

# Government and Politics

Advanced GCE A2 7834

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS 3834

## **Combined Mark Schemes And Report on the Units**

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**January 2006**

**3834/7834/MS/R/06J**

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All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the Report on the Examination.

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**Mark Scheme 2595  
January 2006**

**1 Using Source A and your own knowledge:****(a) describe the purpose of the two electoral systems used. [2]****(b) describe the main features of the two electoral systems used. [8]***(Specification: Local Elections etc)*

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>A02</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	8		2
<b>Level 4</b>	7-8		2
<b>Level 3</b>	5-6		2
<b>Level 2</b>	3-4		0-1
<b>Level 1</b>	0-2		0-1

AO1. Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of all aspects of local elections and mayoral elections. The obvious points in the Source are to elect councils, councillors and mayors and to give a range of political parties the chance of participating locally. For (a) reward any straightforward answer such as Councillors and Mayors. One mark for each and save the AO3 for the second part. For (b) expect to see mention of FPTP for local councillors the different system for mayors, but also reward those who go wider into areas such as fixed terms and turnout.

**2 Using Source B and your own knowledge, describe the main differences between the electoral systems used for the Northern Ireland Assembly and that used for general elections in the UK. [20]***(Specification: UK Parliamentary Elections. Northern Ireland Assembly Elections.)*

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>A02</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	16		4
<b>Level 4</b>	13-16		4
<b>Level 3</b>	9-12		3
<b>Level 2</b>	5-8		2
<b>Level 1</b>	0-4		0-1

AO1. Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the material available in the Source. There are lots of useful pointers in there. Again reward those who spot the date and therefore the fixed term. The fact that there is a first preference vote is an obvious point to make, but there are others from the Source such as the scope for minority parties as well as the obvious proportionality. For this question insist on a focus on *different* for L3 and above. Straight descriptions of the two systems should not get much beyond top L2. Basic knowledge of the UK system should help them well into L3 provided there is the required focus on differences. The different outcomes are also acceptable.

- 3 Using Source C and your own knowledge, discuss the view that the main trend in recent voting behaviour is the decline of class based voting. [30]

(Specification: Voting Behaviour. Trends)

	AO1	A02	AO3
<b>Maximum</b>	12	12	6
<b>Level 4</b>	10-12	10-12	5-6
<b>Level 3</b>	7-9	7-9	4
<b>Level 2</b>	4-6	4-6	2-3
<b>Level 1</b>	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1. Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the data available in the Source. It should not prove difficult to extrapolate data to back up both the case for and against. The scope for own knowledge here is huge so reward relevant information based on recent elections. If candidates want to keep it fairly academic, with a 'model' based answer, that is fine. If the approach is highly political and with a strong contemporary focus, then that is just as acceptable.

AO2. Reward fully any attempt to 'discuss'. This tends to be a topic, which candidates have a lot to say about. If it is clear from the factual content that there is implicit debate, then go to L3. For L4 there has to be a fairly clear view. A candidate who makes a very strong case one way only can still go to the top of L4, as it is a question 3 and therefore there is limited time. Ideally there should be an awareness of the both sides of the argument, but it would be unreasonable to enforce it in this case.

- 4 Using **Source D** and your own knowledge, discuss the view that the newspapers and the other mass media have a significant role in influencing voting behaviour.

[40]

(Specification: *The Role of the media in Campaigns. Voting Behaviour*)

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	16	16	8
<b>Level 4</b>	13-16	13-16	7-8
<b>Level 3</b>	9-12	9-12	5-6
<b>Level 2</b>	5-8	5-8	3-4
<b>Level 1</b>	0-4	0-4	0-2

AO1. Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the main points available in the Source. There is material in there to support both the case for and against, so expect to see it all pretty fully used before you go to L3. Points there include endorsement, reinforcing of views, indirect, agenda setting and the way in which leaders are portrayed. They should be able to make L2 in both assessment objectives simply by using the source well. Expect to see mention of other media than just the newspapers for the top end of L3 and above. Expect to see other factors for L3 and above in AO1.

AO2. Do not expect a full essay here, as always introductions and conclusions would be unreasonable for us to expect in the time. However this is a well known topic and for L3 and above there has to be real evidence of both balance and argument. Do not penalise those who approach it in a very textbook and 'academic' way, but on the other hand do not over-reward those whose answer is based on a superficial knowledge of the most recent general election.



**Mark Scheme 2596**  
**January 2006**

**1 Briefly describe the differences between a political party and a pressure group. [10]**

*(Specification: political parties and pressure groups)*

	<b>A01</b>	<b>A02</b>	<b>A03</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	8		2
<b>Level 4</b>	7-8	-	2
<b>Level 3</b>	5-6	-	2
<b>Level 2</b>	3-4	-	0-1
<b>Level 1</b>	0-3	-	0-1

- Political parties are formed to win power through elections whereas pressure groups exist usually to influence the exercise of power after an election has been won. Occasionally pressure groups will use elections as a means of influence but not in order to gain governing power.
- Political parties offer a programme across the whole field of government but pressure groups concentrate on either one issue (Fathers4Justice) or one area (Greenpeace).
- Membership of a political party is open to all but some pressure groups, such as sectional ones, offer it only to those of the profession or workforce.
- Political parties have formal constitutions and are accountable to their members; pressure groups do not necessarily have such established rules and are not so accountable.
- Pressure groups show greater inclination to use illegal methods.

**2 Describe the main functions of a pressure group.****[20]***(Specification: pressure groups - roles and functions)*

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>A03</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	16	-	4
<b>Level 4</b>	13-16	-	4
<b>Level 3</b>	9-12	-	3
<b>Level 2</b>	5-8	-	2
<b>Level 1</b>	0-4	-	1

- Groups exist to influence / shape public policy
- Representation of minority opinion - Father4Justice as in Source B.
- Participation in politics between elections - Countryside Alliance.
- Provision of information to the public and expertise to government - insider groups such as BMA.
- Check on government to prevent "elective dictatorship" — anti-Iraq war march.
- Groups may assist citizens gain redress of grievance.
- Provide members with various services e.g. trade unions

Reward **all** relevant suggestions: marks can be achieved through range or depth.

**3 Discuss the rights and duties of a British citizen.****[30]***(Specification: Citizenship - importance of)*

	<b>A01</b>	<b>A02</b>	<b>A03</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	12	12	6
<b>Level 4</b>	10-12	10-12	6
<b>Level 3</b>	7-9	7-9	4-5
<b>Level 2</b>	4-6	4-6	3
<b>Level 1</b>	0-3	0-3	0-2

For AO1 - look for information on what citizenship involves:

- Rights - political, civil, social.
- Legal obligations - obeying the law, paying tax, fighting in wartime, jury service.
- Responsibilities - community work, political involvement - parties, pressure groups.

For AO2 these should be discussed:

- Rights - Advantages of being able to participate in politics, have guaranteed liberties under Human Rights Act and social protection in times of illness, unemployment and old age. Disadvantages these are not always equal - politically where you live may change the value of your vote. Civil - these rights may cost time and money to assert (N. Campbell/privacy). Social - provisions are usually only basic.
- Legal obligations - Advantages - protection of the state - police/law and order at home and armed services to prevent invasion plus help from British embassies when abroad. Disadvantages - taxes, compulsory military service in wartime, compulsory purchase of property in the way of a road or development scheme.
- Responsibilities - Advantages - community involvement - interesting and rewarding. Disadvantages - lack of time and commitments may involve some sacrifices.

4 Assess the factors that enable a pressure group to succeed in achieving its aims. [40]

(Specification: Pressure Groups - reasons for success)

	AO1	AO2	AO3
<b>Maximum</b>	16	16	8
<b>Level 4</b>	13-16	13-16	7-8
<b>Level 3</b>	9-12	9-12	5-6
<b>Level 2</b>	5-8	5-8	3-4
<b>Level 1</b>	0-4	0-4	0-2

For AO1 **look** for information on:

- Insider/outsider status.
- Public support plus the media.
- Resources - money and leadership.
- Ability to use sanctions.
- Timing - world events; position of government - majority/proximity of an election.

For AO2 these should be evaluated:

- Insider/outsider - advantages for those such as NFU in department responsible for agriculture over small farmers (foot and mouth crisis) or consumers (salmonella in eggs and CJD) but outsiders can succeed - fuel blockades.
- Public Support - popular causes with media support (Princess Diana and landmines, nurses seeking pay rises) will do better than the Howard League for Penal Reform. However support for banning GM crops has had limited success.
- Resources - NIMBY groups with middle class money, skills and leadership stopped the building of the 3rd London Airport for 20 years and influenced the choice of the 4th (not in Cliffe, Kent but extensions to existing airports). However Countryside Alliance with considerable resources may **have** not succeeded in preventing the ban on hunting.
- Ability to use sanctions - fuel blockade, strikes that affect the public immediately - baggage handlers at airports have a greater chance than those with no such ability. However the fire fighters failed in 2003-4 and violent sanctions can harden both the public and the government against the cause.
- Timing - immediately before an election or when the government has a small majority (J. Major). Use of world events - nuclear disaster like Chernobyl increases pro-wind farm groups and decreases pro-nuclear groups' chance of success. It is not infallible - governments may decide to gain by looking strong - Bush pro-Iraq war campaign.



**Mark Scheme 2597**  
**January 2006**

**Marks**

The mark for a particular question is obtained by the applying the mark scheme and Assessment Matrix as follows:

**Part (a) of all questions in Section A**

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	13-16		4
<b>Level 3</b>	9-12		3
<b>Level 2</b>	5-8		2
<b>Level 1</b>	0-4		0-1

**Section (b) of all questions in Section A**

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Level 4</b>		13-16	4
<b>Level 3</b>		9-12	3
<b>Level 2</b>		5-8	2
<b>Level 1</b>		0-4	0-1

**All questions in Section B**

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Maximum</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	7-8	7-8	4
<b>Level 3</b>	5-6	5-6	3
<b>Level 2</b>	3-4	3-4	2
<b>Level 1</b>	0-2	0-2	0-1

**Assessment Objective 3**

- There are four marks for AO3 on each part-question in Section A and every question in Section B.
- Two should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- Where answers are not full, examiners should use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.



- 1 (a) Describe the main features of the convention of individual ministerial responsibility. [20]
- (b) Discuss the view that the convention of individual ministerial responsibility is no longer important in British politics. [20]

*(Specification: Delivery of government policy through ministers, civil servants, quangos and agencies: ... individual ministerial responsibility)*

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of the main features of the convention of individual ministerial responsibility including some of the following:
- its status as a 'non-statutory rule';
  - the basic principle that each minister, and not departmental officials, are responsible, or answerable, for the actions of their department, whether taken with the ministers knowledge and consent or not;
  - explanatory, amendatory and sacrificial forms;
  - role responsibility and personal responsibility
- Better candidates will clearly understand to whom ministers are responsible (parliament in particular, but also the PM, their party and the electorate) and that ministerial responsibility does not necessarily mean that ministers resign if they make a mistake.
  - Candidates who restrict themselves just to resignation are unlikely to reach Level 4.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must discuss the view that the convention of individual ministerial responsibility is no longer important in British politics. They may cover some of the following:
- there is plenty of evidence that the convention continues to operate in that ministers explain, apologise and occasionally resign in response to the doctrine, for example, in the case of resignation, Carrington, Robinson, Mandelson (x2), Morris, Hughes;
  - however, there have also been a number of occasions when it has apparently not worked, and when ministers have failed to explain, apologise or resign immediately, for example, Currie, Baker, Mellor, Mates, Hamilton, Howard, Davies, Byers, Blunkett.
  - Since few ministers since 1945 have resigned because of mistakes made by their civil servants - most minister have resigned for personal or political reasons - and since 1988 government by agency has made it more difficult to distinguish between the policy failure of ministers and the administrative failings of agencies.
  - Much depends upon the political climate and the willingness of the prime minister to stand by a minister or to seek a scapegoat.
- Better candidates may be able to distinguish between role responsibility and personal responsibility in this regard.
  - Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis.
  - Level 4 answers will clearly focus on the view that the convention of individual ministerial responsibility is no longer important in British politics and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

- 2 (a) **Outline the role of the whips in parliament.** [20]  
 (b) **Discuss the view that MPs should always vote with their party in parliament.** [20]

*(Specification: The UK Parliament: ... party cohesion.)*

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of the role of the whips in parliament (including the House of Lords) and may include some of the following points:
- the broad role of the whips in maintaining party unity by acting as a channel of communication between the leadership and the backbenches - listening, explaining, persuading - but also as a channel of communication between the backbenches and the leadership ('the ears and eyes of the leader');
  - their more specific organisational role in ensuring that MPs turn up to divisions and vote in accordance with agreed party policy (whips, arranging pairs for sick or absent MPs and the various rewards and 'punishments' available to them).
- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on the role of the whips.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must be able to discuss the view that MPs should always vote with their party in parliament and may cover some of the following:
- the nature, importance and consequences of their duty of loyalty to:
    - their party: national, parliamentary and local;
    - the electorate, both those who voted for them and those who didn't;
    - the national interest;
    - other groups they may represent;
    - their conscience.
  - Candidate may also want to comment some of the following:
    - the view that the British system of government rests upon party discipline
    - the need for the government to get its legislation through parliament (as it was elected to do)
    - the need for the opposition to effectively oppose the government
    - the view that voters vote for parties, not candidates
    - the need for parties to appear united if they are to win or regain power.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis.
  - Level 4 answers will offer a discussion that is clearly focused on whether MPs should always vote with their party in parliament and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Do not expect different theories of representation, but reward them if they are used.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

- 3 (a) Outline the process by which members of the higher judiciary are appointed. [20]
- (b) Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this process. [20]

(Specification: Relationship between executive and judiciary: appointment to the higher judiciary. The Constitution: ... principles.)

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of the process by which members of the higher judiciary are appointed. Do not expect the level of detail set out below, but do expect candidates to cover the points:
- the post of Lord Chancellor is a political appointment which carries with it membership of the cabinet and thus the appointment process is in many ways similar to that of other members of the cabinet. However, although there is the expectation that the person appointed will have had considerable legal experience, there is no statutory requirement that they should have held any prior judicial office. Indeed, Lord Irvine never served in any judicial capacity and made his reputation as a highly successful barrister;
  - **all other senior judicial appointments** (see below for a definition) are made by the Queen on the recommendation of the PM, who receives advice from the Lord Chancellor i.e. effectively they are made by the Lord Chancellor and the PM on the basis of soundings taken amongst senior lawyers;
  - candidates for the higher judiciary are usually selected from members of the lower judiciary (who themselves must have certain formal qualifications, particularly experience of advocacy, basically, having practised as a barrister) who have the requisite qualifications and experience (usually already holding judicial office for a certain period of time and possession of a Supreme Court qualification under the *Court and Legal Services Act*, 1990 again for a certain period of time. For example, the statutory qualification for appointment as a Law Lord is to have been a judge of one of the superior courts in England and Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland for not less than two years);
  - appointments are made to fill particular vacancies as they arise;
  - applications are invited, annually, from suitably qualified practitioners, and that in recent years the Lord Chancellor has tried to encourage applications from women and members of minority groups;
  - all Supreme Court Judges are consulted on those who have applied;
  - the Lord Chancellor personally reviews suitable candidates at a meeting with the Heads of Divisions taking into account the nature of the expertise and experience required;
  - the Lord Chancellor reserves the right to appoint those who have not made an application.
  - Better candidates will appreciate that although in 1998 Lord Irvine announced that the more open system for making junior judicial appointments would also apply to the high court, and that posts are now advertised and interviews conducted by a panel, the Lord Chancellor does have the right not to appoint those selected by the panel.
  - In March 2001 an independent Commissioner for Judicial Appointments was appointed to maintain independent oversight of the procedure.

- Candidates are not required to assess or criticise this process, simply to describe it.
  - The LCD defines the senior judiciary as: the Lord Chancellor, the law lords, heads of division, justices of appeal and judges of the high court. Do not expect candidates to know this.
  - Knowledge of appointment processes for more junior judicial posts is not required.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must be able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this process and may cover some of the following:
- the role of the Lord Chancellor and prime minister in making appointments to the judiciary and related issues, for example, the separation of powers;
  - the power of the Lord Chancellor, for example, in being able to ignore short listed candidates and appoint those who have not applied for a post
  - the objectivity and openness/transparency of the process - and/or lack of it
  - the qualifications/experience required for appointment
  - the narrow range of backgrounds of those selected (plus gender, ethnicity etc)
  - the role of the Appointments Commission
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis.
  - Level 4 answers will offer a discussion that is clearly focussed on the advantages and disadvantages of the process by which members of the higher judiciary are appointed and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

- 4 (a) **Distinguish between devolution and federalism.** [20]  
 (b) **Discuss the view that more power should be devolved to the English regions.** [20]

(Specification: *The Constitution: ... devolution.*)

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of what is meant by 'devolution' and 'federalism', along the following lines:
- devolution: a form of decentralisation which involves the transfer or delegation of certain limited executive, and *sometimes* legislative, functions and powers to regional authorities who then exercise these powers within a regional context. A key feature of devolution is that, constitutionally, the devolved bodies are still subordinate to the national government and their powers can be suspended, altered or revoked altogether by that national government;
  - federalism: a form of decentralisation in which sovereignty within a state is divided or shared between a central government and regional authorities. In a federal system both central and regional governments have sovereignty within their own areas of responsibility and the federal government has no constitutional power to force the regional governments to relinquish these powers.
- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on what is meant by 'devolution' and 'federalism'.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use a range of contemporary examples.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must be able to discuss the view that more power should be devolved to the English regions and may cover some of the following:
- the general advantages of devolution, for example, increased democracy, opportunities for participation, accessibility, accountability, representativeness, responsiveness, legitimacy;
  - the general disadvantages of devolution, for example, over-government, cost, disparity of standards, potential for conflict between regions and between the regions and national government;
  - the experience - positive and negative - of Northern Ireland and of Scotland and Wales since 1998;
  - the lack of a regional identity in some areas, as well as an absence of enthusiasm for the initiative.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis.
  - Level 4 answers will offer a discussion of whether more power should be devolved to the English regions and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.



- 5 (a) Outline the traditional characteristics of the British civil service. [20]  
 (b) Discuss the view that changes to the civil service have undermined these characteristics. [20]

*(Specification: Delivery of government policy through ministers, civil servants, quangos and agencies: relationship between; ... civil service reform since 1979.)*

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of the traditional characteristics of the British civil service, and may include some of the following points:
- its permanence;
  - administrative expertise;
  - anonymity;
  - political neutrality (both in the sense of providing impartial advice for ministers and in the sense of supporting all governments with equal enthusiasm).
  - Candidates may also choose to identify other features including the traditional role of the civil service in advising and assisting ministers and executing policy as well as its national character and public service ethos.
- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on the traditional characteristics of the British civil service.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use a range of contemporary examples.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must be able to discuss the view that changes to the civil service have undermined its traditional characteristics and should address the impact of changes on the specific features identified in (5a) i.e. permanence, anonymity and neutrality, but also accountability, and may cover some of the following:
- the changing ethos of the civil service with increasing emphasis on the effective management of services and resources; improved policy making; responding to market demand; greater efficiency; opening up the service to outside talent; and locally negotiated arrangements.
  - This might be contrasted with the view that the various changes have failed to alter the fundamental character of the civil service.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake the description of the reforms for the analysis of their impact.
  - Level 4 answers will offer a discussion that is clearly focussed on whether reform of the civil service has undermined these characteristics (i.e. the impact of reforms) and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

### AO3

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

- 6 (a) Outline the role of the cabinet in the government of the United Kingdom. [20]  
 (b) Discuss the view that the cabinet is now of little practical value. [20]

*(Specification: The Prime Minister and Cabinet: powers of PM; different styles; debate over prime ministerial power; Cabinet membership, functions and relationship with PM; collective responsibility.)*

- (a) **AO1:** Candidates must display a knowledge and understanding of the role of the cabinet, and may include some of the following points:
- Its formal role in:
    - approving important decisions;
    - planning the business of parliament;
    - arbitrating in cases of disputes between departments;
    - providing oversight and co-ordination of government policies;
    - providing political leadership for the party in parliament and in the country.
  - Its more informal role in:
    - representing various interests/wings/elements/regions within the party;
    - as a check on the PM;
    - legitimising decisions taken elsewhere.
  - And as:
    - a sounding board;
    - a party political body.
- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on the role of the cabinet and better candidates will be able to distinguish between the formal or constitutional role of the cabinet and its actual role. They will also appreciate that this role changes with circumstances, prime ministers and cabinets.
  - Weaker candidates will write about the cabinet rather than focus on its role. They will fail to appreciate the difference between the formal role of the cabinet and its actual role.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use a range of contemporary examples.
- (b) **AO2:** Candidates must be able to discuss the view that the cabinet is now of little practical value and may cover some of the following:
- the value/importance, or not, of the formal roles listed above e.g. as the forum in which all major decisions are approved - or not;
  - the value/importance, or not, of the informal roles listed above e.g. as a check on the prime minister - or not;
  - the value/importance, or not, of the other roles listed above e.g. as the body where issues of importance to the party can be raised - or not.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis.
  - Level 4 answers will offer a discussion that is clearly focussed on the current value of the cabinet and display an awareness of both sides of the argument.
  - Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

**7 Discuss the reasons why some people in Britain are opposed to European Monetary Union (EMU) for political reasons. [20]**

*(Specification: The relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU: ... debate about future development of EU (federalism; EMU; enlargement).)*

- For **AO1** marks candidates must display knowledge and understanding of monetary union, and the (political) reasons some people in the UK oppose it. In the case of the former they might know that:
  - economic and monetary union (EMU) was both the objective and the process by which the economic and monetary policies of the member states of the EU were to be harmonised;
  - the central aim was to create a 'single and stable currency' for Europe;
  - at Maastricht it was agreed that EMU would to be achieved in three stages, the last being the creation of a single currency to replace national currencies (2002);
  - Maastricht also created a European Central Bank (ECB) with a board appointed by the Council of Ministers, independent of any other institution with power to set interest rates for the whole EU;
  - membership of EMU was restricted to those members of the EU wishing to join and who met the convergence criteria (targets for public debt, budget deficit, inflation) set out in the Maastricht treaty. The UK and Denmark negotiated opt-outs from the Treaty;
  - all future members must agree to EMU as a condition of membership.
- For **AO2** marks candidates must be able to explain why some people are opposed to British membership of EMU for political (including constitutional) reasons. The political and constitutional consequences of essentially economic and social reasons are acceptable political arguments.
- Explanations may include:
  - the view that it will mean a further loss of national and parliamentary sovereignty - "it would mean giving up the government of the UK";
  - the view that it's another step on the road to the creation of a federal Europe - "monetary union is political union . . . it will lead inexorably to a single government and a single parliament";
  - the view that the British experience of the ERM has bred distrust of such arrangements;
- Some may wish to focus on emotional responses to the loss of the pound and the symbolism of membership, but, on their own, these are unlikely to be sufficient for an answer to reach Level 3 unless very well handled.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis, but do reward both.
- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on the political reasons for opposition to British membership of EMU. There is no need to provide the 'case for' but it can be rewarded if it forms part of the discussion.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.

**8 Discuss the view that the creation of a ‘federal Europe’ is a desirable objective. [20]**

*(Specification: The relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU: ... impact of EU institutions on the UK; debate about future development of EU (federalism; EMU; enlargement).)*

- For **AO1** marks candidates must display knowledge and understanding of what is meant by ‘a federal Europe’, perhaps along the lines that:
  - federalism is a form of government in which the power, functions and sovereignty of the state are divided between central and regional governments so that each exercises responsibility for a particular set of functions independently of the other;
  - that a ‘federal Europe’ might involve EU institutions acting as the national government for Europe with the present nation states as regional authorities and sovereignty divided between them;
  - less radically, it might involve more power concentrated in the hands of European institutions at the expense of the member states;
  - a federal Europe would require further changes to the EU constitution to set out the responsibilities of each level of government and other reforms intended to make remedy the ‘democratic deficit’;
  - a major consequence of any such development would be the inevitable diminution of the power of the member states.
  
- For **AO2** marks candidates must be able to discuss the view that the creation of a ‘federal Europe’ is a desirable objective by considering the advantages and disadvantages of such an arrangement.
  - Advantages might be some of those generally associated with federalism, for example:
    - providing a check against over-strong national governments;
    - providing a baseline of rights;
    - ensuring a minimum of provision across the union while allowing diversity.
  - As well as those specifically relating to Europe:
    - creating an ever closer union by removing the remaining barriers to the free movement of people, goods, services and capital
    - encouraging further economic growth, lower levels of unemployment and higher levels of personal wealth;
    - creating greater security and influence to the members of the EU;
    - providing uniform social benefits;
    - preventing future war.
  - Disadvantages might include:
    - the loss of sovereignty and independence of action;
    - the subsuming of British interests into European interests;
    - the creation of a highly centralised European superstate incapable to reacting to the needs of its constituent elements;
    - a threat to national distinctiveness and a loss of tradition.
  
- Candidates may view the arguments from a British perspective, a European perspective or both.
- Reward focus and balance. In particular, do not mistake description for analysis, but do reward both.

- Level 4 answers will clearly focus on a discussion of whether a 'federal Europe' is a desirable objective and display an awareness of both sides of the argument
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples

**AO3**

- Two marks should be used to credit spelling, punctuation and grammar where a full answer is provided.
- Two marks should be used to credit the ability to identify relevant points correctly and to present an argument clearly where a full answer is provided.
- A very short answer which meets the above criteria should not be awarded full marks for AO3.





**Mark Scheme 2694**  
**January 2006**

	<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	10-12	10-12	5-6
<b>Level 3</b>	7-9	7-9	4
<b>Level 2</b>	4-6	4-6	2-3
<b>Level 1</b>	0-3	0-3	0-1

**1 Evaluate the role played by the media in recent presidential elections. [30]**

*(Specification: Presidential Elections: role of media)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the role played by the media in recent presidential election campaigns which may include: televised debates; TV advertising; news coverage; talk radio; newspapers; the internet. Reward candidates who use a wide range of up-to-date examples.

AO2: Expect candidates to evaluate the role played by a range of media input in recent presidential elections. This evaluation may centre upon such issues as: cost; impartiality; cynicism; effect on public perception and opinion; whether or not televised debates or commercials actually affect the way people vote; the possible replacement of "old media" [newspapers, terrestrial TV] by "new media" [cable TV; internet]. Reward candidates who evaluate the new role played by the internet in "blogging" and fund raising.

**2 Analyse the reasons why Democratic and Republican candidates win virtually every presidential and congressional election. [30]**

*(Specification: Political Parties: philosophy and ideology; role of third parties; Congress: election)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of presidential and congressional elections. They will also display knowledge of the extent to which the Democrats and Republicans have won virtually all such elections: every presidential election since 1856; 534 of the 535 current members of Congress were elected as Democrats or Republicans, though occasional exceptions have occurred.

AO2: Expect candidates to analyse a range of reasons for this phenomenon. These may include: the all-embracing nature of the two major parties; the electoral system; the ability of the main parties to adopt some of the policies of temporarily popular third parties; other difficulties faced by third parties, such as ballot access laws, the lack of money and media coverage. With regard to congressional elections, reward candidates who analyse the effects of incumbency and gerrymandering.

**3 Evaluate the importance of the functions performed by pressure groups in American democracy. [30]**

*(Specification: Pressure Groups: functions)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of pressure groups which will include: a definition; types of; methods used. They will also display knowledge and understanding of a range of functions performed by pressure groups which may include those concerning: representation; participation; education; agenda building; prioritisation; monitoring; scrutiny (though these exact terms may not be used). Reward candidates who illustrate their answer with a broad range of examples.

AO2: Expect candidates to evaluate the importance of a range of functions performed by pressure groups. Look for evaluation that is specific (i.e. the importance of specific pressure groups is evaluated) and well-balanced and that also appreciates the potential for enhanced importance given such features of American democracy as frequent elections, numerous 'access points' and relatively weak political parties.

**4 Assess the extent to which America still has a truly federal system of government. [30]**

*(Specification: The Constitution: development of federalism)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of federalism which may include: a definition; types (such as cooperative federalism, new federalism); development of federalism in recent decades and under different administrations; the differing and changing attitudes of the major parties towards federalism and states' rights.

AO2: Expect candidates to assess recent changes in federalism which will include moves towards decentralisation (1980s and 1990s) but also some moves towards increased centralisation, especially following 9/11, and the effect of these changes on Americans and American politics. Expect candidates to assess the role played by all three branches of the federal government in the changing face of federalism. Reward references to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the responses of the federal and state governments.

**5 Analyse the importance of standing committees in the work of Congress. [30]**

*(Specification: Congress: committees; the legislative process; oversight of the executive branch)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of congressional standing committees as well as 'the work of Congress'. Regarding the former, this will include: a definition; examples; powers; membership; sub-committees. Regarding the latter, this will include: legislation; scrutiny of the executive and representation. Reward candidates who illustrate their answer with a good range of examples.

AO2: Expect candidates to analyse the importance of congressional standing committees especially within their legislative and scrutiny functions, the latter being particularly with regard to the Senate's standing committees' role in the process of the confirmation of executive and judicial branch appointments as well as the ratification of treaties. Look for analysis that is well balanced and which appreciates that most final decisions are *not* taken in committee.

**6 Evaluate the usefulness of the Executive Office of the President in helping recent presidents. [30]**

*(Specification: The Presidency: Executive Office of the President; problems of co-ordination)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the Executive Office of the President (EXOP) and of the administration. Regarding the former, this may include: a definition; the White House Staff including the chief of staff; the Office of Management and Budget; the National Security Council. Regarding the latter, this may include: the size and complexity of the bureaucracy; relations with Congress. Reward candidates who illustrate their answers from a range of recent presidencies.

AO2: Expect candidates to evaluate the usefulness of EXOP in helping recent presidents. Look for a well-balanced evaluation which understands that 'usefulness' has varied, both from office to office, as well as from one presidency to another, and sometimes even within the same presidency. Reward candidates whose analysis clearly indicates they appreciate the difficulties facing presidents in running such a huge federal bureaucracy.

**7 Assess the importance of the Supreme Court's power of judicial review. [30]**

*(Specification: The Supreme Court: issues concerning judicial review)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the Supreme Court and its power of judicial review. This may include: a definition of the power of judicial review; specific examples of a range of recent decisions handed down by the Supreme Court illustrating its power of judicial review.

AO2: Expect candidates to assess the importance of the Supreme Court's power of judicial review in a balanced fashion. Stressing its importance will be the important effects that the Court's decisions have had upon American politics and society in recent years over a range of issues. On the other hand, candidates should stress the limits on the Court's powers such as those possessed by Congress, as well as those related to public opinion and its lack of enforcement powers.

**8 Analyse the effectiveness of the checks on presidential power. [30]**

*(Specification: The Presidency: theories of presidential power; The Constitution: separation of powers, and checks and balances)*

AO1: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of presidential power. This may include knowledge and understanding both of the formal powers of the president and the checks upon them as well as of the concept of 'power' and how it relates to the office of the presidency. Reward those candidates who display knowledge of specific theorists of presidential power such as Neustadt or Schlesinger.

AO2: Expect candidates to analyse the effectiveness of a variety of checks on presidential power such as: the constitution; congress; the judiciary; the bureaucracy; the federal division of powers; those relating to elections, parties, pressure groups, the media and public opinion. Look for candidates to analyse effectiveness specifically, whilst realising that effectiveness of any specific check may vary over time.



**Mark Scheme 2695  
January 2006**

	<b>A01</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>A03</b>
<b>Level 4</b>	10-12	10-12	5-6
<b>Level 3</b>	7-9	7-9	4
<b>Level 2</b>	4-6	4-6	2-3
<b>Level 1</b>	0-3	0-3	0-1

**1 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of social contract theories on the role of the state. [30]**

*(Specification: different views on the role of the state)*

A01: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the concept of the state and of related social contract theories. Expect detail on the relationship between the state and individual and the use of a range of social contract theorists, eg Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau.

A02: Candidates should assess the strengths and weaknesses of social contract theories as they relate to the state. Expect reference to views on human nature, state authority and contractual obligation. Reward students who recognise different interpretations of social contract theory (especially those who show understanding of 20<sup>th</sup> century contract theorists such as Rawls) and make comparisons with alternate perspectives such as natural duty and anarchism.

**2 Discuss the view that socialism is an outdated ideology. [30]**

*(Specification: political ideologies)*

A01: Candidates should display knowledge and understanding of the central ideas of socialism and their relationship to economic and political systems. Awareness of criticisms of socialist principles especially from conservative and liberal thinkers should also be shown. Expect candidates also to refer to attempts to modernise and revise socialism, e.g. Blair and the Third Way.

A02: Candidates should be aware of changes to the post war consensus with the rise of New Right theories and the collapse of Soviet style experiments in revolutionary socialism. Candidates who relate their critique of socialism to Fukuyama's triumph of liberal democratic capitalism should be rewarded. Those who argue a balanced approach in asserting the continued relevance of socialist theories relating to social justice and employee rights should access the higher levels of the mark scheme.



**3 Evaluate the justifications for dictatorship. [30]**

*(Specification: different types of rule)*

A01: Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the concept of dictatorship. They will explore the meaning of dictatorship and how it has been defined, e.g. traditional or totalitarian. There should be knowledge of the characteristics of these types of government, e.g. one-person rule, lack of popular accountability, limited rights. References should be made to justifications of dictatorship of the proletariat by Marx and Rousseau (totalitarian democracy).

A02: Candidates should evaluate some of the following: the theoretical arguments for dictatorship, e.g. maintenance of law and order, efficient government, and the personification of state rule. Expect reference to differing ideological perspectives on dictatorship.

**4 Discuss the possible implications for democracy of a tyranny of the majority. [30]**

*(Specification: characteristics of democracy)*

A01: Candidates should show knowledge and understanding of the central features of democracy and also awareness of the critique of majoritarianism. Reference should be made to difference between permanent and temporary majorities and the necessity to safeguard the rights of minority groups. Candidates should be familiar with the views of theorists such as Mill and de Tocqueville.

A02: Candidates may wish to discuss the dangers of a tyranny of the majority especially with reference to direct and participatory models of democracy and the use of devices such as referendums. Expect reference to protection of minority rights under protective systems of democracy and the need to limit democratic input into decision making through constitutional safeguards.

**5 Evaluate the legitimacy of civil disobedience in a democracy. [30]**

*(Specification: political obligation)*

A01: Candidates should display knowledge and understanding of the main theories justifying civil disobedience. Expect reference to thinkers such as Thoreau, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King. Evidence of the use of civil disobedience campaigns should be provided alongside understanding of the types of disobedience, e.g. law breaking, non-cooperation, and violence.

A02: Candidates should be aware of moral and tactical justifications for civil disobedience, either relating to particular laws or the moral authority of the state. Awareness of theories critical of civil disobedience (e.g. conservative thinkers such as Hobbes and Burke) should be shown. Candidates who highlight the problems relating to alternate channels of democratic involvement and the rise of direct action should be well rewarded.

**6 Evaluate the different interpretations of the meaning of equality. [30]**

*(Specification: meaning of equality)*

A01: Candidates should show knowledge and understanding of the meaning of equality and the different ideological interpretations, e.g. formal, opportunity and outcome. Examples of the operation of each interpretation and the views of related theorists, e.g. Locke, Plato and Marx, should be rewarded.

A02: Candidates should be able to highlight similarities and differences between the various interpretations of equality. Expect reference to ideas on human nature, social cohesion, individual liberty and practicality. Candidates who fail to compare the differing forms of equality, or only discuss one type should be placed in the lower bands of the mark scheme.

**7 Analyse the ways in which power can be legitimised. [30]**

*(Specification: power, authority and legitimacy)*

A01: Candidates should display knowledge and understanding of the meaning of power, authority and legitimacy. Expect reference to the different types of power, e.g. decision making, agenda setting, thought control and coercion. Understanding also should be shown of the different sources of legitimacy and use should be made of the views of theorists such as Weber and Beetham.

A02: Candidates should show awareness of theories relating to legitimisation of power ranging from Weber's belief in legitimacy to Beetham's ideas of constitutional consent. Candidates who examine Marxist perspectives on ideological hegemony and the manufacturing of legitimacy should also be rewarded.

**8 Assess the view that the nation state is in decline. [30]**

*(Specification: internal and external sovereignty)*

A01: Candidates should display knowledge and understanding of the meaning of the nation state and its rise in importance in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Evidence of growing pressures upon the nation state and the loss of internal sovereignty to supranational bodies should be rewarded.

A02: Candidates should be aware of arguments relating to economic and political globalisation and the rise of supranational bodies. Details of ecological interdependence and attempts to produce global solutions beyond the nation state level should also be rewarded. Candidates who produce a balanced argument in highlighting the continued appeal of the nation state and argue intergovernmentalism provides an alternative to trends towards supranationalism should be rewarded highly.



# **Report on the Units January 2006**

### **Chief Examiner's Report**

It was pleasing, once again, to see candidates performing well, some after only one term of following the specification. There seems to be a strong candidature at A2, with some Centres entering large numbers of candidates achieving good results. There are more candidates completing AS units in January, particularly in 2596 and 2597. In early stages of Curriculum 2000 there were only significant numbers doing 2595 after one term, but it now appears that Centres are teaching the AS course in different ways.

There seemed to be less awareness of contemporary politics in both AS and in the US politics papers. It is really worth stressing that a real emphasis is placed on "contemporary" in the mark schemes. Centres are encouraged to make full use of mark schemes, to see how candidates are rewarded.

Again Centres are reminded of the changes coming into effect from January 2007 onwards, in particular for unit 2597. This information has already been sent to Centres but is available to download from the OCR website [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

## 2595: Elections, Electoral Systems and Voting behaviour in the UK

### General comments.

Overall, there was much more effective use of the Sources in evidence this session. Question three was clearly popular and well known which indicates that it is a central topic in all centres. Question four generated some interesting answers. Candidates had a lot to write about but most answers seemed to contain little but vague and sweeping generalizations which had little merit or substance.

It was particularly good to see more recent and contemporary examples being used. Knowledge and understanding of the 2005 election was not only there, but often very intelligently used. It was also good to see better use of time available by most, with fewer writing far more on, say, question two than they did on question four. Some still start with question 4 and go 'backwards', but it never quite seems to work. Some candidates still pitch their answers too high, with tremendous depth and unasked for analysis.

- 1 The only apparent problem with this question was that some candidates did not believe it was that easy and tried to make it more complex than it really was. A lot seemed to feel that the second Source was a parliamentary election and wasted a lot of time there. If there are only two marks available it would be unreasonable to expect more than a short sentence. Again we did not expect much more than two very brief paragraphs on this one. The best as always, clearly differentiated between knowledge gained from the Source and their own knowledge
- 2 This was almost entirely well done. It was good to see the Source being used so well. Some candidates had a slightly shaky knowledge of the Northern Ireland system and were forced to use the Source. Given that the 'own knowledge' that was largely needed was based on general elections, which all candidates had at least some knowledge, this proved to be straightforward. There are only AO1 (factual) and AO3 (Communication) marks available for this answer and candidates should be reminded of this. There are no marks available for analysis/ argument.
- 3 Many candidates answered this question well. The data in the Source was regularly used to back up points which made getting the AO1 marks so much easier. There were some really good discussions. Some were 'academic' and obviously traditional textbook based, other based answers on a study of the past two general elections. There were many interesting and well argued answers. We would ideally like to see some balance in an answer, but given the nature of the topic and the amount of time available, some one-sided, but very powerful answers, easily got full marks.
- 4 This question was approached with enthusiasm and many candidates wrote at great length. We thought we were being very fair by mentioning in the question "newspapers and the other mass media..." However this did not deter the vast majority from looking at the newspapers only, and the majority of those only mentioned the Sun. The majority of candidates failed to spell the words "bias" and "Murdoch" correctly. There seemed to be a commonly accepted assumption that if the Sun backs a party it wins. The fact that a significant proportion of the Sun's readers do not vote and also a significant proportion in 1992 actually thought that its famous headline was a recommendation to vote Labour is not mentioned. Often the points in the Source were ignored. This question led to a lot of quite unbalanced papers, with some candidates getting more or less full marks on Questions 1 to 3, and then staying in L2 on this question simply as there was virtually nothing we could hang any AO1 one marks on.

## 2596: Politics of the UK

### General comments

There was a good spread of answers although it appeared that a notable number of candidates found this a challenging paper. Nearly all candidates attempted all the questions and the majority of papers showed an appropriate balance of shorter answers to the early questions with more time devoted to questions 3 and 4. Nonetheless, a notable minority of candidates produced a short answer to Q4 (worth 40 marks) that was sometimes not that much longer than Q1 (10 marks).

The instruction to use continuous prose was followed and but standards of spelling, punctuation and grammar were variable.

Q3 proved to be a discriminator with candidates often able to *describe* rights and duties but unprepared to discuss / assess the same. Candidates should note that Q1 and Q2 reward knowledge and give no credit for assessment objective 2 (analysis) whereas Q3 and Q4 will significantly reward knowledge **and** analysis.

Finally, examiners understand that time available for each question is very limited and examiners are correspondingly sympathetic to candidates. However candidates must use time profitably rather than repeating points. Essays are not required so introductions that re-state the question without making any progress are not advised. Get straight on to the questions!

- 1 A straightforward and familiar question that presented few problems. Examiners were looking to see at least two major differences identified with a degree of development (and perhaps examples). Many candidates achieved full marks for this question. A notable number of candidates erroneously thought parties are largely funded by the tax payer. Another reason for candidates not scoring well was where they described parties and described interest groups without identifying differences (as required by the question).
- 2 Examiners were looking for a range of functions – three or four – described with some development and perhaps an example. Questions on interest groups have a tendency to trigger a typology of interest groups, whether or not this has been asked for. In this case, this was by no means essential. ‘Functions of interest groups’ is a clearly-defined aspect of the specifications and well covered in textbooks. Nonetheless, a number of candidates seem to find this an unfamiliar area and struggled as a consequence. Too often the candidates described *methods* of groups.
- 3 Better answers assessed the rights and duties of a UK citizen in the light of recent experiences, such as proposals to extend detention of some individuals for up to 90 days or variations to the right to remain silent. The question often produced good and sometimes thorough knowledge of rights and duties. Some answers provided much historical detail (at times, too much historical information from 17<sup>th</sup> century) without sufficient coverage of more recent developments. However, too frequently, candidates made little attempt to ‘discuss’ rights and duties. One Source provided headings for fuller discussion (civil, political and social rights). As sources in this paper are identified as a ‘stimulus material,’ there is little reward gained for merely repeating the information without development, explanation or analysis. Few candidates appreciated that all rights have limits and social rights were often dealt with in a cursory manner. A notable number of candidates addressed rights or duties but not both, as required by the question. The Human Rights Act of 1998 was described with many other titles and dates. As is inevitably the case when rights questions appear, many candidates were confused as to the role and nature of the European Courts.



*Report on the Units Taken in January 2006*

- 4 A familiar question which was often answered well. At times, candidates gave the impression of leaving themselves little time for this important question (answers were sometimes short). Most candidates identified one or two causes behind the success of interest groups and the most able candidates considered what might constitute success for some groups might not be the same for others. Best answers had a range of factors, developed, assessed and supported by examples. Candidates invariably assumed that media coverage constituted success (old adage 'no such thing as bad publicity') but this might have been considered more critically, as in the example of Father4Justice. Most also assumed that because the Hunting with Dogs legislation was passed, the Countryside Alliance had simply failed. Again, this might have been considered more critically.

## 2597: Government of the UK

### General Comments

In the past, the entry for the January paper of this unit has tended to be dominated by candidates who were re-sitting, however, there is some evidence that centres are now entering first-time candidates in greater numbers than in previous years. Where such candidates were well-prepared, the results were encouraging, but sometimes they lacked both the knowledge, technique and political maturity to score highly.

Advice on how candidates might best approach questions on this unit has been provided in past reports, but it is, perhaps, worth emphasising again a few aspects of technique that candidates would do well to note.

- **Introductions.** There is no need to write a general introduction, especially where all the candidate does is to reformulate the question. Answers to Question 1.a. which began, “*The convention of individual ministerial responsibility is an important one in British politics. There are many features of this convention, but some of them are more important than others*”, added nothing and wasted both time and words.
- **Conclusions.** Neither is there any need to write a conclusion, particularly if it simply summarises what has already been said. Too many candidates in this exam ended each answer by writing ‘*In conclusion . . .*’ and then simply re-capping what they had already written.
- **Examples.** Examples should be relevant and reasonably recent. Some candidates still start their answers on civil service reform with references to the Northcote-Trevelyan Report of 1854 and, like the Ghost of Christmas Past, ‘Sir Kritchell Down’ (sic) still makes an unwelcome annual appearance in answers to questions on ministerial responsibility.

On the positive side, there was plenty of evidence in this exam that candidates now appreciate that answers to part (b) questions in Section A usually require a balanced approach and they are becoming adept at inserting ‘However’ paragraphs half-way through their answers.

It would be helpful if candidates knew the difference between MPs and MP’s and could distinguish consistently between party’s and parties’.

### Changes to Specification and Assessment

Centres are reminded that the specification and form of assessment for this unit are changing. The first examination based on these changes will be held in January 2007. Details have been sent to all Centres and can also be found on the OCR website - [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) - together with exemplar questions and associated mark schemes.

## **Comments on Individual Questions**

### **1 Individual ministerial responsibility/its importance**

This is, by now, familiar question, was a popular choice in many centres. However, some candidates still confused the individual responsibility of ministers with the collective responsibility of government, while others focused entirely on resignation, ignoring the wider aspects of the convention. Candidates who were able to provide contemporary illustrations, often did well, and many were able to use the example of Ruth Kelly and List 99/Sexual Offenders Register to illustrate their explanations or arguments.

### **2 Role of the whips/should MPs should always vote with their party**

Another very popular question, though there was a tendency in answer to part (a) to over-emphasise the disciplinary role of the whips to the exclusion of their other roles. In part (b) candidates were much better able to discuss the conflicting loyalties of MPs than when this question last appeared on the paper, and several candidates used apposite examples taken both from local politics and recent events.

### **3 Appointment of the higher judiciary/advantages and disadvantages**

As always, this question was rarely attempted and rarely done well, despite the obvious importance of the issues it raises.

### **4 Devolution and federalism/should more power should be devolved to the English regions**

Judging by the frequency and quality of the responses, a number of candidates had been well-prepared for this question. Many scored highly on the definitions required in part (a), though sometimes they found federalism harder to define than devolution and distinguishing between the two proved a problem for some. The best candidates were able to use their knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of devolution generally to discuss the case for further devolution to the English regions. Surprisingly, a number of candidates ignored the question entirely and wrote at length and unambiguously about the case for devolving further power to Scotland, Wales and Ireland. They did not do well.

### **5 Civil service characteristics/have changes undermined these characteristics**

Not a popular question and not particularly well-answered. The traditional characteristics of the civil service were not well-known or explained in any depth, and answers to part (b) were often a summary of ill-remembered reforms without any attempt to discuss their impact on the character of the civil service.

### **6 Role of the cabinet/value of the cabinet to the prime minister**

Candidates often knew a lot about the cabinet, but didn't always focus on its role and were frequently guilty of writing about the cabinet rather than answering the question actually set. Those who did attempt to deal with role sometimes had only a broad idea of what the cabinet did and soon ran out of ideas.

**7 Discuss the reasons why some people in Britain are opposed to European Monetary Union (EMU) for political reasons**

Both 'European' questions attracted good answers from some candidates. However, candidates who failed to take heed of the fact that the question required them to discuss why some people are opposed to EMU (and not the case both for and against) and to focus on political reasons (as opposed to purely economic reasons) did not do as well as they might have done. Other candidates didn't focus on EMU at all, but provided an all-purpose 'what's wrong with the EU' answer.

**8 Discuss the view that the creation of a 'federal Europe' is a desirable objective**

Again some candidates ignored the question and took the opportunity to criticise the EU more generally, ignoring the benefits, or otherwise, of federalism per se. In other cases, candidates provided a balanced discussion, but not of what the question asked for.

## 2694: US Government & Politics

### General Comments:

The comments will be familiar to those who have read them after previous sittings of this paper. Some candidates are well prepared and focus their answers on the specific question asked. They take care over their use of language. Other candidates display significant weaknesses: they are ill-prepared or have covered too little of the Specification to warrant sitting the paper at this stage; their answers are either devoid of any examples, or those they give are unnecessarily dated and they display carelessness in spelling and punctuation.

#### **1 Evaluate the role played by the media in recent presidential elections.**

Too many candidates had nothing to say outside of the role played by television. Whilst, of course, television is a most important part of the media, it is not the whole picture. Better candidates noted the word “recent” in the question and resisted the temptation to tell us about the Kennedy-Nixon debates of 46 years ago. Some candidates were able to display an impressive level of evaluation of the media’s role which was both balanced and detailed.

#### **2 Analyse the reasons why Democratic and Republican candidates win virtually every presidential and congressional election.**

It was disappointing that the majority of candidates entirely omitted any reference to congressional elections and to the fact that the two major parties currently hold 533 of the 535 seats in Congress. Although we expected candidates to focus on presidential elections, we were surprised how many had either failed to read the question with sufficient care or deliberately omitted some of the answer. Another pitfall here was to answer a question we had not asked, one solely about third parties. Although the role of third parties was clearly relevant to the answer, it was not the focus of the question. Too many candidates merely produced their standard, all-purpose, pre-packaged “third parties” answer.

#### **3 Evaluate the importance of the functions performed by pressure groups in American democracy.**

This was a popular and generally well answered question. Many candidates rattled through an impressive number of functions performed by U.S. pressure groups. Many also had a good range of examples to use. For others, it was the NRA and little else. Some focussed too much on “methods used” rather than “functions performed”. The better candidates looked beyond pressure group functions vis-à-vis Congress, and dealt also with their interplay with the executive and the judiciary.

#### **4 Assess the extent to which America still has a truly federal system of government.**

This was another question where careful reading of every word in the question was crucial. Only a minority of candidates spotted the words “still” and “truly”. Candidates need to realise that each word in a question is there for some purpose. But candidates from some Centres did this question very well indeed with thoughtful assessment of changes in recent decades and even looking at the implications of both 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina.

**5 Analyse the importance of standing committees in the work of Congress.**

Again, better candidates immediately clarified what they saw as “the work of Congress” – legislation, scrutiny of the executive and representation. Given the straightforwardness of the question and the accessibility of congressional committee activity through the Internet, it was surprising that so few tackled this question. Many forgot the role of Senate standing committees in the confirmation of appointments to the executive and the judiciary. Given that we had just had a good deal of media coverage of the Roberts and Alito hearings at the Senate Judiciary Committee, this was surprising.

**6 Evaluate the usefulness of the Executive Office of the President in helping recent presidents.**

This was quite a popular question which was generally well done. Most chose to use the White House Office and the National Security Council to illustrate the role of EXOP, and that was acceptable provided the candidate made it clear that other Offices do exist. Again the word “recent” was ignored by some candidates who trotted out Sherman Adams from the 1950s as their only example of a White House Chief of Staff.

**7 Assess the importance of the Supreme Court’s power of judicial review.**

This was a very popular question. The distinguishing characteristic of good answers was a wide range of up-to-date examples. The candidates from one largish Centre had nothing to offer as an example beyond *Roe v Wade* in 1973. That’s 33 years ago now. By all means start there, but please don’t stop there. There are numerous sources of up-to-date examples on the Supreme Court and really no excuse for presenting a merely historical study of the Court.

**8 Analyse the effectiveness of the checks on presidential power.**

Some focused only on the congressional checks whilst others considered only the Supreme Court’s checks. Better answers ranged widely. They also were accurate and used up-to-date examples. In terms of accuracy, candidates need to know that it’s a **two-thirds majority in both houses** of Congress to override the president’s veto, that a **two-thirds** majority is required in **the Senate** to ratify a treaty, and such like. Only a few considered checks in foreign policy. Those who didn’t missed a significant opportunity to analyse, for example, the effectiveness of Congress’s power to declare war.

## **2695: Political Ideas and Concepts**

With only 86 candidates having chosen to take this unit in January, mostly from three centres, it wasn't really possible to get a true impression of the range of quality of the candidates across centres. However, whilst a sizeable proportion of those that were entered lacked the necessary understanding and sophistication to tackle essay questions on political theory, there was also a pleasing number who had been thoroughly prepared and had impressive knowledge of relevant political ideas. Many produced text book answers showing a great propensity to learn almost verbatim chunks of information from the most widely used texts written by Andrew Heywood. What did tend to differentiate the best answers from those that displayed almost parrot fashion learning was their ability to apply their knowledge to evaluate the actual questions. Unfortunately many students were unable to apply their considerable knowledge in an appropriate manner and thus failed to comprehend the demands of the questions. This showed most clearly in answers to questions two and five, where for the former, a number of students produced well rehearsed answers on the meaning of socialism as opposed to focusing on the critique of the ideology being outdated and in the case of the latter, rehearsed arguments on justifications for civil disobedience without any reference to democracy.

Other factors that distinguished the quality of answers were the ability to understand a range of relevant theories and relate ideas to individual political theorists. Some weak answers showed almost a general studies approach in hypothesising personal opinions based upon a very limited understanding and knowledge of political theory. This often proved to be the case in question four on the implications for democracy of a tyranny of the majority and question three on justifications for dictatorship. Some answers whilst displaying reasonable knowledge of relevant ideas, were highly descriptive in their explanation of the issues, thus limiting themselves in achieving AO2 marks. The latter fault was often seen in answers to questions one and seven where knowledge of social contract theory and of power often were not related to evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the theories in question one or to the legitimisation process in question seven.

Finally, there exists still a strong centre effect where candidates in certain centres are very effectively prepared and have the necessary skills to cope well with the paper. Other centres require better understanding of the nature of the paper and the approach needed to write successful political theory answers.

### **1 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of social contract theories on the role of the state.**

Most students had good knowledge and understanding of the traditional social contract theories – wide coverage was shown of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. Better answers entered the top level for AO1 with updating their ideas through consideration of modern social contract theorists such as Rawls. Candidates tended to do less well on AO2 due to their descriptive approach. Better answers directly tackled concepts relating to the strengths and weaknesses of the theories, often making comparisons with other theories of the state. The weakest candidates failed to discriminate between contract and non contract theories thus providing random lists on attitudes towards the state.

**2. Discuss the view that socialism is an outdated ideology.**

Whilst being a popular question, few candidates attempted to directly address the issue of outdatedness. Instead many spent a majority of their answers describing aspects of socialism. Better answers highlighted developments in socialist thought such as social democracy and the Third Way. A significant number also highlighted the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former USSR, but often in a very descriptive manner. The best answers introduced sophisticated analysis of post modernism and the end of ideology debate, alongside Fukuyama's triumph of liberal democracy.

**3. Evaluate the justifications for dictatorship.**

This was a fairly popular question, but one that often became very historical in approach. A significant proportion of answers tended to want to discuss the issue of dictatorship through analysing the Nazi and fascist regimes of interwar Germany and Italy. Whilst some reward was given for AO1 with regards to evidence of understanding a more theoretical approach to the arguments should have been adopted. For AO2 a significant proportion of candidates described the justifications without analysing or evaluating their validity. Some of the better answers did however highlight the diversity of dictatorial regimes, traditional and modern extreme left and right wing versions, giving theoretical justifications for their existence as well as discussion as to their suitability and effectiveness.

**4. Discuss the possible implications for democracy of a tyranny of the majority.**

This question was one of the least popular questions on the examination paper and often led to answers that produced limited understanding of the meaning of tyranny of the majority in a democracy and/or generalised discussion of the problems of democracy. Some candidates succumbed to the temptation to write an AS style answer focussing purely upon problems relating to unfair electoral systems providing evidence only based around recent general elections in the UK. Some candidates also got sidetracked into lengthy discussions on models of representation. Whilst both of the above areas have relevance to the topic they needed to be analysed from the theoretical position of de Tocqueville and other critics of unfettered democracy.

**5. Evaluate the legitimacy of civil disobedience in a democracy.**

Candidates have obviously been thoroughly prepared for this particular topic and were capable at describing/discussing at length attitudes to civil disobedience across a range of theoretical and ideological opinion. Yet relatively few focused upon the requirement of the question to look at its relevance to democracy. Many answers focused on Hobbes and Locke, both of whom lived long before the advent of modern democracy and were envisaging societies with limited engagement by the citizenship in decision making. Better answers did highlight more modern ideas relating to democratic societies as outlined by Thoreau, Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Rawls.

**6. Evaluate the different interpretations of the meaning of equality.**

Candidates generally showed a good grasp of the three key forms of equality; foundational, opportunity and outcome. The key distinguishing feature for answers to this question was the distinction between description of the ideas and an attempt to evaluate their relevance and viability. There were a number of very good answers that were able to incorporate both an impressive understanding and knowledge of differing ideological and theoretical responses to the topic of liberty, scoring particularly well for AO1. Some answers obscurely confused equality and liberty, resulting in achieving few or no marks for their answers.



**7. Analyse the ways in which power can be legitimised.**

Candidates who chose this question tended to appreciate the different interpretations of power, often providing a series of effective typologies of the concept (e.g. Lukes, Boulding, Beetham), yet were less effective at focusing upon the process of legitimising power. Some candidates still were confusing power and authority (Weber's 3 types of power sic!) and whilst the process of transforming power into legitimate authority was a key feature of the question, often ignored other suggested methods. Some of the better answers went beyond the process of legitimising power in a democracy based around constitutional method of consent, to considering other ways in which power may be legitimised (e.g. views of Machiavelli, Hobbes and neo Marxists).

**8. Assess the view that the nation state is in decline.**

Only a handful of candidates chose to answer this question and did so having been prepared for a standard sovereignty question. Whilst this was relevant to some degree, answers tended to show minimal understanding or appreciation over questions relating to the nation state's role in the contemporary world.

**Advanced GCE Government and Politics (3834/7834)  
January 2006 Assessment Session**

**Unit Threshold Marks**

Unit		Maximum Mark	a	b	c	d	e	u
2595	Raw	100	74	66	58	50	43	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2596	Raw	100	78	70	62	54	46	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2597	Raw	100	76	67	58	49	40	0
	UMS	120	96	84	72	60	48	0
2694	Raw	90	68	60	52	44	37	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0
2695	Raw	90	69	61	53	45	37	0
	UMS	90	72	63	54	45	36	0

**Specification Aggregation Results**

Overall threshold marks in UMS (i.e. after conversion of raw marks to uniform marks)

	Maximum Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
<b>3834</b>	300	240	210	180	150	120	0
<b>7834</b>	600	480	420	360	300	240	0

The cumulative percentage of candidates awarded each grade was as follows:

	A	B	C	D	E	U	Total Number of Candidates
<b>3834</b>	6.7	24.4	64.4	86.7	91.1	100	45
<b>7834</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see;  
[www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp](http://www.ocr.org.uk/OCR/WebSite/docroot/understand/ums.jsp)

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.



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