



# General Certificate of Education

## General Studies 6766

### *Specification B*

#### *GSB5 Power – Regulation*

# Mark Scheme

## *2006 examination – June 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.

## Unit 5

## (GSB5 Power - Regulation)

Answers given in the mark schemes are not necessarily definitive. Other valid points must be credited, even if they do not appear in the mark scheme.

Marks should be awarded in these bands:

- Band One**     9 – 12
- A good response which demonstrates awareness of the issue.
  - Language and communication skills complement the answer resulting in a concise, logical and clear structure, using appropriate style and expression and accurate use of grammar.
  - Evidence is well marshalled; examples are well chosen and help clarify assertions.
  - Understanding of the source is shown, and of the possibilities and limitations of different approaches to the subject. Facts and opinions and implicit and explicit values are clearly distinguished.
- Band Two**     5 – 8
- A competent response which shows some awareness of the issue.
  - Language and communication skills are reasonably good and the structure is reasonably clear and logical. Style and expression are usually appropriate with some errors of grammar.
  - Evidence is moderately well marshalled using a few relevant examples accompanied by some explanation.
  - Some understanding of the source is shown and there is some recognition of the limitations of different approaches to the subject. Facts and opinions and implicit and explicit values are sometimes distinguished.
- Band Three**   1 – 4
- A limited response in which only one or two basic points are identified.
  - Language and communication skills are, at best, adequate. Clarity of expression is marred by poor style and inaccuracies of grammar.
  - Evidence is poorly marshalled, with arguments tending to one side only, and examples being basic and few.
  - Little understanding of the source is shown or of the distinction between fact and opinion and implicit and explicit values.
- Band Four**     0
- No response, or no relevant information.

**1 Modern technology ensures that our domestic lives have become easier.**

**How far do you believe that this statement is valid?**

**(12 marks)**

**Is valid:**

- (a) far less drudgery with machines which can take the strain e.g. washing machines, microwaves etc.
- (b) more time is available for other activities if less time is spent on domestic chores
- (c) internet shopping allows greater flexibility in organising domestic lives
- (d) modern technology ensures empowerment in fields such as communications e.g. e-mail, mobile phones, leisure e.g. computer games and domestic life generally
- (e) cars allow us to go where and when we want
- (f) greater choice.

**Is not valid:**

- (n) family life appears to be more stressful. There seems to be no extra time to organise our lives
- (o) any extra time accrued has gone towards extra employment and/or career opportunities aiming to fulfil aspirational or affluence desires
- (p) physical drudgery has been replaced by machine watching drudgery e.g. working with computers, repetitive strain injury, etc.
- (q) peoples lives have changed in recent decades and it is difficult to make comparisons
- (r) the myth promulgated that everyone would buy on line, or that commercial companies would dominate, has not come to fruition
- (s) total reliance on technology creates over-dependence and when modern technology fails our lives are made very difficult e.g. computer viruses, car breakdowns
- (t) mobile phone drudgery – always having to be available even when ‘off duty’.

A balanced response is preferable: however, it is possible for a one-sided answer to reach Band One.

**2 How far do you believe that the UK tax system is fair?**

*(12 marks)*

**Is fair:**

- (a) we are all members of society and should make contributions to the well-being of that society
- (b) many of the taxes are progressive i.e. linked with ability to pay e.g. Income Tax.
- (c) everyone receives a basic return on items such as healthcare
- (d) some taxes have been changed to become more equitable e.g. Council Tax replaced the Poll Tax
- (e) choice re. Indirect Tax; we can decide which items to buy.

**Is not fair:**

- (n) some taxes are regressive and take no note of ability to pay e.g. VAT, car tax
- (o) more affluent members of society can afford financial expertise to be able to avoid paying certain taxes
- (p) taxes are universal and the income from them cannot necessarily be directed to the areas that the taxpayer may want
- (q) there should be only minimum taxation, people would then be able to purchase what services etc. they required
- (r) many elements of the tax system ensure that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer e.g. tax “havens”
- (s) why should people pay inheritance tax after they have paid tax all of their lives?
- (t) the present Income Tax banding system benefits the highest earners
- (u) We pay NI at 11% on £4 264–32 700 per annum, then at 1% thereafter – higher earners benefit more.

NB Credit may be given for comparisons with other countries’ tax systems.

A balanced response is preferable: however, it is possible for a one-sided answer to reach Band One.

**3 To what extent do pressure groups add to or detract from democracy in the UK?**

**(12 marks)**

**Add to:**

- (a) pressure groups bring issues to the attention of both public and Parliament which may otherwise be ignored
- (b) many groups are consulted by Government on policy matters e.g. AA/RAC re. transport policy
- (c) in an era of large governmental majorities pressure groups provide a real opposition to the government e.g. protests against the Iraq War 2003
- (d) they make the government “think” forcing them to rehearse arguments over policy issues
- (e) they allow ordinary citizens to become more involved in the democratic process of the UK
- (f) they can ensure that power is not monopolised by a relatively small “clique” or minority
- (g) they are a product of freedom of association, which is a fundamental principle of liberal democracy
- (h) they increase social cohesion and political stability by providing a “safety valve” for individual and collective grievances and demands.

**Detract:**

- (n) many pressure groups are single issue groups, they are narrow or limited in scope and rarely appreciate the wider picture
- (o) they are not elected and have no real constituency
- (p) single issue groups can have a disproportionate influence compared to the size of their membership
- (q) they are not accountable i.e. they can fulfil their aims and not be as concerned about consequences e.g. Animal Liberation Front
- (r) direct action groups can be perceived as the only way to get things done e.g. fuel protesters (2000). This can lead to violence, potential anarchy and a breakdown of the democratic process.

A balanced response is preferable: however, it is possible for a one-sided answer to reach Band One.

**4 The use of credit, debit and store cards encourages people to become large-scale debtors.**

**How valid an assertion is this?**

**(12 marks)**

**Is a valid assertion:**

- (a) many consistently overspend with the attitude of “spend today – tomorrow will take care of itself”
- (b) long distance shopping encourages the use of credit cards
- (c) unemployment is low, thus there is not a general fear of job losses
- (d) increases in lending rate seem to have had little effect on spending
- (e) availability of different cards ensures that people can always obtain a new card
- (f) no longer seen as shameful to be in debt
- (g) there is active encouragement by elements of the media to run up large debts
- (h) student loans, top up fees mean that many begin their careers owing a large amount, hence it becomes a vicious circle
- (i) consumers encouraged by “special offers” to take out store cards which charge very high rates of interest.

**Is not a valid assertion:**

- (n) a large proportion of the population do not use credit recklessly, many are paying credit card bills completely and hence are accruing no interest
- (o) customers are taking the long term view and feel secure that they can meet their commitments
- (p) many use credit cards to obtain points which can be used for bonuses e.g. Air miles
- (q) all card companies take note of salary levels before setting the card limit
- (r) many are using low interest rate offers to transfer debts from several credit cards to one card, with the intention of paying off the debt sooner
- (s) it is not the card that causes debt but the consumer society which encourages materialism and over-spending
- (t) bad debts prevent people obtaining new credit.

A balanced response is preferable: however, it is possible for a one-sided answer to reach Band One.

**5 To what extent do you think that television companies should take notice of complaints about programmes from the public?**

*(12 marks)*

**Should take notice of the complaint:**

- (a) if the public is unhappy about a programme or series of programmes, this could lead to smaller viewing figures with resultant repercussions for the television company
- (b) watershed hours do not work with the advent of video/DVD recorders
- (c) some control is needed to ensure that there is not total licentiousness
- (d) the public could ensure that material which may invade individual rights and privacy can be regulated
- (e) it ensures that the governors/board of directors of television companies are in touch with grass roots opinions inside the country
- (f) should treat moral values of society with respect and recognise correct boundary lines.

**Should not take notice of complaints:**

- (n) no-one is forced to watch or listen to any material they perceive as dubious
- (o) we live in a sophisticated society that can decide for itself what it wants to see, hear etc.
- (p) we are all individuals: we should not have our arts/media tastes prescribed for us
- (q) we all have a basic right to express ourselves
- (r) many complaints are orchestrated by groups who have a particular axe to grind
- (s) television companies have agendas, which it is their duty to see through
- (t) a multi-value cosmopolitan society means someone will always be offended.

A balanced response is preferable: however, it is possible for a one-sided answer to reach Band One.

**Distribution of Assessment Objective marks across Unit 5**

<b>Question Numbers</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>AO marks per unit</b>	
<b>Assessment Objectives</b>	<b>AO1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>
	<b>AO2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>AO3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>
	<b>AO4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Marks per question</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60</b>	