Stage 2 Australian and International Politics

Task Instructions

This task is a formal written argument and has an Australian politics focus. 1000 word limit in line with the assessment requirements.

Context

1000 words maximum

Formal written argument

Research Essay

Three weeks to complete

A 10 minute interview draft opportunity

In attempting to be all things to all voters, the major parties have abandoned their ideologies'

**Knowledge and Understanding**

Considered knowledge and understanding of political concepts, ideas and practices with useful background information.

The two major political parties -the ALP and the Liberal Party -each have ideologies that are a set of attitudes and beliefs that make them unique from each other. An *'ideology'* is the party's statement of what they believe about society, humanity and the economy.

The liberal's believe "in the inalienable rights and freedoms of all peoples", of a "government that nurtures and encourages its citizens through incentive", and that, "wherever possible, government should not compete with an efficient private sector; and that businesses and individuals - not government - are the true creators of wealth and employment." (Liberal Party of Australia n.d.)

Research, Critical Analysis, and Evaluation

Some analysis of different views on issues.

By contrast, the Labor Party states that it has, "stood by Australians in difficult and uncertain times, building a strong safety net and providing help through hardship. Labor has promoted social justice, compassion and the fair go at home and abroad." (Australian Labor Party n.d.-b)

Communication

Communication is thoughtful and clear but the large number of quotes prevents focus on the key idea of the question.

From the beginning, the Labor Party has formulated their ideology to "improve the lives of ordinary Australians" (1bid.). Some of the key words in the Labor Party's ideology are: 'quality', 'liberty', 'safety net', 'social justice' and 'compassion' and to achieve these objectives aim to redistribute political power so people can participate. In contrast the Liberals believe it is not the role of the government to dictate people's lives. Some key words of the liberal Party are: 'safe guard', 'advance of freedom for the individual', 'private property' and 'economic growth', and quoted on their website "we believe in the inalienable rights and freedom of people and work towards a lean government that minimises interference in our daily lives and maximises individual and private sector initiative” (Liberal Party of Australia n.d.)

**Communication**

Clear communication of information but not always coherent.

Knowledge and Understanding

Accurate historical information but lacks specific links to the question.

The Labor Party formed in the early 1890s due to disillusioned shearers, maritime workers and gild workers being unable to improve their conditions and wages (Williams 2006; Australian Labor Party n.d.-a). The solution as they saw it was to form a political party so as to have the power to change industrial laws, the party was sponsored by the trade union. Labor's ideology at the time was based on being the 'defender of the underprivileged' (Williams 2006; Australian Labor Party n.d.-a). This ideology was strengthened in 1921 when the party advocated "socialisation of industry, production, distribution and exchange" (Jaensch 1992, p. 122). Labor's foundations were formed from 1891 to 1903 and the Labor Party came to represent itself as a trade union representative, aiming to protect the workers' conditions, which at times put them in conflict with the business community (Labor History n.d.-b).

**Communication**

Clear communication of information but not always coherent.

Research, Critical Analysis, and Evaluation

In-depth research into a range of sources with only limited analysis of different views.

Although, the 1970s saw a transition in which Labor, attempting to be all things to all voters began a process of pragmatisation through actively supporting the business community and abandoning its ideologies. The support of business was strengthened by Premier Bob Hawke in the 1980s who introduced fundamental policy changes such as the floating of the Australian dollar and deregulating the banking industries. Labor reduced public services and deregulated the labour market by the late 1980s and 1990s, 'aiming to be all things to all voters and abandoning' their ideology of a worker-friendly party (Williams 2006).

Research, Critical Analysis, and Evaluation

In-depth research into a range of sources with limited analysis of different views.

Knowledge and Understanding

Well considered, knowledge and understanding.

The Liberal party was formed in 1944 by Robert Menzies. The foundation of the Liberal Party's ideology was formed from the joining together of two anti-Labor groups in the late 1890s. Their shared ideology was to support private enterprise (businesses). Menzies' ideology was to be a ''business friendly party but remain independent from commercial interests"(Williams 2006, p.63). Menzies also included in the party's ideology the desire to support the Australian worker, advocating full employment, with the government also attaining ownership of enterprises. The shift in ideology was an attempt to be all things to all voters and gain the support of the middle class Australian.

**Communication**

Good use of reasoned argument.

Research, Critical Analysis, and Evaluation

Proficient critical analysis of views and convincing evaluation of ideas, structures and procedures of government systems.

Knowledge and understanding

Well considered, moving toward comprehensive, knowledge and understanding.

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John Howard became Prime Minister in 1996 and during that election campaign had promised not to introduce a Goods and Services Tax. However, the tax was eventually introduced, along with the privatisation of public utilities and the introduction of controversial Workplace Agreements; which later cost him the 2007 election win. These moves strengthened the Liberal Party's relationship with businesses and signalled their ideological move back towards supporting businesses.

Considered knowledge and understanding with some repetition of background information. Competent analysis and communication is considered and generally clear.

Communication

Good use of reasoned argument.

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Good use of reasoned argument.

In attempting to be all things to all voters whilst in power, Labor Prime Minister Kevin Rudd did not cut spending in the 1998 budget to middle class welfare, as expected, and he also neglected to reduce government spending on government programs (Onselen 2011).

The breaking of Labor Prime Minister Julia Gillard's election promise not to introduce a carbon tax has caused a hostile reaction from many Australian citizens (Oakes 2011). Despite the public and political opposition to a tax, Julia Gillard has remained supportive of the tax, whilst Liberal's Opposition Leader, Tony Abbott is using an anti-carbon tax campaign to win over voters (Kelly 2011; Shanahan 2011).

Knowledge and understanding continues to be considered with convincing evaluation and thoughtful communication.

Winning votes appears to be pivotal to each party's unstated policies. Both parties have deviated from their ideologies over their history in pragmatic attempts to remain in power, and to be all things to all voters.

The conclusion is general and broad.

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**Performance Standards for Stage 2 Australian and International Politics**

|  | **Knowledge and Understanding** | **Research, Critical Analysis, and Evaluation** | **Engagement and Reflection** | **Communication** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A** | Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts, ideas, and practices.Insightful and well-informed understanding of participation, power, and government in a variety of national and international contexts. | Astute and in-depth research into and use of a variety of highly relevant primary and secondary sources.Highly proficient critical analysis of different views on complex issues. Concise and clear evaluation of ideas, structures, and procedures associated with various systems of government. | Constructive engagement in and perceptive reflection on political concepts, ideas, and issues, using primary sources.Insightful reflection on the relationship between politics, power, and decision-making. | Astute and coherent communication of political ideas and information through reasoned, connected arguments. Accurate and incisive use of political terms and appropriate acknowledgment of sources. |
| **B** | Well-considered knowledge and understanding of political concepts, ideas, and practices.Well-informed understanding of participation, power, and government in a variety of national and international contexts. | Some in-depth research into and use of a range of relevant primary and secondary sources.Proficient critical analysis of different views on complex issues. Convincing evaluation of ideas, structures, and procedures associated with various systems of government. | Well-organised engagement in and thoughtful reflection on political concepts, ideas, and issues, using primary sources.Well-informed reflection on the relationship between politics, power, and decision-making. | Thoughtful and clear communication of political ideas and information through reasoned, connected arguments. Mostly accurate and considered use of political terms and appropriate acknowledgment of sources. |
| **C** | Considered knowledge and understanding of political concepts, ideas, and practices.Informed understanding of participation, power, and government in different national and international contexts. | Competent research into and use of different primary and secondary sources.Competent critical analysis of different views on complex issues. Considered evaluation of ideas, structures, and procedures associated with various systems of government. | Mostly organised engagement in and considered reflection on political concepts, ideas, and issues, using primary sources.Informed reflection on the relationship between politics, power, and decision-making. | Considered and generally clear communication of political ideas and information through reasoned, connected arguments. Generally accurate use of political terms and appropriate acknowledgment of sources. |
| **D** | Recognition and some basic understanding of political concepts, ideas, and practices.Some basic understanding of participation, power, and government in different national or international contexts. | Narrow research into and use of primary and secondary sources.Superficial consideration of different views on issues, tending towards description. Some description of ideas, structures, and/or procedures associated with various systems of government. | Some engagement in and superficial consideration of aspects of political concepts, ideas, and issues, using primary sources.Consideration and description of an aspect or aspects of the relationship between politics, power, and decision-making. | Some communication of political ideas or information through description rather than argument.Inconsistent use of a narrow range of political terms, with some attempted acknowledgment of sources. |
| **E** | Identification and some awareness of political concepts, ideas, and practices. Some awareness of participation, power, and government in a national or international context. | Limited use of sources.Description of one or more views on an issue. Recognition of one or more ideas, structures, and/or procedures of government. | Attempted description of an aspect or aspects of political concepts, ideas, or issues, using one or more sources.Some awareness and attempted description of an aspect or aspects of the relationship between politics, power, and decision-making. | Limited communication of political information. Some attempted use of a very limited range of political terms. |