



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Mark scheme January 2004

GCE

Government and Politics

Unit GOV1

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CRITERIA FOR MARKING

Introduction

The AQA's revised Government and Politics specification has been designed to be objectives-led in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the specification. The assessment objectives for A Level and AS are the same, but the weightings are different at AS and A2. Details of the weightings are given in paragraphs 7.2 and 8.4 of the specification.

The schemes of marking reflect these objectives. The mark scheme which follows is of the *levels of response* type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the skills required in the context of their knowledge and understanding of Government and Politics. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for examiners but they cannot cover all eventualities. Candidates should be given credit for partially complete answers. Where appropriate, candidates should be given credit for referring to recent and contemporary developments in Government and Politics.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other options.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the general principals of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

Using a levels of response mark scheme

Good examining is about the **consistent** application of judgement. Mark schemes provide a framework within which examiners exercise their judgement. This is especially so in subjects like Government and Politics which in part rely upon analysis, evaluation, argument and explanation. With this in mind, examiners should use the Assessment Matrix alongside the detailed mark scheme for each question. The Assessment Matrix provides a framework ensuring a consistent, generic, source from which the detailed mark schemes are derived. This supporting framework ensures a consistent approach within which candidates' responses are marked according to the level of demand and context of each question.

Examiners should initially make a decision about which Level any given response should be placed in. Having determined the appropriate Level the examiners must then choose the precise mark to be given within that Level. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think first of the mid-range within the Level, where that Level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates' responses to the same question might then suggest whether the middle mark is unduly generous or severe.

In making decisions away from the middle of the Level, examiners should ask themselves questions relating to candidate attainment, including the quality of language. The more positive the answers, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid "bunching" of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided. A candidate's script should be considered by asking "Is it:-

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced or markedly better in some areas than others?
- generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded)?
- well presented as to general quality of language?"

The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (a) questions (Total: 8 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Levels 3-4 (3-4 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate or generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p> <p>Where appropriate, the candidate is able to illustrate his/her answer with relevant evidence/example(s).</p>	<p>Levels 3-4 (2 marks) The candidate provides an appropriate analysis of political data, concept(s) or term(s) showing an awareness of differing viewpoints where appropriate.</p>	<p>Levels 3-4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary.</p>
	<p>Levels 1-2 (1-2 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight or basic knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p> <p>The candidate may illustrate his/her answer with evidence/example(s) of limited relevance.</p>	<p>Levels 1-2 (1 mark) The candidate provides a superficial or partial analysis of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p>	<p>Levels 1-2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates with limited clarity and effectiveness using a limited political vocabulary.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (Total: 22 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (10-11 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that deploys relevant knowledge and understanding to address the requirements of the question and that demonstrates significant contextual awareness.</p> <p>The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides analysis which displays sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with valid and precise comparisons. The answer includes relevant and convincing interpretations or explanations.</p>	<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate communicates clear arguments and explanations using accurate political vocabulary. The candidate produces answers with a clear sense of direction leading towards a coherent conclusion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (7-9 marks) The candidate demonstrates generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates adequate contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5-6 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides clear arguments and explanations and demonstrates awareness of differing viewpoints and a recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with some sound comparison.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and explanations using some political vocabulary. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 2 (4-6 marks) The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationship between them. He/she makes a limited attempt at addressing the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3-4 marks) The candidate offers a simplistic evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour and begins to construct arguments which contain basic explanation.</p> <p>The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 marks) The candidate attempts to develop an argument using basic political vocabulary. Where a conclusion is offered, its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
	<p>Level 1 (1-3 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight and/or incomplete knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and limited awareness of the relationship between them.</p> <p>The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question. Only superficial awareness of the context of the question is evident and the few examples cited are often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1-2 marks) The candidate makes a partial attempt to evaluate political institutions, processes and behaviour. Arguments offered are superficial. There is very limited awareness of parallels or comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The answer relies upon narrative which is not fully coherent and which is expressed without using political vocabulary. A conclusion is either not offered or it is not related to the preceding material.</p>

1**Total for this question: 30 marks**

- (a) Explain the term *coalition partners* used in the extract. (8 marks)

This may be explained in terms of two or more parties collaborating or cooperating in government or opposition. The nature of the links may be more or less formal in nature – with the stimulus providing an example of the former along with those operating in devolved government, and the Lib-Lab ‘pact’ and Lib-Dem participation in cabinet committee as examples of the latter. Hung councils may also be cited as examples. Some may refer to the SDP-Liberal Alliance. Forming coalitions brings advantages (eg office holding) and disadvantages (eg horse-trading and compromises on policy). It is most unlikely that candidates will refer to the theoretical literature on coalition formation.

- (b) “A major disadvantage of proportional representation is that it can put parties with limited support in power.” Discuss. (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of the operation of PR in principle. The stimulus and previous question on coalitions should trigger knowledge of electoral outcomes from proportional and majoritarian systems. Candidates may argue that majoritarian systems, allowing FPTP as a legitimate example, can also result in parties winning power who are not popular in terms of their share of the vote. There may be reference to the contested argument that majoritarian systems encourage a two (or few) party system with government dominated by one party. On the other hand, proportional systems result in multi-party systems which necessitate coalition formation for government. Examples may be cited, such as the Israeli system, and the undue influence of minority parties may also be mentioned.

AO2 Analysis and evaluation/assessment of proportionality. All electoral systems are a trade-off between advantages and disadvantages, and PR may be discussed in this context with reference to the specific disadvantage mentioned in the statement offered for discussion. Can coalition government, including ‘unpopular’ minority parties, still represent electoral opinion, although not as expressed through the ballot box? Is this more/less desirable than the divide and rule of FPTP which can maintain an ‘unpopular’ winning party in power? Is the list system more likely to keep unpopular parties in power than STV (which can exclude unpopular parties by use of thresholds/quotas). Does the second ballot or supplementary vote provide a compromise between proportionality and exclusion of unpopular parties? A reflective conclusion should attempt an evaluation of the statement.

2

Total for this question: 30 marks

- (a) Explain the phrase *the wording of the referendum question* used in the extract. (8 marks)

The actual wording or phrasing of the question(s) the electorate votes on. The importance of the wording may be discussed in terms of different wording resulting in potentially different answers. Some argue that complex issues cannot be reduced to a question requiring a simple yes/no response. Examples, not essential, may include Bill Cash's tortuous referendum question, or that of the Referendum Party. Some might argue that the wording need not be crucial since there is a hidden question which is being asked (Hague's internal party referendum really a vote of confidence, also de Gaulle).

- (b) "Referendums are alien to the British tradition of politics." Discuss. (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of Attlee's famous comment in terms of material about various referendums – Labour's only national referendum on continued membership of the EEC; the various referendums on devolution in Scotland and Wales as well as those relating to Northern Ireland (which may also include reference to referendums in the Irish Republic); various local referendums on directly-elected mayors and other issues; the London Assembly; private referendums, such as those organised by the Daily Mail and Brian Souter.

AO2 Analysis and assessment of changes that have taken place in British political culture, such as constitutional change, Europeanisation, decline of deference and rising public expectations to participate, which have led towards adoption of referendums in order to legitimise decisions. Some argue that the end of the cold war has 'loosened up' British politics resulting in, for example, declining party loyalty with the disappearance of the threat that once instilled discipline. New issues cause divisions within, not between, parties. Traditions have changed, it might be argued, with Attlee's certainties and stability replaced by a rapid pace in political developments. Referendums are increasingly appropriate in the 'new' politics of the 1990s-2000s. Others may argue that referendums are alien in a world of representative democracy since they favour the wealthy (eg Souter), or might encourage 'irrational' behaviour along the lines of Proposition 13. Viewed in this light, referendums are politically dangerous. A reflective conclusion which attempts the requested evaluation.

3

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *tabloid newspapers* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Tabloid, redtop, pejoratively low-brow or gutter press, refers to mass circulation papers such as the *Sun*, *Star*, *Mirror*. These papers usually contain limited political content compared with the quality press (*Times*, *Guardian*, *Telegraph* and *Independent*). News tends to be presented in a particularly populist manner (anti-foreign, anti-Euro, highly-partisan, anti-left, etc). Politically significant because of their relatively large circulations and predominantly working-class readerships. In particular, the significance of the *Sun* may be mentioned. The political significance of the mid-market tabloids may be mentioned, especially in influencing the political agenda with the example of the *Mail*. Mention may be made of the significance of ownership. Also mention may be made of the tabloid *Independent* and *Times*, as experiments in publishing which are ‘exceptions to the rule’.

(b) To what extent, if any, does the mass media influence voting behaviour? (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of different types of influence, such as partisan or cultural (gender, class, etc) as well as forms of the media (TV, radio, press, etc). Knowledge that TV and radio are obliged by law to be impartial over time, whereas the press is free to pursue a partisan line. Understanding that influence can be located in keeping issues off the political agenda as well as pushing issues up the agenda. Press may wield influence through discrediting individuals or causes.

AO2 Analysis of the influence of the media over voting – assessment of whether the media influences public opinion or follows public opinions. There may be discussion of limited reporting of the 2001 general election campaign within this framework, or discussion of the changing editorial politics of newspapers in the run-up to the 1997 general election. Can there be hidden bias in the broadcasting media which discredits one or other party? Accusations may be explored in this context, such as Blair’s Broadcasting Corporation or Labour’s argument with the BBC following the war with Iraq. The focus may be on voting in terms of when the decision is made and competing influences. Does the media reinforce an already made decision, with inconsistent information rejected? There may be some discussion of electronic media and their (potential?) influence on voting behaviour. There may be a discussion of theoretical perspectives concerning the working and influence of the mass media. A reflective conclusion should attempt the required assessment.

4

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *gender gap* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Differences in voting patterns between men and women (and increasingly gay/lesbian in US analyses). Where there are no differences, it will be claimed that there is no gender gap. A feature of the 1960s (and 1992), but generally seen as absent from contemporary voting behaviour. It was conventionally argued that, for example, women were less exposed to trade unionism and workplace conflict and thus more conservatively inclined than men. With more women at work this distinction had disappeared. Alternatively, some argue that similar statistics may hide gender/age differences with older males and females differing from each other as well as younger males and females. In this sense, any gender gap is seen primarily as an artefact of age differences. Finally, some argue that while there may be no substantial differences between males and females in voting patterns, there are distinctive male and female perspectives on political issues.

(b) To what extent were the images of party leaders a factor in explaining recent voting behaviour? (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of the nature of political image, either party image which embraces the leader's image, or a distinct leader's image. Discussion of unpopular leaders and the nature of their negative images. Examples might include Michael Foot, John Major, William Hague and IDS. Others might discuss leaders where images changed from positive to negative, such as Blair or Thatcher. The leader's image may be based on carefully spun media presentation – successful in the case of Blair, but far less so in the case of Hague. Other brief examples might include, for example, Thatcher as the warrior-leader who instigated change in the political culture away from collectivism towards individualism; Blair initially as moderniser-leader who changed Labour into New Labour and promised to 'clean up' politics. Knowledge of Howard's public image.

AO2 Analysis and assessment of the influence of the party leader's image on voting behaviour. Other factors may be referred to, but this should not be 'converted' into a general influences on voting behaviour answer, for which the candidate has a pre-packaged, rote-learned response. Impact of image may be discussed in terms of, for example, the 'Blair effect' and electoral consequences. Failure of IDS's image amongst Conservative members to make an impact in an increasingly presidential style of general election. Some may have information at hand to aid assessments, such as approval ratings when unpopular leaders (Heath) beat the more popular (Wilson), or when negative revelations regarding Ashdown were followed by an increase in popularity. The impact of changing images might also be related to electoral outcomes (Thatcher from Falklands to poll tax; Major's problems in managing the party and increasing sleaze; Blair and declining trust with Brent by-election loss, etc). There should be a reflective conclusion which includes an assessment of the leaders' images on recent voting behaviour.