

GCE 2005
January Series



Mark Scheme

General Studies Specification A

Unit GA3W – Society, Politics and the Economy

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Unit 3

(GA3W Society, Politics and the Economy)

INTRODUCTION

The nationally agreed assessment objectives in the QCA Subject Criteria for General Studies are:

- AO1** Demonstrate relevant knowledge and understanding applied to a range of issues, using skills from different disciplines.
- AO2** Communicate clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and relevant way.
- AO3** Marshal evidence and draw conclusions; select, interpret, evaluate and integrate information, data, concepts and opinions.
- AO4** Demonstrate understanding of different types of knowledge and of the relationship between them, appreciating their limitations.

All mark schemes will allocate a number or distribution of marks for some or all of these objectives for each question according to the nature of the question and what it is intended to test.

Note on AO2

In all instances where quality of written communication is being assessed this must take into account the following criteria:

- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to purpose and complex subject matter;
- organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate; and
- ensure text is legible and spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate, so that meaning is clear.

Note on AO4

In previous General Studies syllabuses, there has been a focus on the knowledge and understanding of facts (AO1), and the marshalling and evaluation of evidence (AO3) – on what might be called ‘first-order’ knowledge. AO4 is about understanding what counts as knowledge; about how far knowledge is based upon facts and values; and about standards of proof – what might be called ‘second-order’ knowledge.

By ‘different types of knowledge’ we mean *different ways of getting knowledge*. We might obtain knowledge by fine measurement, and calculation. This gives us a degree of certainty. We might obtain it by observation, and by experiment. This gives us a degree of probability. Or we might acquire it by examination of documents and material remains, or by introspection – that is, by canvassing our own experiences and feelings. This gives us a degree of possibility. In this sense, knowledge is a matter of degree.

Questions, or aspects of them, which are designed to test AO4 will therefore focus on such matters as:

- analysis and evaluation of the nature of the knowledge, evidence or arguments, for example, used in a text, set of data or other form of stimulus material;
- understanding of the crucial differences between such things as knowledge, belief or opinion, and objectivity and subjectivity in arguments;
- appreciation of what constitutes proof, cause and effect, truth, validity, justification, and the limits to these;
- recognition of the existence of personal values, value judgements, partiality and bias in given circumstances;
- awareness of the effects upon ourselves and others of different phenomena, such as the nature of physical, emotional and spiritual experiences, and the ability to draw upon and analyse first-hand knowledge and understanding of these.

NB It is the questions themselves which are designed to elicit the range of response appropriate to the assessment objectives for each question. Except in Question 1, examiners are required to assign each of the candidates' responses to the most appropriate level. (In Questions 4 and 5, the communication mark for AO2 must be shown separately.)

With *some* questions it might be feasible to think in terms of awarding 1 mark for each valid and coherent point made. It may also be appropriate, however, to award marks for depth and sophistication of comment, development of ideas, use of supporting illustrations etc, as well as the range covered. The number of ticks, therefore, need not equal the final mark awarded for each attempt, which should reflect the overall quality of the candidate's response as expressed in the Mark Scheme.

Half-marks are not to be awarded.

A response which bears no relevance to the question should be awarded no mark.

Q1 Read Source A. Identify five criticisms of Tony Blair and the Labour government made by this source.

(5 marks)

Target: Comprehension of Source

Candidates are asked only to ‘identify’ 5 criticisms from the source. They are not required to explain the criticisms or, necessarily, to express them in their own words.

1 mark for each of the following criticisms specifically identified:

- Too much/heavy reliance on spin (doctors)/ distorted media messages.
- (Blind) arrogance/control freakery of government/those in power.
- Tax and (public) spending (NB. both must be mentioned).
- Failure of home/domestic policies or priority of war/Iraq over home/domestic issues.
- Too much talk/too many pledges and not enough action (towards delivering them) /over 6 years.

(AO1 : 2 marks AO3 : 3 marks)

Q2 Read Source B. Using your own knowledge, and examples from the source, state three reasons for questioning the objectivity of Source B.

(5 marks)

Target: Evaluating objectivity of source.

Indicative notes

The ability of candidates to recognise the distinction between an *objective* and *subjective* approach is clearly crucial to producing a successful answer to this question.

Reasons which might be used for questioning objectivity

- An ***objective*** view would be based on an attempt to abstract away from the writer’s own point of view towards a more detached analysis which relies more on facts which can be verified. This letter clearly doesn’t do that and it is one-sided/biased.
- ***Objectivity*** implies a more neutral and unbiased approach. It might suggest scientific/empirical methods, gathering information and testing hypotheses.
- The writer of this letter uses an approach which is much more ***subjective*** – the situation from his/her point of view. It makes value judgments about “idiotic laws” and uses often emotional generalisations and sweeping statements about wars, immigrants, taxes etc.
- There is a fallacy based on “the law abiding middle classes” who are “always picked on”, and several examples of rhetoric in the second paragraph.
- The source opens and closes with broad and unsubstantiated comments which are less than complimentary to the EU and the stereotyped “fat cats” clearly associated with it by the writer.
- A “letter of the day” to a tabloid newspaper is usually chosen to generate interest/responses and is thus unlikely to take a ‘measured’/‘both sides’ view.

Mark Scheme:

Level I: *Simple, unexplained points such as ‘biased’, ‘from a tabloid’ or one clearly set out reason why, in the context of Source B, its objectivity should be questioned.* (1-2 marks)

Level II: *Two clearly explained reasons why, in the context of Source B, its objectivity should be questioned.* (3-4 marks)

Level III: *Three clearly explained reasons why, in the context of Source B, its objectivity should be questioned.* (5 marks)

(AO1: 3 marks; AO3: 2 marks)

Q3 Read Source C. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this source of informing the reader about recent general election results, voting patterns and the influence of social class on voting?

(10 marks)

Target: Assessing strengths and weaknesses of source.

Indicative notes:

Possible strengths of source

- Published in *Journal for Citizenship Studies*, a respectable publication likely to offer an unbiased view when presenting voting figures.
- Easy-to-view tabular information accessible to most readers.
- Clearly presented factual information on voting figures in GB for 2001 election and results of last 3 general elections with Prime Ministers.
- Acknowledges and seeks to quantify important link between social class and voting.
- Illustrates the unfairness of the electoral system in as much as the number of MPs elected is not in proportion to the number of votes cast.
- Seemingly clear example of quantitative research methods.

Possible weaknesses of source

- Exclusive reliance on quantitative methods/absence of supplementary comment & explanation (seeking to say why people vote in a particular way or explaining voting trends).
- Research source not given.
- Covers GB rather than UK/omits results for Northern Ireland.
- Gives results but not comparative voting figures for 1992 and 1997 elections.
- Does not define social class/say what measurement of social class was used.
- Many other factors other than class which influence voting.
- Offers only a simplistic/superficial view which neglects the complexity of trying to explain changes in voting trends. Essentially descriptive.

Mark Scheme:

Level I: *Mostly simple/unexplained/descriptive/irrelevant or very small number of points about strengths and/or weaknesses. Perhaps limited communication skills.* (1-3 marks)

Level II: *At least four mostly explained and communicated points, perhaps not covering whole of question but with maximum of 5 marks if covering only strengths or weaknesses.* (4-7 marks)

Level III: *Range of at least five explained, ordered and clearly communicated points covering the whole question and both strengths and weaknesses.* (8-10 marks)

(A01: 2 marks; A02: 2 marks; A03: 2 marks; A04: 4 marks)

Q4 Read Source D. Examine the justification for young people being absent from school to go on a protest march. You may use any combination of moral, legal, political and educational arguments.

(15 marks)

Target: Using a source to demonstrate understanding of different types of knowledge and arguments.

Indicative notes:

The dilemma at the heart of this question is *not* the right of young people to protest but the extent to which protests should take place in school time. As indicated below, the **legal** position is clear. The best answers should recognise this but may legitimately try to make a case using other arguments. These answers are also likely to identify issues which might be the nature of legitimate protest, perhaps even in school time.

Legal arguments:

- Those who have not reached minimum school leaving age are legally required to attend school. Schools act in *loco parentis* and, even though a parent/guardian may give permission for a pupil to be absent, the ultimate responsibility is the school's.
- Even where the headteacher may be sympathetic, local authorities might take a less sanguine view of unauthorised absence. Health & Safety law could easily apply if the march is large and/or turns violent.

Educational arguments:

- The purpose of school is to educate its students and that education will be disrupted if students absent themselves.
- Taking part in a march can be an educational opportunity not to be lost.
- What criteria can be used to determine which issues be educational (the 'thin end of the wedge')?

Moral arguments:

- Young people have the right to make a protest against something they consider to be morally wrong.
- Potential conflict between legal requirements regarding school attendance and moral codes influencing behaviour.

Political arguments:

- Students have plenty of opportunity to learn about rights and responsibilities through compulsory citizenship at KS4.
- A healthy democracy requires as much participation as possible from its citizens. Young people are often criticised for low levels of political participation.

The arguments listed above do not represent an exhaustive list.

Mark Scheme: content

- Level I:** *Mostly simple, unexplained points, perhaps heavily value-laden and based on very superficial awareness/understanding of the context and different forms of knowledge.* (1-4 marks)
- Level II:** *Some ability to present a restricted range of arguments, mostly in the context of the source, with some reasoning which might not always be sustained. Mostly focused on question and mostly free from assertions with some recognition of different forms of knowledge. Some ability to work towards a conclusion.* (5-8 marks)
- Level III:** *Mostly/fully sustained ability to demonstrate a range of reasoned arguments in the context of the source. Clearly articulated and free from assertions with the ability to reach a conclusion which is logically argued and based on a sound understanding different forms of knowledge.* (9-11 marks)

(AO1: 2 marks; AO3: 3 marks; AO4: 6 marks)

Mark scheme for communication:

The 4 AO2 marks must be shown separately and awarded according to the following criteria:

4 marks	Clear organisation, analysis and structure, mostly fluent and with only minor errors in expression, spelling punctuation and grammar. Relevant communication with clear meaning.
3 marks	Clear attempt at organisation, analysis and structure. Occasional errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Mostly relevant communication with mostly clear meaning.
2 marks	Limited organisation and structure. Little fluency, perhaps with a number of errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Relevance of communication may not be consistent and meaning may sometimes be unclear.
1 mark	Lacking organisation, structure and fluency. Frequent errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Communication may demonstrate little relevance and meaning may be often unclear.
0 marks	No response or totally irrelevant response.

Note:

- A totally irrelevant response should also receive no marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 1** for **content** should be awarded up to 2 marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 2** for **content** should *normally* be awarded up to 3 marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 3** for **content** may be awarded up to 4 marks for communication.

Q5 Read Source E. Using the information in Sources D and E, and your own knowledge, examine the arguments for and against the proposal that the voting age should be reduced from 18 to 16.

(15 marks)

Target: Extrapolation and exposition of arguments from a range of sources.

Indicative notes:

Source D

- Young people are increasingly disaffected from the political process.
- Schools don't always provide sufficient opportunities for students to be more politically involved/educated.
- "Our opinions matter as much as anyone's." (14-year-old protestor).

Source E

- Students ask why they have the legal right to marry at 16 but are unable to vote.
- National debate on lowering voting age to 16 launched by the Electoral Commission.
- Students being taught citizenship should be encouraged to vote.
- Young people more interested in celebrity show voting than voting in political elections.
- Need to channel some of the interest of young people from single-issue to mainstream politics.

Additional knowledge which might be used to support votes at 16

- The age of consent is 16 and at that age young people are legally able to leave school, take a job and, depending on their income, become taxpayers.
- Seems arbitrary if young people have a number of rights at 16 that they should not have the right to vote.
- Because of compulsory Citizenship lessons, young people should be better informed about political matters and thus capable of making a more informed choice.
- Extending the franchise would reduce apathy towards politics and increase political participation.

Additional knowledge which might be used to oppose votes at 16

- (With or without Citizenship) young people don't understand enough about politics to be able to vote (e.g. judging a government's record over 4/5 years.)
- Young people could become alienated/cynical at an earlier age, realising that party politics might be far less interesting/stimulating than single issue politics.
- Voter awareness often requires a measure of experience and maturity not always evident in many 16-year-olds.
- Trivialises political process.
- Most young people lack knowledge of/interest in politics that would allow them to make an informed choice.
- In April 2004, on the basis of survey results, the Electoral Commission decided not to recommend the reduction of the voting age to 16.

Mark Scheme: content

- Level I:** *Mostly undeveloped and superficial comments with some reference to the voting age proposal but with often limited knowledge and understanding of the points and issues.* (1-4 marks)
- Level II:** *Some explained comments and arguments relating to the voting age proposals with some clear examples of knowledge, understanding and development of arguments but within a limited, perhaps excessively one-sided, range. Some progress in taking the arguments towards a conclusion. Maximum of 5 marks for **content** if*
- *answer is based either on only own knowledge or only on sources*
 - *only one side of the question is considered.* (5-8 marks)
- Level III:** *Consistently explained comments with a wider awareness of a range of issues associated with a proposal to reduce the voting age. More sustained knowledge, understanding and development of arguments based on Sources D & E and own knowledge leading to a logically argued conclusion.* (9-11 marks)

(AO1: 4 marks; AO3: 3 marks; AO4: 4 marks)

Mark scheme for communication

The 4 AO2 marks must be shown separately and awarded according to the following criteria:

4 marks	Clear organisation, analysis and structure, mostly fluent with only minor errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Relevant communication with clear meaning.
3 marks	Clear attempt at organisation, analysis and structure. Occasional errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Mostly relevant communication with mostly clear meaning.
2 marks	Limited organisation and structure. Little fluency, perhaps with a number of errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Relevance of communication may not be consistent and meaning may sometimes be unclear.
1 mark	Lacking organisation, structure and fluency. Frequent errors in expression, spelling punctuation and grammar. Communication may demonstrate little relevance and meaning may often be unclear.
0 marks	No response or totally irrelevant response.

Note:

- A totally irrelevant response should also receive 0 marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 1** for **content** should be awarded up to 2 marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 2** for **content** should *normally* be awarded up to 3 marks for communication.
- Responses at **Level 3** for **content** may be awarded up to 4 marks for communication.

**Approximate distribution of marks across the questions and assessment objectives
for the Sources and Issues Analysis**

Question Numbers		1	2	3	4	5	AO marks per unit
Assessment Objectives	1	2	3	2	2	4	13
	2	-	-	2	4	4	10
	3	3	2	2	3	3	13
	4	-	-	4	6	4	14
Total marks per Question		5	5	10	15	15	50

AO1 (K & U) 13; AO2 (Com) 10; AO3 (A & E) 13; AO4 (UoK) 14 = 50