



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **General Studies 5761**

## *Specification A*

**GA3W**      **Society, Politics and the Economy**

# **Mark Scheme**

*2008 examination - January series*

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 responses appropriate to the assessment objectives for each question. Examiners are required to assign each of the candidates' responses to the most appropriate level in Questions 2-5, according to the **overall quality**, then to allocate a single mark within the appropriate level, except in the instance shown in Question 5 where the level mark is accompanied by a separate mark for AO2. The levels take into account a candidate's knowledge, understanding, arguments, evaluation and communication skills as appropriate.

Half-marks are **not** to be awarded.

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

**Q1 Read Source A. Using information from the source *only*, identify *five* measures that might be taken to improve Britain's political system and to increase participation.**

**(5 marks)**

**Target: Comprehension of source and selection of relevant information**

The essential requirement is that candidates need to use their ability to comprehend the source and to *identify* five measures from the source and to reject any source information that is not relevant. No explanation is required and, although most candidates will use at least some of their own words, those who do not do so in all circumstances should not be penalised in this instance. No credit can be given for any information that is taken from outside Source A.

**Indicative content notes:**

The measures are:

- lowering voting age to 16
- linked to a package of citizenship/political education
- addressing the problem of low election turnouts/increasing turnouts (or participation in) elections
- addressing the problem of falling (political) party membership/ increasing membership of (political) parties
- tackling the perception that all power resides in Downing Street/that the Prime Minister has too much power
- placing a cap/limiting individual donations to political parties
- a largely elected House of Lords/more elected peers
- a shake up of Britain's political system (to prevent what it calls a democratic meltdown)
- Politicians need to listen more.

1 mark for each clearly recognisable point to a maximum of 5.

**AO1 : 2 marks      AO3 : 3 marks**

**Q2 Read Source B. Using information from both the source and your own knowledge, discuss the effectiveness and the limitations of the case Peter Hain makes for changing the existing first-past-the-post voting system in British general elections.**  
**(10 marks)**

**Target: Ability to use own knowledge and understand and interpret information contained within the source.**

**Indicative content:**

What Peter Hain says:

- Labour (his party) should move from the 'first past the post system' from a position of strength while they still have a majority.
- Directs readers to one system (the alternative vote) as used e.g. in Australia.
- Supports a system which retains the link between voters and an individual constituency MP rather than large multi-member constituencies.
- Change necessary in an effort to tackle low turnout at elections and public disengagement from the political process.

Does this make a good/effective case?

What is meant by 'a good case?' (AO4)

Yes/effective

- Calling for change while still in power would avoid charges of political opportunism.
- Describes an alternative system (AV) clearly and accurately.
- Warns against possible voter opposition to large, multi-member constituencies characteristic of some forms of PR.
- Recognises the dangers of falling turnouts at elections and public disengagement as indicated in the Power report.

No/limitations

- Doesn't say anything specific about disadvantages of existing system
- Doesn't mention cost/complexity of an alternative system
- Directs readers to one alternative system but doesn't mention others.
- Tells Lib Dem leader, Sir Menzies Campbell, not to press for full-scale PR leading to multi-member constituencies used by some European countries.
- Doesn't say what might be the cause of lower turnouts in elections/increasing public disengagement.

Any other valid 'yes/no' argument should be credited.

**Mark Scheme:**

- Level I:** Simple answer with limited knowledge and understanding/relevance (AO1) with little evidence of interpretation (AO3), perhaps mainly reliant on words of source. Perhaps variable communication (AO2). Undeveloped answer with some knowledge and understanding (AO1) but with very narrow range of points/interpretation (AO3). (1–3 marks)
- Level II:** Demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding (AO1) to provide some, perhaps limited, ability to examine a few of the reasons why Peter Hain might/might not make a good case for electoral reform (AO3) but with little or no exploration of what is meant by a 'good case' (AO4). Uses some limited arguments (AO3) and mostly clearly structured/communicated (AO2). Perhaps some evidence of seeking to reach a conclusion though this might be more implied than explicit. (4–7 marks)
- Level III:** Demonstrates good knowledge and understanding (AO1) with clear and sustained ability to examine range of reasons why Peter Hain might/might not make a good case for electoral reform (AO3). Some awareness of what might be meant by 'a good case' (AO4). Clear, justified arguments (AO3) and clearly structured/communicated (AO2) leading to logically argued conclusion. (8–10 marks)

**AO1 : 3 marks; AO2 : 2 marks; AO3 : 2 marks; AO4 : 3 marks**

**Q3 Read Source C. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this source? Give examples to support your answer.**

**(10 marks)**

**Target: Identification and critical assessment of the potential strengths and weaknesses of a source dealing with elections and participation.**

Answers must focus on strengths and weaknesses of the *source*. More detailed discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of different *election systems* is not likely to be relevant.

**Indicative content**

**Strengths**

- Provides recognisable quantifiable/factual data on low general election turnouts in 2001 and 2005 drawing attention to growing voter apathy.
- Offers a measure of historical perspective (1918 election and 76% average in post 1945 turnout).
- Uses specific reference point: *British Votes 2005*
- *Independent* generally seen as reliable broadsheet source not aligned to any particular political party.
- Tries to offer some explanation (1.8% rise in turnout in 2005 partly due to more access to postal votes).
- Highlights importance of PR and its role in helping to increase turnout and benefiting minority parties.
- Up-to-date information, covering most recent British general election.

**Weaknesses**

- Doesn't quote anyone's views directly.
- Reference to 'Campaign for Democracy' in title may suggest degree of bias towards proportional representation.
- Limited range of data used, covering only electoral turnouts.
- Final paragraph becomes a little more speculative/subjective – perhaps selective in use of evidence to support PR.
- Does not explain what is meant by proportional representation, refer to a specific form of PR or to any of its disadvantages.
- Over-simplified in its approach to the complex problem of growing voter apathy.
- Source has been adapted which could indicate omissions.

Wherever possible, the reason for identifying a strength or weakness should be clear and based on the specific source. Supporting examples from the source should be used where appropriate.



**Mark Scheme:**

- Level I:** Little understanding of the requirements of the question (AO1) and/or very limited explanation/exemplification of the source's strengths/weaknesses (AO3) in the context of the source. (1–3 marks)
- Level II:** Some understanding of what might constitute strengths/weaknesses of the source used (AO1). More detailed/developed explanation of at least three relevant strengths/weaknesses (AO3). Mostly clear structure and communication (AO2). Perhaps not always consistently/clearly explained and/or limited in range or generalised. No/limited awareness of difference between fact/opinion, subjectivity and objectivity/different forms of evidence (AO4).  
Maximum of 6 marks if deals only with strengths or weaknesses. (4–7 marks)
- Level III:** Clear and sustained understanding of what might constitute strengths/weaknesses of the particular source used (AO1). More detailed and developed explanation/exemplification of at least five relevant strengths and weaknesses (AO3) demonstrating a wider range. Clear, well integrated structure and communication (AO2). Some awareness of difference between fact/opinion, subjectivity/objectivity and different forms of evidence (AO4). (8–10 marks)

**AO1 : 2 marks; AO2 : 2 marks; AO3 : 3 marks; AO4 : 3 marks**

**Q4 Read Source D. To what extent do you agree with the viewpoint that the proposal to make voting compulsory in the United Kingdom is both desirable and necessary?**

**(10 marks)**

**Target: Using a source to demonstrate understanding of the complexity of an issue and the significance of recognising and evaluating different viewpoints.**

**Indicative content:**

**Desirable and necessary**

- Necessary to stop the trends towards falling turn-outs in elections.
- Has worked quite effectively in some other countries.
- Voting is part of a civic duty. Sanctions may be necessary if people don't exercise it.
- Desirable and necessary if it allows the individual voter freedom of choice to be able to abstain.
- Needed to tackle growing alienation in British politics.

**Undesirable and unnecessary**

- Threat to personal freedom. It is up to individual voters to decide whether or not they wish to vote and it is their responsibility to make the decision.
- May not be a candidate/party that an individual voter wishes to vote for.
- Symptomatic of 'nanny state' / 'big brother' mentality.
- May be difficult to enforce and fines likely to be unpopular.
- Erroneous to think that a single measure can 'revive democracy'.
- Threat to a tradition that seems to work.
- May lead to more spoilt ballot papers.

**Mark Scheme:**

- Level I:** Simple, perhaps mostly unexplained points reflecting limited knowledge and understanding (AO1). Little interpretation/explanation (AO3), perhaps relying heavily on words of source. Undeveloped answer with some knowledge/understanding (AO1) but with very narrow range of points/interpretation (AO3). Perhaps variable communication. (1-3 marks)
- Level II:** Demonstrates sufficient knowledge and understanding (AO1) to provide some, perhaps limited, ability to recognise a viewpoint (AO4) and to formulate a limited range of arguments relating to whether or not, and to what extent, compulsory voting is undesirable/unnecessary (AO3). Mostly clearly structured and communicated (AO2). Perhaps some evidence of seeking to reach a conclusion though this might be more implied than explicit. Maximum of 6 marks if deals only one side of the argument is given. (4-7 marks)
- Level III:** Demonstrates good knowledge and understanding (AO1) with clear and sustained ability to develop arguments in a 'to what extent' context (AO3) and to recognise a viewpoint and the extent to which different perspectives may be taken (AO4). Clear, justified arguments (AO3) and clearly structured/communicated (AO2) leading to conclusion which acknowledges the validity of different positions on the issue of compulsory voting (AO4). (8-10 marks)

**AO1 : 2 marks; AO2 : 2 marks; AO3 :2 marks; AO4 : 4 marks**

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**Q5 Read Source E. Using examples from Source E, at least one other source, and your own knowledge, discuss the most effective ways of increasing the interest and participation of young people in politics.**

**(15 marks)**

Answers may reflect a selection of points (most likely to be) drawn from sources and also from the candidate's own knowledge. The focus should be on different methods of seeking to make *young people* more interested in politics and ways of encouraging their participation in politics (hopefully beyond the act of voting).

**Summary of what the sources say**

**Source E**

- Experiment allowing parents to take their children into the voting booth.
- Use of alternative polling stations such as supermarkets and post offices.
- Voting by text from mobiles as in *Big Brother/Strictly Come Dancing*.

**Source D**

- Compulsory voting, as used in other countries might be used to increase turnouts, decrease alienation and enhance civic participation.
- Voters might have the option to abstain and fines may be necessary to enforce any compulsory voting law.

**Source C**

- There is voter apathy but interest in politics is still high – people join pressure groups, sign petitions and go on protest marches.
- Young people far less likely to vote/be interested in politics than older people.
- Our perceptions of politicians are primarily negative.

**Source B**

- Call for a change from 'first past the post' voting to proportional representation to tackle low turnouts and political disengagement.
- Need to find a system which retains close contact between voters and constituency MPs.

**Source A**

- Lowering of the voting age if linked to package of citizenship education.
- Address the problems of low turnouts and falling party membership.
- Change perception that all power resides with the Prime Minister.
- Cap individual party donations and further reform of the House of Lords.

**Own knowledge**

- Reduce the voting age unconditionally.
- Adults should take the views of young people more seriously.
- Find ways of making politics less 'sleazy'.

- Show how politics can be more relevant to the lives of young people.
- Raise status of citizenship courses in school (only short course GCSE at present with very little post 16 development).
- Politicians should address issues particularly relevant to young people.
- Involve young celebrities as role models to encourage participation.

**Mark Scheme for CONTENT (AO1, AO3, AO4)**

- Level I:** Limited knowledge and understanding (AO1) leading to undeveloped/insufficiently relevant/very narrow comments from source(s)/own knowledge with very limited analysis/interpretation (AO3) relating to ways of increasing interest/participation of young people in politics. (1–4 marks)
- Level II:** Evidence of sufficient knowledge and understanding (AO1) using sources/own knowledge and leading to some, perhaps limited, ideas and arguments to support analysis/interpretation (AO3) relating to ways of increasing interest/participation of young people in politics. Perhaps developed to lead to some form of conclusion which might be more implied than explicit, possibly recognising validity of conflicting views (AO4). (5–8 marks)
- Level III:** Clear evidence of more detailed knowledge and understanding (AO1) using both sources and own knowledge and leading to clear and more developed ideas and arguments to support analysis/interpretation (AO3) relating to ways of increasing interest/participation of young people in politics. Recognisable conclusion recognising validity of conflicting views and tentative nature of any conclusions according to how knowledge about complex issues is obtained (AO4). (9–11 marks)

**Mark Scheme for COMMUNICATION (AO2)**

- 4 marks:** Clear organisation, structure and relevance; fluent with only minor errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 3 marks:** Mostly clear organisation, structure and relevance; mostly fluency with few errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 2 marks:** Often limited organisation and structure and/or limited relevance; linked fluency with some errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 1 mark:** Lacking organisation, structure and fluency and/or very limited relevance/bullet-pointed answer. Frequent errors in expression, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 0 marks:** No response or response that is wholly irrelevant.

**Note:**

- A totally irrelevant response should receive 0 marks for communication.
- Responses at LEVEL I FOR CONTENT should be awarded up to 2 marks for communication.
- Responses at LEVEL II FOR CONTENT should *normally* be awarded up to 3 marks for communication.
- Responses at LEVEL III FOR CONTENT may be awarded up to 4 marks for communication.
- THE MARK FOR **COMMUNICATION** must not exceed the mark for **CONTENT**.

**AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 4 marks; AO3: 3 marks; AO4: 4 marks**

**Distribution of marks across the questions and Assessment Objectives  
for the Sources and Issues Analysis**

Question Numbers		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	AO marks per unit
<b>Assessment Objectives</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>
	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Total marks per Question</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>50</b>