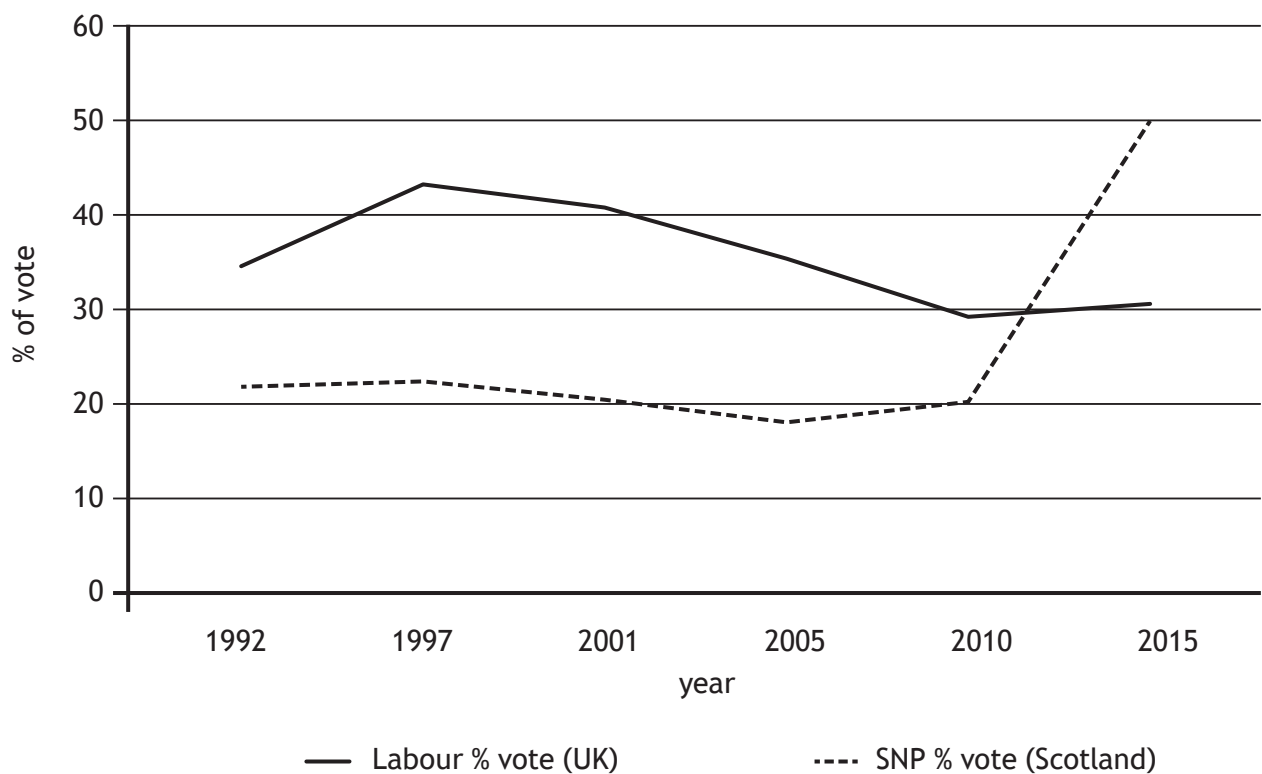
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2. Study Sources A–G, then attempt the question which follows.

Source A Seats change by nations of Great Britain (2010–2015)

	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dems	SNP
England	+21	+15	-37	+0
Wales	+3	-1	-2	+0
Scotland	+0	-40	-10	+50

Source B % share of the vote for Labour and the SNP (1992–2015)

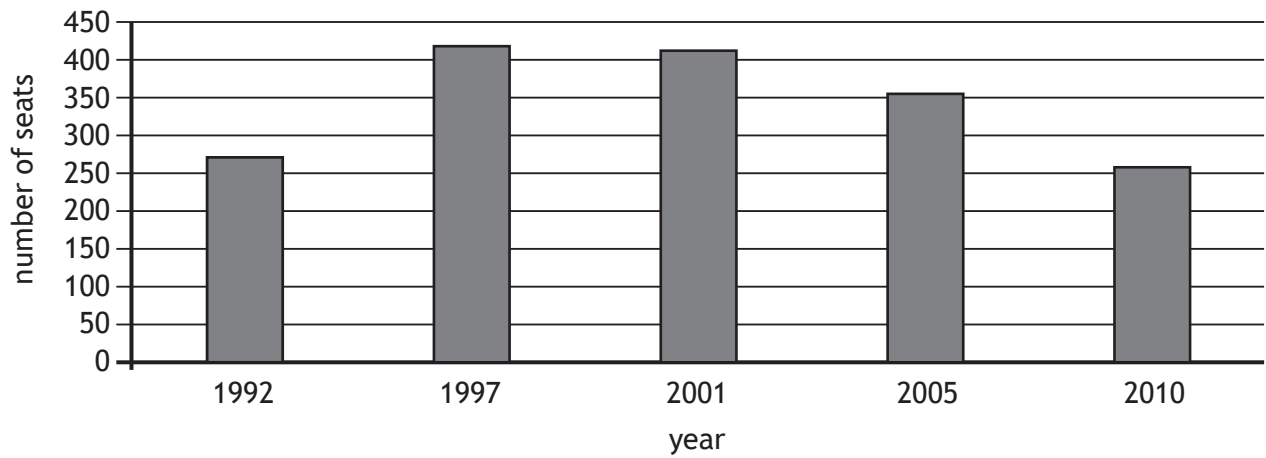


Source C Electoral data from the 2015 UK general election

	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dems	SNP
Seats won	330	232	8	56
Change	+24	-26	-49	+50
Votes (000s)	11,299	9,347	2,416	1,454
% share of vote	36.8	30.4	7.9	4.7
% change	+0.8	+1.5	-15.2	+3.2
Candidates	647	631	631	59

2. (continued)

Source D Performance of Labour in UK general elections (1992–2010)



Source E Support for the Conservatives by social characteristics, 2015

Age	% support 2015	Change 2010–2015
18–24	27	–3
25–34	33	–2
35–44	35	+1
45–54	36	+2
55–64	37	–1
65+	47	+3

Social class	% support 2015	Change 2010–2015
AB	45	+6
C1	41	+2
C2	32	–5
DE	27	–4

Ethnic group	% support 2015	Change 2010–2015
White	39	+1
all BME	23	+7

Housing tenure	% support 2015	Change 2010–2015
owned	46	+1
mortgage	39	+3
social rent	18	–6
private rent	28	–7

Source F Support for the Conservatives by nations of Great Britain and English regions, 2015

Nations of Great Britain	Total votes (000s)	% of support	% change in support (2010–2015)
England	10,449	40.9	+1.4
Wales	408	27.2	+1.1
Scotland	434	14.9	-1.8

English regions	Total votes (000s)	% of support	% change in support (2010–2015)
North East	301	25.3	+1.6
North West	1,050	31.2	-0.5
Yorkshire and the Humber	797	32.6	-0.2
East Midlands	969	43.5	+2.3
West Midlands	1,098	41.8	+2.2
East of England	1,446	49.0	+1.9
Greater London	1,233	34.9	+0.3
South East	2,234	50.8	+1.5
South West	1,320	46.5	+3.7

Source G Selected data on Conservative support in the 2017 UK general election

	Nations of Great Britain			Social class				Age					
	England	Wales	Scotland	AB	C1	C2	DE	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
% support	45.4	33.6	28.6	47	44	45	38	27	27	33	43	51	61
% change in support (2015–17)	+4.6	+6.3	+13.7	+2	+3	+13	+11	0	-6	-2	+7	+14	+14

The 2015 general election in Scotland was a fantastic result for the SNP. However, the UK wide results were a total disaster for the Labour Party and as well as being the biggest losers on the night it was also their worse performance in decades. Analysis of support for the Conservatives shows that, in 2015, across a range of social characteristics, they made their biggest gains exclusively from those groups where they had high levels of support. This also undoubtedly applied across different parts of the country. Both these trends clearly continued in the 2017 general election.

Using only the information in Sources A–G.

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

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