



General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics 5151

GOV3 Features of a Representative Democracy

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.

CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Introduction

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
	<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>

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
	<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>

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

	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 to address 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 *local government* used in the extract. (8 marks)

At minimum local council/authority; district/county council, etc. For higher marks, from own knowledge, additional information (eg key functions) or analysis (eg value of local government; relations with central government).

- (b) ‘Labour’s post-1997 reforms of devolved and regional government have radically changed the distribution of powers within the UK.’ Discuss. (22 marks)

At minimum, relevant information about powers of Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly with some attempt at analysis (eg Scottish Parliament’s greater powers). For higher marks, information also about reforms of London governance also with some attempt at analysis (eg significance of elected mayor as spokesperson for London). For levels 3 and 4 ‘radically changed’ should be specifically addressed. Possible to either agree with contention (eg more decisions taken locally by MSPs and AMs accountable to Scottish/Welsh electorates; London reforms have provided elected government for Greater London previously removed by Thatcher) or disagree (key decisions/budget still determined in Westminster/Whitehall). ‘Distribution of powers’ is a discriminator so reward answers which specifically address this (eg significance of policy divergence in Scotland and Wales; substantial reserved powers retained by Westminster and Whitehall). Reward answers which develop wider context (eg regional initiatives in England; EU dimension) and analysis (eg implications for England including ‘West Lothian’ question). Distribution of powers between central and local government, and powers of Northern Ireland Assembly, are relevant and should be rewarded but full marks possible without this.

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

- | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (a) Explain the term <i>European Parliament</i> used in the passage. (8 marks) |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

At minimum explanation that this is Parliament of European Union. For higher marks, from own knowledge, additional information (eg directly elected, powers) or analysis (eg democratic deficit).

- | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (b) ‘The House of Commons is too dominant within the Westminster Parliament.’ Discuss. (22 marks) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

At minimum knowledge and understanding of functions and powers of Houses of Commons and Lords, eg delaying powers of Lords (and of monarch if mentioned, but this not necessary even for full marks) with some attempt to analyse relative power (eg Parliament Acts give Commons dominance over legislation). For middle range marks, there should be additional information (eg composition of reformed Lords; importance of legislative revision role) and analysis (eg of how composition of Commons confers democratic legitimacy; Commons composition determines and largely provides government). For higher mark ranges, there should be a clear focus on ‘too dominant’ (eg key legislation initiated/determined by Commons, rarity of Lords rejecting key Commons legislation; [reformed] composition of Lords gives PM increased control of composition) but also recognition of Lords’ role (eg delaying power, constitutional check, revising chamber, ability to embarrass government – eg fox hunting, terrorism legislation 2005). Also reward relevant examples (eg use of delaying powers) and information (especially accurate information about recent reforms and ongoing debate about Lords).

3

Total for this question: 30 marks

- (a) Explain the term *junior ministers* used in the extract. (8 marks)

At minimum non-Cabinet ministers and example(s). For higher marks, from own knowledge, additional information (eg roles) or analysis (often future cabinet ministers, useful for prime ministerial patronage).

- (b) ‘Permanent, politically neutral and anonymous.’
How far does the British civil service still reflect these key features? (22 marks)

At minimum demonstration of understanding of terms and some analysis (eg why these features have arguably been undermined by developments such as special advisers, and Next Steps). For higher marks, additional information (such as evidence of politicisation) and analysis (eg of why these features have been considered important, the extent to which they are mutually ‘reinforcing’ and reasons arguably underlying their erosion). ‘Still’ is a discriminator and must be addressed for higher mark ranges. Possible to argue that features no longer fully apply and/or that special advisers do not undermine civil service neutrality and that for most civil servants traditional features still apply anyway. Reward also wider perspectives (eg implications for ministerial responsibility and for wider minister/civil service relationships; extent to which erosion of features have been accompanied by other gains (eg managerial efficiency; development of other more effective forms of accountability) and extent to which other features, such as unity, may also have been affected).

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

(a) Explain the term *Cabinet* used in the passage.

(8 marks)

For minimum group of senior ministers who advise PM, etc. For higher marks, some additional information (eg size, composition, functions) or analysis (decreased power relative to Prime Minister) from own knowledge.

(b) Discuss the view that modern British Prime Ministers are not too strong, but too weak.

(22 marks)

From extract statement and information in support of contention plus, from own knowledge, other factors underlying weakness (eg party divisions, power and standing of key ministers/colleagues, limited time/expertise etc). Analysis should attempt to balance these weaknesses against countervailing strengths (eg powers of appointment and dismissal, control of cabinet agenda, control over committees, influence within Parliament, party, media etc). Reward relevant examples for AO1 plus analyses (eg developments over time, similarities/contrast with presidential systems) for AO2. ‘Too’ strong and ‘too’ weak are discriminators so reward answers that address this. Accept Prime Ministerial/Cabinet government material where relevant and so long as it does not take over the answer.