

# AP<sup>®</sup> COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## 2007 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 7

**6 points**

**Part (a): 2 points**

One point is earned for the definition of a referendum. One point is earned for describing an advantage.

A common definition is: National vote by the electorate on an issue referred by the government.

Acceptable advantages include:

- Avoid responsibility.
- Enhance power of executive.
- Bypass the legislature.
- More democratic.
- Shift accountability.
- Forces decision/shuts off debate.
- Legitimacy.

**Part (b): 2 points**

One point is earned for correctly identifying the official who has the power to call a referendum in Great Britain. One point is earned for correctly describing one example.

Individual: Prime Minister/Tony Blair (through an act of Parliament).

- “The queen“ does not earn a point.
- Naming previous prime ministers does not earn a point.
- No point is earned for stating an incorrect title with a name.

Acceptable referendums may include:

- Scottish Parliament.
- Welsh Assembly (parliament is OK).
- Northern Ireland Assembly.
- Single currency/EMU/euro (proposed).
- EU constitution (proposed).

Information given on the referendum must be accurate to earn credit.

No point is given for the House of Lords proposal or joining the EU as an example of a British referendum.

**Part (c): 2 points**

One point is earned for correctly identifying the official who has the power to call a referendum in Russia. One point is earned for correctly describing one example.

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## Question 7 (continued)

Individual: President/Vladimir Putin.

- Naming previous presidents does not earn a point.
- No point is earned for stating an incorrect title with a name.

Acceptable referendums may include:

- Ratification of the Russian Constitution.
- Yeltsin as President.
- Chechnya.

Proposed referendum refers to a national governmental initiative: e.g., “white paper.” No point is earned for citizens’ initiatives, press, public debates, or proposals by external organizations.

The national referendum described in parts (b) and (c) must have been proposed by the chief executive and be in regard to one of the nations in the multinational state.

A score of zero (0) is earned for an attempted answer that earns no points.

A score of dash (—) is earned for a blank or off-task answer.

7

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

7A

A referendum is the situation in which the government allows the citizens to vote on an issue which began in the government. One advantage is that it helps legitimize actions of the government through citizen participation with the government. The prime minister has the power to call a referendum in Great Britain. One example is the recent issue over whether or not to adapt the House of Lords into a body containing real legislative power and not formed through titled members. In Russia, the president has the power to call a referendum. A referendum had been called to ratify the constitution of Russia.

Write in the box the number of the question you are answering on this page as it is designated in the exam.

7

7B

Ⓐ A referendum is a call of voting <sup>to the public</sup> on a specific issue.

One advantage for government of holding a referendum is they can settle issues quickly and immediately take action.

Ⓑ The Prime Minister can call a referendum in Great Britain. One specific national referendum in Great

Britain would be on healthcare benefits. Whether to keep them <sup>or make a welfare state</sup> or cut back on them.

Ⓒ The President can call a referendum in Russia. One

specific national referendum in Russia would be on tax cuts. Whether to cut back taxes to help boost economy that is in bad shape.

(a) A referendum is an issue proposed to the people during an election. One advantage is for the government to have a general idea of its citizens beliefs when proposing legislation.

(b) The Prime Minister can call a referendum, currently Tony Blair. One specific referendum is the use of the Euro as part of the <sup>European</sup> Union.

(c) The Prime Minister can call a referendum, currently Vladimir Putin. One specific referendum in Russia is the environmental issue due to Chernobyl and other nuclear testing.

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## 2007 SCORING COMMENTARY

### Question 7

#### Overview

The aim of this question was threefold. The intent of part (a) was conceptual. Students were asked to define the term *referendum* and to describe one advantage for a government of holding one. As the referendum is a feature of democratic politics, it was important to clearly state that a referendum is an opportunity for a government to refer an issue to the people for a vote. Then students should have explained that in this way the government can enhance its legitimacy and the power of the executive by shifting accountability for the issue to the people instead of the legislature.

The objective of part (b) was specific to Great Britain. Students were asked to identify the official who has the power to call a referendum in Great Britain and to describe the use or proposed use of one actual referendum in Great Britain. They were required to name the Prime Minister as the official with the power to call a referendum and to accurately describe a specific referendum that had either been proposed or called for by the Prime Minister, or called for by the Prime Minister and voted on by the entire United Kingdom or a specific nation within the multinational state of Great Britain. Consequently, students should have distinguished between a proposed referendum—such as having Great Britain adopt the euro, which has not been put to an actual referendum vote—and an actual national referendum, such as Scotland’s voting for a parliament.

The objective of part (c) was specific to Russia. Students were asked to identify the official who has the power to call a referendum in Russia and to describe the use or proposed use of one actual referendum in Russia. They were required to name the President as the official with the power to call a referendum and to accurately describe a specific referendum that had been called for by the President and voted on either by the entire country, such as ratification of the 1993 Russian constitution, or by a specific nation within the multinational state of Russia, such as the Chechnyan ratification of its own constitution in 2003.

#### Sample: 7A

##### Score: 5

In part (a) the response earned 2 points. The first point was earned for accurately defining referendum: “the government allows the citizens to vote on an issue which began in the government.” The response earned the second point for the description of an advantage for a government of holding a referendum: “it helps legitimize actions of the government through citizen participation with the government.”

In part (b) the response earned 1 point by correctly identifying the Prime Minister as the official who calls a referendum in Great Britain. The response did not earn a point for the reference to “adapt the House of Lords” because that is not a proposed referendum in Great Britain.

Part (c) earned 2 points. The first point was earned for correctly identifying the President as the official who calls a referendum in Russia. The response earned the second point for describing a referendum in Russia as one that “had been called to ratify the constitution of Russia.”

#### Sample: 7B

##### Score: 3

In part (a) the response did not receive credit for the definition of referendum because “a call of voting to the public on a specific issue” does not clearly indicate that this issue has been referred to the people by the government. The response did earn 1 point for describing an advantage for a government of holding a referendum as forcing decisions; the government “can settle issues quickly and immediately take action.”

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**Question 7 (continued)**

In part (b) the response earned 1 point for identifying the official who has the power to call the referendum in Great Britain as the Prime Minister. The response did not earn a second point because “healthcare benefits” is not a proposed referendum in Great Britain.

In part (c) the response earned 1 point for identifying the official who has the power to call a referendum in Russia as the President. The response did not earn a second point because the reference to “cut back taxes” is not a proposed referendum in Russia.

**Sample: 7C**

**Score: 2**

In part (a) the response did not earn a point for the definition of referendum: “an issue proposed to the people during an election” does not clearly reflect who referred the issue to the people. The response did not earn a point for the description of the advantage for a government of holding a referendum (“to have a general idea of its citizens [*sic*] beliefs”) because this statement does not distinguish a referendum from a public opinion poll.

In part (b) the response earned 2 points: 1 point for correctly identifying the Prime Minister as the official who can call for a referendum in Great Britain, and the second point for describing a specific referendum on “the use of the Euro” for Great Britain.

In part (c) the response earned no points. Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is incorrectly described as the official who can call a referendum in Russia, and “the environmental issue due to Chernova [*sic*]” is not a proposed referendum in Russia.