



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Mark scheme January 2004

GCE

Government and Politics

Unit GOV2

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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 *canvassing* used in the extract. (8 marks)

The work of party activists in meeting the public, traditionally by going from ‘door to door’, but increasingly by phone and e-mail, in order to win or confirm support for their party. Canvassing is seen by some as important in ‘bringing out the vote’, and some victories in specific constituencies have been interpreted in part as the result of heavy canvassing. Canvassing may have greater significance on marginal constituencies.

- (b) Assess the opportunities for effective political participation that parties provide for their members. (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of the ‘hierarchy’ of participation referred to in the stimulus, from grassroots party activism to political office holding. The nature and purpose of participation, from selection of local candidates to election of party leader. Opportunities to influence policy – in committees, at conferences, in ballots, face-to-face interaction with elected members. There may be discussion or focus on a particular party’s internal organisation and the opportunities it provides for participation. Some candidates might note that despite the democratisation of political parties, memberships are falling.

AO2 Analysis and assessment of effectiveness of the various opportunities within the hierarchy. Limitations on effectiveness at lower levels (leaderships generally ignore unwelcome or hostile conference votes). Although effectiveness increases with opportunities higher up the hierarchy, there are still limitations – examples might include the relative powerlessness of backbenchers. Rival sources might be explored by candidates, such as party advisers or even focus groups. Some candidates might make evaluations, such as the limited effectiveness of opportunities of party members is desirable since, for example, they are generally more ideological than the electorate at large, they are too poorly informed to influence increasingly technical matters of policy or, as with the Conservatives, they are more elderly and less sympathetic towards contemporary social trends. There may be a comparison of opportunities for participation between two or more political parties. There should be a reflective conclusion which attempts the assessment required in the set question.

2

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *minority parties* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

The source identifies two minority parties which may be referred to by candidates in their responses which focus on parties with limited electoral support in national terms. There has been an increase in the number of minority parties contesting elections, some being single-issue, others having a broader manifesto. Some may refer to the emergence of the BNP in the local government of some northern cities. Parties such as the SNP and Labour began as minority parties but have grown, arguably, into major political parties. Minor parties may not want seats, but they can influence electoral outcomes by taking votes away from the major parties disproportionately in marginal seats.

(b) 'It is difficult for any one party to represent electorates at local, national and European levels.' Discuss.

(22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of multi-level electorates and implications for parties as set out in the extract. Parties operate at constituency level with some regional organisation and national headquarters. This may also be seen in terms of the parliamentary party, the mass membership, the leadership and bureaucracy. The same electorate, differently configured, votes in local, national and Euro elections. But campaigns and issues may vary at each level. Some candidates might argue that the extract ignores the impact of devolution on party representation, and point to the growing gap between Scottish Labour and New Labour.

AO2 Analysis and assessment of party effectiveness in representing multi-level electorates. Some candidates might argue that this is relatively easy for an ideological party since it appeals to, for example, socialists at all levels. However, this task is much harder for 'pragmatic' parties with catch-all appeal since the agendas at local, national and European levels may differ or even contradict. This occurred with the gulf between Conservative Europhiles and Europhobes. Some candidates might focus specifically on the European Parliament and the scope for tensions between Westminster and Strasbourg, again more for the Conservatives with the danger of MEPs going native and giving greater support to the institutions of the EU (and Euro) than exists in the Commons and country. For Labour, its links with Europe are less stressful since, arguably, it has a history of contact and cooperation with European partners since Labour was a member of the Socialist International, etc, and has regularly fraternised with European social democrats. For Labour, the difficulty may come in representing English and Scottish constituencies. The relatively low turnouts at local and Euro levels might also be mentioned by some candidates in the context of difficulties for representation. There should be a reflective conclusion which attempts the assessment required of the set question.

3

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *pressure group politics* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Reference to the world of pressure group politics might include recruiting members, seeking publicity and attempting to influence policy through lobbying. There may be some reference to a pressure group typology, such as insider/outsider distinctions which are used to contrast differing forms of pressure group politics.

(b) Discuss, with examples, how the effectiveness of pressure groups might be measured. (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of pressure groups in terms of effectiveness. Candidates are likely to define effectiveness in terms of influencing policy or changing social attitudes. They should provide examples to illustrate points made, frequently citing the NFU, BMA, etc as examples of the former, and animal rights and environmentalists as examples of the latter. Some may define effectiveness more specifically, for example, in terms of winning media support (the Snowdrop campaign), causing massive disruption (fuel protest), winning parliamentary support (first round defence of keeping Sunday special), etc. Such definitions must be plausible and described or explained in the context of a wider framework which explores the impact of pressure group activity.

AO2 Analysis and evaluation of measures of pressure group effectiveness might utilise one or other pressure group typology as an organising framework. Some might compare/contrast corporatism with, for example, the Thatcher years and use the trade unions as an example of ‘beer and sandwiches’ access to Number 10 before political marginalisation. Attitude of government towards pressure group input might be discussed in terms of conviction/consensus/big ten approach of policy-makers to pressure groups. Impact on policy might provide a measure of effectiveness (with Formula One frequently cited) – with damage limitation in the face of a reforming government also being a measure of effectiveness. Sympathy of other actors, such as the media, EU, other pressure groups, etc might be considered. Some might consider the effectiveness of groups, such as NSMs, which have changed the political culture, such as feminists and environmentalists, contrasted with those which have not, such as pacifists. Cause and interest groups might provide some candidates with an alternative framework within which to measure the effectiveness of pressure groups. A reflective conclusion should consider how the effectiveness of pressure groups might be measured.

4

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *lobbying government* used in the extract. (8 marks)

The behaviour of pressure groups in contacting elected representatives or public sector bureaucrats (civil servants, local government officers) with a view to making representations concerning policy. The form of such behaviours may depend upon opportunities for access ('guaranteed' face-to-face contact with a minister, letter, petition, etc). The stimulus may guide some candidates into a discussion of 'who lobbies on behalf of whom' and issues of 'authentic' lobbying in terms of the disabled.

(b) 'Pressure groups play a vital role within democracy.' Discuss. (22 marks)

AO1 Knowledge and understanding of the role of pressure groups in a democracy. Candidates are likely to discuss pressure groups in terms of widening participation (especially at a time of falling turnouts), providing information to government through consultation which improves the quality of policy, providing information to the opposition which improves scrutiny of government, the role of pressure groups in incorporating marginal interests and thus resulting in greater social cohesion, providing an additional intermediary between government and society, facilitating pluralism, etc. Candidates may also discuss the role of pressure groups within a democracy in terms of promoting elitism, facilitating the selfish defence of privilege and established interests, the construction of undemocratic policy networks and closed government, the promotion of social conflict, etc.

AO2 Analysis and evaluation of the importance of the role played by pressure groups – using their knowledge and understanding of pressure groups, candidates must reach an evaluation; for example, do pressure groups help distribute power throughout society and play a positive role in strengthening democracy, or do pressure groups simply increase the power of the already powerful. Some candidates might argue that the importance of the role of pressure groups has changed over time; for example, less vital to democracy during corporatism and more so throughout New Labour. A reflective conclusion should include some evaluation on the role of pressure groups within a democracy.