GCE 2004
June Series

AQA

Mark Scheme

Government and Politics
AS Unit 1 – Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour (GOV1)

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.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING
AS/A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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 principles 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.

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (GOV1, GOV2, GOV3)

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

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

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (GOV1, GOV2, GOV3)

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

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
	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. The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.	**Level 4** **(7 marks)** The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories. 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.	**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.
	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. The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.	**Level 3** **(5-6 marks)** The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories. 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.	**Level 3** **(3 marks)** The candidate communicates arguments and explanations using some political vocabulary. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
	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 to address the requirements of the question. The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.	**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. The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.	**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.
	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. 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.	**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.	**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.

June 2004

Unit GOV1 – Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour

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

(a)   Explain the term *parliamentary majority* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

The number of seats the winning party has over the combined total of all other parties. Some may reduce by one to take account of the Speaker in the case of Westminster. Parliamentary arithmetic is important since with a small parliamentary majority, death of MPs (Wilson post-1964) or rebellions (Major) may weaken or endanger survival. With a huge majority, a massive rebellion may even strengthen a leader (Blair). A hung parliament results from having no party with a parliamentary majority.

(b)   "All electoral systems are biased." Discuss with reference to electoral systems that you have
        studied.   *(22 marks)*

There may be an introductory discussion of desired features of an electoral system: fairness in representing political opinion; constituency-MP link; outcomes including effective government, gender and ethnic considerations; simple to operate and understand, etc. Since no one system embraces all these desired features, all systems are 'biased'. Others may consider specifically party bias, big party bias, etc.

FPTP biased towards Labour, not only exaggerating the lead of the winning party, but also helping Labour to be the winning party. Concentration and distribution of vote, disadvantaging Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. Also minority parties.

Some candidates may discuss the two ballot system with reference to the recent French elections, which provided electors with a second choice between candidates of the right and far right.

AV (or Jenkins' modification) advantages leading parties but also redistributes the lowest value votes of the least popular candidates on parity with top value votes of popular candidates.

STV favours third parties, but not minority parties unlikely to reach the quota?

List systems favour minority parties. Closed lists favour parties' choices over electorate's choices?

Hybrid systems.

A conclusion likely to accept bias (electoral systems not a neutral technicality) but arrive at some sort of supported judgement based on the examination of more than one system.

---

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

(a)   Explain the term "*PR Top-up" votes* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

Additional members elected by list system with such votes. Extract shows Labour would have won under FPTP only, but whilst PR top–up votes increased Labour's total from lists, they increased seats for other parties to a greater extent. Labour left as the largest party, but without a majority. Concern that top–up votes elect second rate/second class politicians.

(b)   "Different electoral systems result in different ways of governing." Discuss.   *(22 marks)*

Conservative Party under FPTP in Scottish general elections; from most popular to Doomsday scenario. Conservative Westminster/Labour Scotland. Contrast elections to Scottish Parliament. Conservatives increase level of representation but SNP become the opposition. Limited tensions between Labour-led Scottish Executive and Labour Westminster – future possibilities.

New politics replacing adversarial politics? Creation of new distinctly Scottish/Welsh policies? Situation in Wales.

Pressure for further constitutional change – English regional assemblies to regain 'balance'?

Euro-elections: representation of minority parties. Potential for change in new EU structures? Consequences of electoral reform at local level, from directly elected mayors to local government.

Conclusion, which may consider Jenkins.

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

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

Candidates may refer to any of the 'hierarchies of participation' to support explanations, such as the ladder of participation, gladiators/spectators/apathetics, etc. Activists seen as committed to politics; higher levels of participation in parties, pressure groups or New Social Movements. Some may argue that the term sounds sinister, but should carry connotations of democracy. In a broad sense, activists include those who successfully stand for power as well as those active at local levels in unelected roles.

(b)   "Voting is predominantly a middle-class activity." Discuss.   *(22 marks)*

Traditional analyses of voting behaviour portrayed class parties and largely aligned voting patterns. It may be anticipated that some candidates may challenge the basis of the quotation. The largest class was the working class, and the size of the working class Tory vote was important in shaping electoral outcomes. But class is no longer such a significant factor in explaining voting. However, have middle class concerns come to dominate parties' electoral strategies as they compete for the support of middle Britain?

Decline of working class vote, or dealignment of working class? Labour heading towards becoming a regional working class party in terminal decline until modernisation under Kinnock/Smith/Blair.

Changes in occupational structure. Distribution of wealth, with any of the models cited such as underclass, 40/30/30, constituency of contentment, with implications for voting.

Middle Britain, the target of catch-all parties? Mrs Thatcher's victories in capturing the C2s, and Blair's appeal to natural Tory voters.

Turnout: highest among the middle classes (social capital, etc.), (Winchester top/Liverpool Riverside bottom in turnouts). Implications. Agenda set by middle class? Pro-business rather than pro-trade union? Media such as The Daily Mail set the agenda?

Conclusion, which may consider 'class and power' or the propensity of the middle class to vote and thus get recognised in election pledges.

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

(a)   Explain the term *election campaign* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

Formally seen as the period between the dissolution of Parliament and election day but, depending on political circumstances, can be much longer. In the run-up to 1997 there existed a 'permanent' election campaign. Delay in 2001 because of rural crisis. A period of intense party competition, expressed particularly via the mass media. Press campaigning, PPBs, TV coverage; also parties canvassing, the manifesto. Funding of campaigns may be mentioned in context.

(b)   Assess the influence of opinion polls and media coverage on general election results.
                                                                                   (22 marks)

Some candidates may refer to the stimulus for polls discussion, with local polling informing tactical voting. They may refer to the media generally or specifically, for example, to TV and/or newspapers.

Opinion polls: one of many possible factors behind the low turnout in 2001, since Labour consistently shown with a large winning lead. Much less intensive election coverage in newspapers and on terrestrial TV channels reinforcing this effect.

More generally, positive coverage of party/leader can be significant in close-run elections. Last minute swings can be based on small perceptual shifts. Rising poll ratings can provide credibility for (opposition) party(ies). Coverage of 'bad news' events or declining poll ratings can affect image and perceived competence of the party in government ('Black Wednesday', etc.).

Where parties have similar programmes/manifestos, focus may shift to leaders for differentiation. Where parties offer distinctive alternatives, media may judge against their preferences (longest suicide note in history in 1983, or Hague's irrelevant campaign in 2001).

Conclusion, which assesses the influence of polls and media, but which may argue that other factors may be involved which strengthen or weaken such influence, e.g. parliamentary arithmetic, policy failures, etc.