

'Evaluate the view that think-tanks, lobbyists and pressure groups have little impact on government decisions.' (You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.) **ANSWER 1**

I personally disagree that any of these groups have little influence over government decision making as think-tanks, lobbyists and pressure groups shape the legislation of this country, either by research, pressure or money. *For example lobbyists, who have the most influence over government decision-making, can be individuals or companies, such as Google, which pay for politicians to put their policies forward into parliament.* Pressure groups also have an enormous following which pressures but most importantly takes the government into account, for example Stonewall which called out Thatcher for being homophobic for putting forward Section 28 and therefore Stonewall got rid of it in 2003. Think-tanks are not as influential as the others, but they do advise and do research for the government, such as the Centre for Social Justice who put the Universal Credit in place as economic strategy for the government. However, some may argue that the government cannot accept all the demands from all these groups as there are finite *resources*.

This is not really what is meant by a lobbyist.

An unnecessarily long introduction, which is a bit rambling. Ideally introductions should be concise, outlining both sides briefly and coming to a view.

Firstly, lobbyists have the most influence on government decisions because companies and individuals make a transaction with politicians to put policies through parliament. Lobbyists pay for their influence in parliament. One of the biggest lobbyists is Google as in 2018 they fled £1.5 billion of taxation and tried to lobby Zarah Sultana to do it once again. These transactions may seem harmless but they can, not only nationally but internationally, be demolishing, for example Heathrow wanted to expand their airport which would contribute to the climate emergency the world is feeling contemporarily. It is strange that the government allows these transactions to take place as it is undemocratic as the voice of the people are unheard, this just comes to show that wealth is power. As this benefits the government, the government does not care to represent the people and further proves the point that politicians are power-hungry and money-driven people who represent nothing but *themselves*.

A few issues here in this paragraph. Technically, Google are not a lobbyist, they are a corporation. Also the information is a bit scattered, with lots of assertions put forward without it being clear what they are arguing. Lastly, the language is a bit provocative. Ideally, essays should be convincing by the strength and quality of their argument, not by using insulting language.

*Moreover, pressure groups are extremely important for our democracy because, unlike lobbyists, pressure groups are the voice of the public to make a difference, which is stronger than the voice of the power-hungry politicians. Pressure groups also make campaigns in order for the government to hear them. "All power to the people." For example, Stonewall is very successful in shaping government legislation; in 2005 through the Equality Act they were able to banish discrimination against sexual orientation so the LGBT community can feel safer. The most important thing to note is that pressure groups want their achievements to make a better country, unlike lobbyists who only act upon self-interest. The government does not support this idea as they are afraid they are losing legitimacy, this is evident in low turnout and party membership declining, this is because pressure groups and movements are gaining a large following and the government is losing the trust of the public, being critical for *democracy*.*

This isn't what the question is asking.

Again, the language here is a problem. There is a good example of Stonewall. However, the idea that all pressure groups are good and motivated by altruistic ends would need to be challenged.

Furthermore, think-tanks are not as influential but still have influence over the government as they advise the government and apply evidence from their research to further help the government. Think-tanks help the government mainly with political strategy and the economy. As I mentioned they are not as influential as pressure groups and lobbyists because the government are able to ignore strategies and advice they are given, for example the government is ignoring the advice from SAGE of a 2 week lockdown because it doesn't suit them as they are scared the economy *will crash*. ●.....

Is it clear that the student knows what a think tank is? Lacking detailed information and examples.

In conclusion, lobbyists, think-tanks and pressure groups do have a huge impact on government decisions because they all give an insight of different parts of the nation: pressure groups represent the voice of the people, lobbyists represent the companies and think-tanks represent the logic. Even though I do agree with the tactics, lobbyists are the most influential group over government decisions.

This student should be commended for attempting to discuss all three types of groups. However, their knowledge is limited and their language a bit unsophisticated and in the second paragraph they veer away from what the question is asking. Their comparative analysis, i.e., the influence of each group compared to the other, is limited and, apart from the introduction, it is not clear what they are arguing.

AO1 – L3

AO2 – L2

AO3 – L2

Overall level – L3 13/30

'Evaluate the view that think-tanks, lobbyists and pressure groups have little impact on government decisions.' (You must consider this view and the alternative to this view in a balanced way.) **ANSWER 2**

The government's decisions are impacted when the influencer aligns with the government's agenda or if money is proposed. Think-tanks want to influence the policies rather than impact them whereas lobbyists and pressure groups seek for change.

Lobbyists are people who are paid to seek access to the government in order to have great impact in an undemocratic way. Lobbyists have major impact because their elitism allows them to get their legislation enforced. Therefore, their voices are heard by the government so they have significant impact rather than little impact. Furthermore, wealth is an important factor for lobbyists because the greater the wealth means the louder the voice is. This is evident by an airline trying to persuade for the third runway to open by sending gifts in order to get what they want. In addition, 10% of new MPs in 2010 came from lobbyist backgrounds which highlights the lobbyists' advantages of access in the government. This emphasises the inside contacts they have so their impact has greater power. Overall, lobbyists have great impact on the government's decisions because they are blinded by greed.

Good understanding and explanation of lobbyists. Examples are a bit sketchy in places and no real debate on the other perspective.

Think-tanks have more influence rather than impact as they are public research organisations who seek influence on the government's policies. An example of a think-tank is CSJ which stands for the Centre of Social Justice. This think-tank seeks to influence their conservative values upon the government's policies. Although CSJ has been successful, for instance their troubled families programme has reduced youth crime, their impact can be limited dependent on the amount of supporters. Think-tanks are fuelled by charity and donations so less support means less money so less resources, resulting in limited impact. Furthermore, think-tanks undermine other policies in order for their policies to be heard, for example CSJ undermines Labour policies in order to enforce their conservative values. Overall, think-tanks have little impact but drastic influence upon the government's decisions.

Not sure the distinction between impact and influence is necessary or relevant.

Good explanation at the start of a think tank. Paragraph is more descriptive than analytical, also, what side is it arguing?

Pressure groups have minor impact on the government's decisions dependent on the group. Pressure groups seek to pressure the government in order for their legislation to be passed through. This can be achieved easier for an insider group rather than an outsider group because they have more close connections within the government. Therefore, insider groups hold greater impact compared to outsider groups. However, the impact depends on the amount of media attention as well because this is the main source to gain supporters. An example of a successful social movement would be Extinction Rebellion as their impact helped to raise awareness. Overall, pressure groups are not as effective because their voices do not hold enough power to impact the government's decisions.

To conclude, lobbyists overpower think-tanks and pressure groups because they have physical impact on the government's decisions such as enforcing legislation.

Quite general, examples of influence that have led to change would have been better.

Overall, this essay has good explanations of the three groups, but is very general and descriptive. It doesn't address arguments on both sides of each group, i.e. lobbyists have an impact vs. lobbyists don't have an impact. It is therefore limited on AO2 and AO3.

AO1 – L2

AO2 – L2↓

AO3 – L2↓

Overall level – L2 12/30