

Cambridge Pre-U Syllabus

Cambridge  
**Pre-U**

Cambridge International Level 3  
Pre-U Certificate in

**COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

For examination in 2010, 2011 and 2012



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

# **Cambridge Pre-U**

## **Comparative Government and Politics**



**Cambridge Pre-U**

---

# Comparative Government and Politics

## 9770

### Contents

---

	Page
Introduction	4
Aims	6
Assessment Objectives	6
Scheme of Assessment	7
Description of Papers	8
Curriculum Content	10
Appendix 1: Performance Descriptors	18
Appendix 2: Additional Information	19

## **Introduction**

---

Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses aim to equip candidates with the skills required to make a success of their subsequent studies at university, involving not only a solid grounding in each specialist subject at an appropriate level, but also the ability to undertake independent and self-directed learning and to think laterally, critically and creatively. The Cambridge Pre-U curriculum is underpinned by a core set of educational principles:

- A programme of study which supports the development of well-informed, open and independent-minded individuals capable of applying their skills to meet the demands of the world as they will find it and over which they may have influence.
- A curriculum which retains the integrity of subject specialisms and which can be efficiently, effectively and reliably assessed, graded and reported to meet the needs of universities.
- A curriculum which is designed to recognise a wide range of individual talents, interests and abilities and which provides the depth and rigour required for a university degree course.
- A curriculum which encourages the acquisition of specific skills and abilities, in particular the skills of problem solving, creativity, critical thinking, team working and effective communication.
- The encouragement of 'deep understanding' in learning – where that deep understanding is likely to involve higher order cognitive activities.
- The development of a perspective which equips young people to understand a range of different cultures and ideas and to respond successfully to the opportunity for international mobility.

Cambridge Pre-U syllabuses are linear. A candidate taking a Principal Subject must take all the components together at the end of the course in one examination session.

This linear syllabus is designed to develop candidates' abilities to communicate their understanding to a range of audiences, both orally and in written form; to encourage the development of critical understanding of and the articulation of informed opinions about government and Politics nationally and internationally; and to enable candidates to participate effectively in debate about such issues.

### **Prior knowledge and progression**

This syllabus builds on the skills and understanding typically gained by candidates taking Level 2 qualifications. The Assessment Objectives, assessment model and content all allow appropriate progression from IGCSE, GCSE or O Level in many Arts and Social Science subjects. This syllabus is linear and promotes the development of analytical skills and the ability to write essays while encouraging candidates to think critically and develop as reflective and independent learners. Equally, it equips candidates with a broad grounding in methodologies of the social sciences and liberal arts. This syllabus thus provides a sound preparation for study in Higher Education; and its design reflects developments in this domain over recent decades. Equally, the skills developed will provide a solid grounding for those intending to progress directly into employment or professional training.

It is recommended that candidates have attained communication and literacy skills at a level equivalent to IGCSE/GCSE/O Level Grade C in English.

**Studying Comparative Government and Politics involves:**

- understanding the processes by which power is deployed and the outcomes that its application achieves;
- analysing structures and issues in governance, and understanding the complex nature of the relationships within and between political institutions;
- appreciating the ideals of liberal representative democracy that have shaped much of the modern world, and the practical forms it can take in contemporary societies;
- identifying the principles and philosophies motivating major political movements and examining how these influence the policies and programmes of contemporary politicians and parties;
- recognising the diversity of different contemporary political systems and ideas, and making meaningful comparisons between them in a regional and global context.

Cambridge Pre-U Comparative Government and Politics should invoke in candidates an enthusiasm for Politics and encourage reflection on the nature, history and philosophy of political thought and practice.

The Assessment Objectives and assessment model allow appropriate progression from GCSE, O Level and IGCSE in many Arts and Social Science subjects.

Key features of this syllabus include:

- breadth of learning that provides for balanced study in the empirical and theoretical aspects of the discipline through study of more than one state, comparative political study, study of political ideologies and philosophies, and study of contemporary political debates;
- focus on both the ideological underpinnings of the western political tradition and contemporary international political issues;
- a series of core papers, each containing flexible and open-ended options which provide choice for schools and encourage broad and imaginative teaching and study;
- a syllabus which encourages candidates to discuss, argue critically and debate;
- open-ended questions which encourage candidates to think broadly and argue critically.

## Aims

---

The aim of the syllabus is to stimulate an interest in, and promote the study of, key issues and perspectives of contemporary Government and Politics in an international and comparative context by encouraging:

- 1) critical understanding of the nature of Politics and governance, of the structures of authority and power within political systems, and of the relationships between political ideas, institutions and processes;
- 2) critical comparisons across political systems to develop a critical awareness that such structures can and do differ in form and function;
- 3) a developed awareness of individual rights and responsibilities in contemporary representative democracies;
- 4) critical consideration of the works of key political thinkers;
- 5) critical assessment of ideologies, theories and traditions which have helped determine the nature of society in and the political institutions of contemporary representative democracies, including the development of these traditions in different societies;
- 6) critical understanding of and engagement with current political and policy-making processes and debates in a global context;
- 7) a developed understanding of core concepts used by political scientists and political theorists;
- 8) a lifelong enjoyment of and interest in Politics, and active participation in the political process.

Together, these aims will also encourage the development of reflective and independent learners able to discuss, write and debate in a critical and analytical fashion.

## Assessment Objectives

---

<b>AO1</b>	<p><b>Knowledge with critical understanding effectively communicated</b></p> <p>Candidates will be expected to demonstrate relevant knowledge and critical understanding of political concepts, theories, debates, processes and institutions, and the ability to relate these to relevant structures, institutions, organisations and practices, using appropriate political vocabulary.</p>
<b>AO2</b>	<p><b>Analysing and evaluating information</b></p> <p><b>Interpreting, comparing and evaluating texts</b></p> <p>Candidates will be expected to investigate political questions, presenting critical explanations and analyses and developing well-substantiated judgements. Where appropriate, candidates will be expected to interpret, compare and evaluate political texts critically.</p>

There will be some short essay questions, but the primary mode of assessment will be extended writing in full essays. All four papers will require critical argument and evaluation. Assertions will have to be justified. In papers 1 and 2, the ratio of marks per AO for short essays will be 3:2 and for full essays will be 1:2. In paper 3, the ratio per AO will be 1:1 for short essays and 1:3 for full essays. For the full essays of paper 4, the ratio will be 2:5.

## **Scheme of Assessment**

For the Principal Pre-U qualification in Comparative Government and Politics candidates take all four components in the same session.

<b>Component</b>	<b>Component Name</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Weighting (%)</b>	<b>Max raw mark</b>	<b>Max weighted mark</b>	<b>Type of Assessment</b>
<b>Paper 1</b>	Concepts & Institutions (UK and/or USA)	1 hour 30 minutes	25	100	100	Written paper externally set and marked
<b>Paper 2</b>	Parties and Ideas (UK and/or USA)	1 hour 30 minutes	25	100	100	Written paper externally set and marked
<b>Paper 3</b>	Ideologies and Philosophies	2 hours	25	100	100	Written paper externally set and marked
<b>Paper 4</b>	Contemporary International Debates: contexts and comparisons	1 hour 40 minutes	25	100	100	Written paper externally set and marked

AO2 will carry greater weight than AO1 across the syllabus. Generic mark schemes will govern assessment of the high-level skills and fundamental requirements of each paper or question type, but the marking of individual questions will be holistic. Candidates respond to essays in a discipline like this in many ways so, to prevent marking in narrow and pre-determined patterns, marks will not be allocated per AO.

## **Description of Papers**

---

### **Paper 1: Concepts & Institutions (UK and/or USA)**

This paper focuses on recent and contemporary governance and offers detailed study of the UK and/or the USA. There will be two sections, one on the UK (section A) and one on the USA (section B). Each section will contain three short essay and three long essay questions. Short essays will require explained and argued definitions while full essays will require analysis and evaluation. Candidates must answer **two** short essays and **one** long essay in 1½ hours, chosen all from Section A **or** all from Section B **or** both of the short essays from one section and the long essay from the other. No questions will be set requiring comparison of the UK and the USA.

Answers will require critical argument and evaluation. Assertions will have to be justified. Candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. Detailed knowledge of political history or philosophy are not required.

### **Paper 2: Parties and Ideas (UK and/or USA)**

This paper focuses on recent and contemporary party Politics in the UK and/or the USA. There will be two sections, one on the UK (section A) and one on the USA (section B). Each will contain three short essay and three long essay questions. Short essays will require explained and argued definitions while full essays will require analysis and evaluation. Candidates must answer **two** short essays and **one** long essay in 1½ hours, chosen all from Section A **or** all from Section B **or** both of the short essays from one section and the long essay from the other. No questions will be set requiring comparison of the UK and the USA.

If teachers did not opt to teach both states in paper 1, they should consider whether they wish to present a broad course and thus teach here the state not studied in paper 1. Alternatively, papers 1 and 2 may be used to develop depth of understanding in candidates by teaching the same state for both papers or both states in both papers.

Answers will require critical argument and evaluation. Assertions will have to be justified. Candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. Detailed knowledge of political history or philosophy are not required.

Questions requiring data handling on elections and party strengths will not be set, but Centres are encouraged to use data when teaching these topics and also to familiarise their candidates with simple data-handling skills so that they may use such material to enhance answers to part (a) and part (b) questions.

### **Paper 3: Ideologies and Philosophies**

This paper focuses on the interpretation of political ideas through study of a range of political texts important to various strands within political philosophy, and fleshes out some of the ideas and concepts studied in papers 1 and 2. Candidates will need to be familiar with key strands of thought within their chosen themes, but no specific works will be prescribed for study (Appendix 1 offers various suggestions, but is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive). All texts will be examined in English. There will be five options.

One compulsory text-based short essay question and one compulsory full essay question will be set per option. The text-based question will contain two extracts from relevant works. There are no limits to the number of options that may be studied. Candidates must answer on **two** options, answering **both** of the questions on each option in 2 hours.

Candidates will be expected to have read widely in the field of political ideologies and philosophies, and in their answers to respond using understanding and specific examples drawn from that reading. Answers to short essay questions on the texts will need to provide full comparison of the views expressed and be supported by examples from other texts to amplify the explanation/provide context. Answers to full essays will require critical analysis and evaluation of ideas and texts drawn from that extensive reading of political texts, substantiated by specific examples from individual works that have been read. Assertions will have to be justified.

#### **Paper 4: Contemporary International Debates: contexts and comparisons**

This paper focuses on the thematic study of international Politics in a comparative context. It builds on skills, ideas and concepts developed in the previous three papers. Study of contemporary debates will focus around three themes. Five essays will be set, covering a range of issue across the three themes. Candidates must answer any **two** questions in 1¾ hours.

Comparisons will need to be considered within and across the themes; themes may be combined in a single essay. Substantiated examples and critical evaluation must be drawn from various countries/regions of the world, and candidates will be expected to compare and contrast at least **two** of these in their answers (**neither** of which may be the UK or the USA, although either or both may be referenced for supplementary context/comparison). Answers will need to be built around critical and comparative evaluation and analysis. Assertions will have to be justified.

#### **Further Guidance**

Candidates should keep abreast of current political affairs.

For further guidance on each paper and suggestions of suitable resources for teaching and learning, please see the accompanying Teacher Guide.

## **Curriculum Content**

---

### **Paper 1: Concepts and Institutions (UK and/or USA)**

This paper aims to develop an advanced understanding of recent and contemporary governance in context.

Candidates must answer **two** short essays and **one** full essay in 1½ hours, chosen all from Section A **or** all from Section B **or** the short essays from one section and the long essay from the other. No questions will be set requiring comparison of the UK and the USA.

#### **Section A: Concepts and Institutions in the UK**

##### **Core Concepts:**

- Sovereignty
- Consent
- Constitution
- Democracy
- Representative government

There is considerable overlap between these.

##### **Supporting Concepts:**

- Accountability
- Mandate
- Legitimacy
- Judicial independence/Judicial neutrality
- Judicial review
- Plurality/Supranationality
- Devolution/Subsidiary/Federalism/Nationalism
- Citizenship
- Prime Ministerial government/Cabinet government/Parliamentary government
- Separation of Powers
- The Rule of Law
- Collective and individual ministerial responsibility

These concepts should be studied as part of learning about the Core Concepts. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of them in the examination and questions may be set directly on them in relation to the Core Concepts.

Further, candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. 'Contemporary' should be taken as meaning since 1979, but earlier examples will always be welcomed if relevant. Detailed knowledge of political history is not required; neither is political philosophy.

##### **Sovereignty:**

Parliament: What is its significance?

What are the functions of the Commons?

To what extent are the Lords becoming more significant?

What is Parliament's relationship to the electorate?

To what extent is Parliament sovereign in the UK?

(This includes studying the evolving constitutional relationship between the UK and the EU, and studying devolution in practice in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.)

**Consent:**

What do we mean by the idea of popular sovereignty within a representative democracy?

How effective are the various electoral systems used within the UK? Do elections change anything?

How has the first-past-the-post system come under challenge in the UK?

How important are pressure groups in securing democracy in the UK? What determines their success or failure?

How is power shared between central government and local government, and between Westminster and the devolved assemblies/parliaments in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh as well as between the UK and the EU?

**Constitution:**

What are the key principles and sources of the UK constitution?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of an uncodified constitution?

What role does the judiciary have in maintaining the UK constitution?

Why are judicial neutrality and independence considered to be important? Do they exist in practice?

To what extent is the British constitution balanced?

In what ways and to what extent have constitutional arrangements changed/developed?

**Representative Government:**

What is the relationship between government and parliament?

What is the relationship between the cabinet and the prime minister?

Where does power lie?

To what extent is the charge of 'elective dictatorship' an accurate one?

Have prime ministers since 1979 become more 'presidential'?

To what extent have the media and modern communications influenced politics and political behaviour?

**Section B: US Concepts and Institutions**

**Core Concepts:**

- The Separation of Powers
- Federalism
- Consent
- Constitution
- Democracy
- Government

**Supporting Concepts:**

- Accountability
- Checks and Balances
- Mandate
- Legitimacy
- Judicial Review/Judicial independence
- Plurality
- Filibustering
- Log-Rolling
- Clientelism
- States' rights

- Citizenship
- Presidential system
- The Rule of Law

These concepts should be studied as part of learning about the Core Concepts. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of them in the examination and questions may be set directly on them in relation to the Core Concepts.

Further, candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. 'Contemporary' should be taken as meaning since 1977, but earlier examples will always be welcomed if relevant. Detailed knowledge of political history is not required; neither is political philosophy.

**Consent:**

What do we mean by the idea of popular sovereignty within a representative democracy?

How effective in securing democracy are the various electoral mechanisms (congressional, presidential) operating in the USA? Do elections change anything?

How important are pressure groups in democratic politics in the USA?

**Constitution:**

What are the key principles of the US constitution?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of a codified constitution?

What is federalism?

How is power shared between federal and state level in the US system?

What is Judicial Review and how does it operate?

What role does the Supreme Court have in upholding/redefining the constitution?

Why are the Supreme Court's neutrality and independence considered to be important? Can they and do they exist in practice?

**Government:**

What are the respective functions of the House of Representatives, the Senate and the President?

What is the relationship between President and Congress?

What are the structure and functions of the Federal bureaucracy? How do you account for its growth?

What is the relationship between Congress, the bureaucracy and the making of government policy? How are the problems associated with this best resolved?

To what extent have the media and modern communications influenced politics and political behaviour?

**Separation of Powers:**

What are the checks and balances within the US political system?

What factors determine the power of the President in the USA?

How is the relative power of the President and Congress determined?

To what extent have Presidents increased their power?

## Paper 2: Parties and Ideas (UK and/or USA)

This paper aims to develop an advanced understanding of recent and contemporary party Politics (parties, ideas, ideologies and political behaviour) in context.

Candidates must answer **two** short essays and **one** full essay in 1½ hours, chosen all from Section A **or** all from Section B **or** the short essays from one section and the long essay from the other. No questions will be set requiring comparison of the UK and the USA.

### Section A: Parties and Ideas in the UK

#### Core Concepts:

- Democracy
- Representation
- Liberalism
- Conservatism
- Socialism/Social Democracy/'The Third Way'
- Nationalism/Internationalism

#### Supporting Concepts:

- Participation/non-participation
- Freedom/Libertarianism
- Individual
- Rights and Duties
- Constitutionalism/Parliamentary democracy
- Alignment/De-alignment
- Organic society
- Community
- Social justice
- Multiculturalism
- Positive discrimination

These concepts should be studied as part of learning about the Core Concepts. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of them in the examination and questions may be set directly on them in relation to the Core Concepts.

Further, candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. 'Contemporary' should be taken as meaning since 1979 (unless specified otherwise), but earlier examples will always be welcomed if relevant. Detailed knowledge of political history is not required; neither is political philosophy.

#### Democracy and Representation:

What is meant by a 'liberal democracy'?

What is a parliamentary democracy?

What is a political party? What are their functions in the UK?

How democratic are the UK's political parties?

What challenges are posed by the media/modern communications, and by issues of party funding?

**Liberalism:**

What does it mean to be a 'liberal'?

To what extent do all three major parties follow aspects of 'liberalism'?

How far are the Liberal Democrats a liberal party?

**Conservatism:**

What are the key principles of conservatism, and to what extent are they reflected in the modern Conservative Party?

What effect did the Thatcher period and the ideas of the New Right have on the Conservative Party, and how enduring has this effect been?

What does the struggle between modernisers and traditionalists tell us about the Conservative Party, and how do their ideas relate to those of traditional conservatives and the New Right?

**Socialism/Social Democracy/'The Third Way':**

What are the key principles of socialism and social democracy? To what extent is the Labour Party a socialist or a social democratic party?

What are the main ideas of New Labour, and to what extent are they similar to or different from previous Labour Party ideas?

What effect did the Blair period have on the Labour Party, and how enduring has this effect been?

**Nationalism:**

What types of nationalism exist in the UK? How similar are the nationalist parties of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales? To what extent is nationalism an issue in UK – EU relations?

Is nationalism a source of unity or disunity in the UK and within its constituent nations?

How does nationalism relate to other core concepts and issues?

**Section B: Parties and Ideas in the US**

**Core Concepts:**

- Democracy
- Representation
- Liberalism
- Conservatism

**Supporting Concepts:**

- Participation/non-participation
- Freedom/Libertarianism
- Individual
- Rights and Duties
- Primaries
- Ticket-splitting
- Alignment/De-alignment
- Lobbying
- Social justice
- Multiculturalism
- Positive discrimination

These concepts should be studied as part of learning about the Core Concepts. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of them in the examination and questions may be set directly on them in relation to the Core Concepts.

Further, candidates will need to substantiate their answer with relevant examples and should keep themselves informed about contemporary political issues and developments in the political system(s) they are studying. 'Contemporary' should be taken as meaning since 1977 (unless specified otherwise), but earlier examples will always be welcomed if relevant. Detailed knowledge of political history is not required; neither is political philosophy.

**Democracy and Representation:**

What is meant by a 'liberal democracy'?

What is a political party?

What is the significance of Primaries in the US electoral process?

What challenges are posed by the media/modern communications, and issues of party funding?

How strong are political parties in the USA?

**Liberalism:**

What does it mean to be a 'liberal'?

To what extent do Republicans and Democrats follow aspects of liberalism?

**Conservatism:**

What are the key principles of conservatism in US Politics?

What was the impact of Reaganism and the New Right on conservative Politics in the USA?

To what extent and why has neo-conservatism been influential in US Politics in recent years?

**'Americanism': pluralism and the small state:**

What are the key debates and issues in civil liberties and civil rights campaigns and in ethnic/racial Politics in the USA?

Why are trades unions so weak compared to other pressure groups? Why is there a profusion of interest groups?

Why is there almost no socialism in the USA?

**Paper 3: Ideologies and Philosophies**

This paper explores political ideas and arguments, and extends work undertaken in papers 1 and 2. Teaching and study need to be broad, and undertaken via critical and creative engagement with texts exploring a spectrum of political thinking about theories of power and legitimacy, political systems, the role of the state, the purposes and responsibilities of government, the rights and responsibilities of the individual. Candidates will be expected to have read widely in the primary and secondary literature on political ideologies and philosophies, and in their answers to respond using understanding drawn from that reading. Before candidates are launched into specific texts, initial familiarisation via more general readers might prove useful: e.g. Dagger and Ball (ed.) *Ideals and Ideologies* and volumes from the Oxford Readers series (such as Rosen and Wolff's *Political Thought*) or studies on, for example, ethnicity, feminisms, totalitarianism. Such works will also provide valuable contextual underpinning.

No specific texts will be prescribed for study. Candidates will not have to 'learn' a prescribed list of texts, but they will need to be familiar with the key strands of thought relevant to the options they are studying and bring to the examination an engagement with a range of relevant texts. For suggestions to indicate the sort of works (level, depth and breadth) that need to be used, please consult the Teacher Guide. Centres might wish to include authors from a country/area they plan to study in paper 4. All texts will be studied in English.

There will be five options. There are no limits to the number of options that may be studied. Candidates must answer on **two** options, answering **both** of the questions on each in 2 hours.

### Options

1. Liberalism and the Individual

Key themes: individualism, liberty, toleration, diversity, equality, social justice, constitutionalism, checks and balances, environmentalism, internationalism.

2. Conservatism and the Nation

Key themes: tradition, patriotism, authority and hierarchy, organicism, nationalism, ethnicity, libertarianism, neo-conservatism.

3. Socialism and the Common Good

Key themes: equality, collectivism, communitarianism, centralisation, rights and responsibilities, social democracy, 'the third way', utopianism.

4. Democracy and its critics

Key themes: nationalism, dictatorship, absolutism, totalitarianism, terrorism, fundamentalism.

5. Current ideological debates

Key themes: globalisation, environmentalism, feminism, poverty/development, freedom, human rights, anarchism, security, neo-conservatism, neo-colonialism, fundamentalism, terrorism, interventionism.

Answers to the short part (a) question on texts will need to provide full comparison of the views expressed and be supported by examples from other texts to amplify the explanation/provide context. Answers to the part (b) essay will require critical analysis and evaluation of ideas and texts drawn from extensive reading of political texts, substantiated by specific examples from individual texts that have been read. Assertions will have to be justified.

### Paper 4: Contemporary International Debates: contexts and comparisons

Paper 4 takes ideas and issues encountered in the other three papers, and extends them in new directions to develop a more nuanced understanding by examining some of the pressing issues in contemporary international politics. It does this in three distinct but complimentary ways by examining

- the nature of the state and the position of the individual in a global age;
- relationships between states within a globalising world; and
- efforts to tackle specific issues of global concern and global significance (human rights, development, the environment).

Approaches to study need to be thematic and concept-based (not geographical). Candidates will be expected to consider issues comparatively and essays will need to be built around comparison and contrast (not one half on one country/region and then the other half on another). Consideration needs to be given both to the issues themselves and to how they are dealt with. Perspectives and examples used in study and in answers must be drawn from various countries/regions of the world, and candidates will be expected to compare and contrast at least **two** of these in each answer, **neither** of which may be the UK or the USA, although either or both may be referenced for **supplementary** context/comparison (i.e. as part of but not as the basis of an answer). 'Contemporary' should be taken as meaning from the 1970s.

Books such as Peter Calvocoressi *World Politics 1945-2000* (8<sup>th</sup> ed Longman 2000; ISBN 0 582 38122 3) and John Bayliss & Steve Smith *The Globalisation of World Politics* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed Oxford University Press 2004; ISBN 0 19 927118 6), both available in paperback, might be useful in providing basic frameworks for teaching and learning.

Five essays will be set covering a range of issues across the three themes. Comparisons need to be considered within and across the themes, and themes may be combined in a single essay. Answers will need to be built around critical evaluation and analysis, substantiated by specific examples. Assertions will have to be justified. Candidates must answer any **two** questions in 1 hour 40 minutes.

## Comparative Themes

### 1. Governance: issues in how states govern themselves

Concepts for study: constitutions, legitimacy, separation of powers, citizens, civil liberties/human rights/minority rights, failed states.

Questions for study: How are constitutions organised and governmental authority divided? What is the relationship between the citizen/subject and government, and how does this differ in varying national traditions and political systems? How do different regimes secure legitimacy and maintain obedience? To what extent (and why) do constitutional arrangements allow for the separation of powers and provide scope for human rights/civil liberties? How durable are authoritarian and democratic regimes? Why are some states more successful than others? Why do some states fail?

### 2. Independence and Inter-dependence: issues in how states interact

Concepts for study: sovereignty, nations, separatism, subsidiarity, intranationalism, internationalism, supranationalism, peacekeeping/peace-building/peace enforcement, interventionism, 'rogue states', 'war on terror', regime change, state building, neo-colonialism, geopolitics.

Questions for study: Why has the nation state become such a common means of organising political structures? In an increasingly globalised and inter-dependent world, is national sovereignty still meaningful and are nation states still useful? What are the sources of contemporary conflict? Why are some conflicts settled peacefully while others result in war? How and why have arguments for 'just war'/liberal intervention/humanitarian intervention affected post-Cold War international relations?

### 3. Global issues that affect states and individuals

Concepts for study: civil liberties/human rights; political socialisation; sustainable development and sustainable societies, global commons, north-south divide (including problems with its definition).

Questions for study: Why do individual states adopt certain values? How and why are issues surrounding race and ethnicity relevant in different states? Why has the pursuit of multi-cultural policies been more effective in some state than others? How significant and effective are human rights-based and environmental improvement-based approaches in the politics of humanitarian and development aid? How significant have international environmental action and cooperation become, and how effective is environmental politics at the international level?

## **Appendix 1: Performance Descriptors**

---

The following grade descriptors indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the middle of the given grade band. They give a general indication of the required standard at each specified grade. The descriptors should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the syllabus; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

### **Distinction (D2)**

Candidates display comprehensive and in-depth political knowledge and critical understanding. They make very well informed and very effective use of a wide range of relevant political information, concepts, ideas and issues that are used carefully to support and advance fully coherent and developed analysis and argument.

Candidates analyse, evaluate and interpret very tightly, critically and effectively a wide range of evidence that is synthesised into fully substantiated and evaluated arguments and conclusions. Written communication is very clear, accurate, cogent and succinct at all times. Political concepts and terms are properly understood and rendered.

Answers are perceptive, sophisticated, subtle and seamless.

### **Merit (M2)**

Candidates display a good political knowledge and critical understanding. They make informed and good use of a wide range of relevant political concepts, ideas and issues to support and advance analysis and argument, not merely illustrate it.

Candidates analyse, evaluate and interpret clearly a good range of evidence to draw substantiated and evaluated arguments and conclusions. Written communication is usually clear, accurate and demonstrates clear evidence of general planning. For the most part, political concepts and terms are properly understood and rendered.

### **Pass (P2)**

Candidates display only a basic political knowledge and understanding. They present only basic arguments, explanations and conclusions drawn from and based on a limited use of relevant political concepts, ideas and issues. The attempt to address and answer the requirements of a question is limited.

Candidates' ability to analyse, evaluate and interpret evidence is limited, as is their ability to differentiate between the relevant and the irrelevant. The structure of answers will characteristically be in descriptive form. Engagement with and response to questions is limited. Written communication is only adequate and shows clear limitations in planning and organisation. Political concepts and terms are recognised but understanding is weak and rendering is often inaccurate and/or inappropriate.

## **Appendix 2: Additional Information**

---

### **Guided Learning Hours**

It is intended that this course should be delivered through 380 hours of guided learning. This is a notional measure of the substance of the qualification. It includes an estimate of the time that might be allocated to direct teaching or instruction, together with other structured learning time such as directed assignments or supported individual study and practice. It excludes learner-initiated private study.

### **Certification Title**

This qualification is shown on a certificate as:

- Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in **Comparative Government and Politics (Principal)**.

The qualification is accredited at Level 3 of the UK National Qualifications Framework and provides a solid grounding for candidates to pursue a variety of progression pathways.

### **Entries**

For Entry information please refer to the *Pre-U E3 Booklet*.

### **Grading and Reporting**

The Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificates in the Principal Subjects are qualifications in their own right. They are acceptable as an alternative to A Level (or other Level 3 qualifications) for entry into Higher Education or employment. Each individual Principal Subject is graded separately on a scale of nine grades: Distinction 1, Distinction 2, Distinction 3, Merit 1, Merit 2, Merit 3, Pass 1, Pass 2, Pass 3.

Subjects can also be combined with two core components to meet the requirements for eligibility for the Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Diploma. More details about the Diploma requirements and the core components can be found in a separate Diploma syllabus. The results of the individual Principal Subjects are reported on a separate certificate to the Diploma result.

### **Classification Code for UK Centres**

In the UK, every syllabus is assigned to a national classification code that indicates the subject area to which it belongs. UK Centres should be aware that candidates who enter for more than one qualification with the same classification code will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this syllabus is **XXXX**.

### **Overlap with other qualifications**

There is no overlap between this syllabus and any others in the Cambridge Pre-U suite.

## **Language**

This syllabus and the associated assessment materials are available currently in English only. All texts studied are in English.

## **Procedures and Regulations**

This syllabus complies with the *CIE Code of Practice* and *The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004*.

Further information about the administration of Cambridge Pre-U qualifications can be found in the *CIE Handbook for Cambridge Pre-U Centres* available from CIE Publications or by contacting [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)

## **Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social and Cultural Issues**

The study of Comparative Government and Politics contributes to an understanding of these issues by:

- developing awareness of diversity in civilisations by understanding some of the values and assumptions of various societies, including some different from the candidate's own;
- promoting awareness of aspects of human life other than the physical and material, including some of the high ideals that individuals have cherished and fought for over the centuries;
- encouraging awareness of the relationship between the individual and the state and the rights and responsibilities of both, and the significance for both if subjects/citizens are/are not active participants in decision-making;
- providing opportunities for understanding core foundations for different traditions of political ideas and philosophies, institutions and governance – traditions which have had major influences on the shape of the modern world.

## **Health and Safety Issues**

There are no health and safety issues in this syllabus.

## **European and International Dimension**

CIE has developed this syllabus in line with UK, European and International legislation and agreements. This syllabus provides opportunities to consider both the European dimension and the International dimension through various options across the papers.

This syllabus focuses on different strands within western political traditions and encourages study of political cultures beyond the First World.

## **Avoidance of Bias**

CIE has taken great care in the preparation and presentation of this syllabus and specimen assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind.

## Key Skills

This syllabus provides opportunities for the development of evidence for the Key Skills of: *Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Performance* and *Problem Solving* at Levels 2 and/or 3. However, the extent to which this evidence fulfils the Key Skills criteria at these levels will be totally dependent on the style of teaching and learning adopted for each section.

The Key Skills awarding bodies and the regulatory authorities have produced a suite of example portfolios that will help to give candidates and practitioners a clear understanding of the requirements for the Key Skills portfolio. These are available on the QCA Key Skills website ([www.qca.org.uk/keyskills](http://www.qca.org.uk/keyskills)). Full details of the requirements for certification can be obtained from the awarding bodies that are approved to offer Key Skills. For further information about Key Skills assessment, including the current standards, please see the document *The Key Skills Qualifications Standards and Guidance* published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2004 (ISBN 1 85838 548 2).

The following table indicates where opportunities may exist for at least some coverage of the various Key Skills criteria at Levels 2 and/or 3 for each section.

Paper	Communication	Application of Number	IT	Working with Others	Improving own Learning and Performance	Problem Solving
1	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
4	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

University of Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 1223 553554 Fax: +44 1223 553558  
Email: [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk) Website: [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)

© University of Cambridge International Examinations 2008