

# **Government and Politics**

Advanced GCE **2694**

US Government and Politics

## **Mark Scheme for June 2010**

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

- 1 To what extent did the nominations of McCain and Obama strengthen the case for reforming the method of choosing presidential candidates? [30]

*(Specification: Presidential Elections: the nominating process)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the process for selecting major party presidential candidates in general and in 2008 in particular. This may include the “invisible primary”, primaries and caucuses; frontloading; the role of money and the media, the importance of Iowa and New Hampshire; the changing role of National Party Conventions. Examples can be drawn of course from other elections. Alternative methods of choosing candidates should be outlined.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to analyse the presidential candidate selection process in a balanced fashion putting forward both its merits and demerits. In the former category, candidates should be able to recognise: the excitement created by the contests evident in the record levels of participation; the improvement upon the old system; the ability of McCain to triumph despite a lack of money over Romney; the less than critical role played by New Hampshire and Iowa; the ability of super delegates to provide peer group review; the value of media scrutiny; the ability of outsiders to challenge for the nomination; the test of stamina and character; the benefits of media scrutiny. In terms of demerits, it could be argued: Iowa and New Hampshire still have too much importance (Giuliani) and their unrepresentative nature; the impact of frontloading (super duper Tuesday) and the benefits this confers to those with money and national profile; the impact of the media (soft ride for Obama?); negative advertising and the impact upon party unity; the absence of peer group review and the triumph of telegenic qualities over political skills.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will apply the 2008 nominations to the arguments. They may differentiate between the proportional system used for the Democrats and winner takes all for the Republicans. There should be recognition of the interest and participation levels reached in 2008 and their significance for this debate.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

- 2 Discuss the view that there are more differences within than between the two main parties in the US today. [30]**

*(Specification: Political parties: philosophy and ideology; organisation; Congress: party cohesion)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the two major parties. This may include: philosophy, history and ideology; policy similarities and differences between the two major parties; levels of party cohesion in Congress. This discussion may extend to the nature of elections with their focus on the candidate rather than the party and partisan dealignment. Reference to Clinton's New Democrats and the decline of the New Deal Democracy, and Bush's compassionate conservatism as evident in education and Medicare spending would be relevant. Reward those who attempt to find similarities and differences between McCain and Obama (eg Iraq, energy independence, tax policy).

**AO2:** Expect candidates to examine a range of differences within and between the two major parties. The former may include discussion of regional differences with a contrast between the south and north, east and west coast. Argument may be based upon the electoral imperative of winning the "vital centre" and/or broader ideological developments with the triumph of liberal capitalism and its impact upon New Deal/social democratic policies. Historically, the notion of a dominant ideology is also a useful point for consideration. Those who detect an increased polarisation of party views between Obama and McCain (or conversely, convergence) will be rewarded. Candidates may choose to establish policy criteria such as party positions on economic, foreign and social policy as a means of considering policy differences. This would provide a sound analytical framework for this question.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will be able to separate arguments relating to within and between. They will display a range of arguments supported by contemporary examples.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

**3 Assess the claim that pressure groups weaken rather than strengthen democracy in the USA. [30]**

*(Specification: Pressure groups: types, methods used; implications for the democratic process; arguments for and against their existence and influence)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of: the different types of pressure groups that exist; the role and activities of Political Action committees; the various strategies used by pressure groups to achieve their objectives. Look for a good range of well worked and up to date examples. This is likely to be a good discriminator. Good candidates will go beyond the traditional pressure groups and give plenty of US examples. Reward candidates who display knowledge and understanding of such concepts as democracy and participation by reference to democratic theory/theorists re Pluralism/Dahl, elitism/C Wright Mills, New Right & public choice/Olsen and corporatism.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to analyse both sides of the argument in a reasoned and balanced fashion. In the case of weakening democracy, expect analysis of such issues as: the inequalities of power between competing groups in such issues as gun control, tobacco and health care; the over-importance of money; the “revolving door” syndrome; iron triangles’ “special” v narrow interests. In terms of strengthening democracy, expect analysis of such issues as: increasing opportunities for political participation; information-giving and educating roles of pressure groups. Look for analysis of the pluralist v elitist debate.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will attempt to reach a conclusion one way or the other rather than merely reciting the standard arguments. They will have established criteria which will allow an assessment of the democratic worth of pressure groups in a US context. This may invite reference to voter turnout, the frequency of elections and party functions.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

- 4 Examine the reasons for the changes in the balance of power between federal and state governments since 1980. [30]**

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

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of federal and state governments which may include: the dynamic nature of the relationship between federal and state governments; the increased responsibility and activity of state governments and the reduced activity of federal government; the concept of new federalism and the policies which emerge from it; the changes to federal grant-in-aid to states; unfunded mandates; the attitude of the two major parties, for example, the impact of GW Bush's compassionate conservatism with policies such as the No Child Left Behind Act, Clinton's Third Way and the "Republican Revolution." There may be references to the role of the Supreme Court and its "federalism revolution" in the Rehnquist years with detail of relevant cases such as *Alden v Maine* and its strict interpretation of article 1 section 8 re the role of Congress in cases such as *US v Lopez*.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to examine some of the following: the federal government's budgetary problems; federal government failure; the end of the Keynesian consensus (in their own words); the rise of anti-Washington sentiment. The reaction of the states to developments such as the civil rights legislation and elimination of corruption and inefficiency resulting in an institutional revival at state level can be coupled to their fiscal revival in the 1980s. States acting as laboratories such as in Wisconsin (welfare) and California (environmental policies) and the increased profile of governors and the NGA could also be explored.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will provide an analytical discussion of the factors contributing to the changing relationship between federal and state government. This is in contrast to those who provide a detailed historical narrative. A range of factors will be identified.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

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

*(Specification: Congress functions; committees/legislative process)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the types of committees which play a role in the legislative process in Congress and of the process itself. This will largely revolve around the standing committees (and their sub committees) at the committee stage but may also include House Rules Committee and conference committees. Look for up to date examples.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to assess the importance of the roles played by committees in the legislative process including: the detailed scrutiny of legislation through the hearings conducted at the committee stage; the standing committees' powers of pigeon holing and of amendment; role of timetabling played by the House Rules Committee; the role of reconciling differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill played by conference committees. Better candidates will weigh the importance of committees against the role played by the two chambers, suggesting that final decisions are rarely made in committee.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will maintain a sharp focus on the legislative process throughout the essay. This may invite discussion of the nature of the Congress and the impact of party. Reference may be made to the differing outlooks of the Senate and the House.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

**6 To what extent does the Executive Office (EXOP) help or hinder the president? [30]**

*(Specification: The Presidency: Executive Office of the President; problems of coordination)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the Executive Office of the President (EXOP) which might include: a definition; functions; examples of certain offices within the EXOP such as the White House Office, the National Security Council and Office of Management and Budget; important posts within the EXOP such as the Chief of Staff, Press Secretary, head of congressional liaison, National security Advisor, Director of OMB. Discussion may be linked to the powers and role of the president as chief legislator, commander-in-chief, bargainer-in-chief etc. Reference may be made to the cabinet. Reward those who give up to date examples and who show awareness of the size of the bureaucracy and the difficulty of control and coordination.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to use examples of offices, persons and incidents from a number of recent presidencies to examine the role of the EXOP in such areas as economic, foreign and defence and national security policy. This might be contrasted with attempts to make greater use of the cabinet either individually or collectively such as in the Bush second term. Reward the candidates who are able to discuss the bureaucracy as a fourth branch of government with reference to views of theorists such as Weber and Heclo. There may be some brief reference and contrast to the UK system of government as a plural executive.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will be able to provide a detailed and balanced assessment of the role of the EXOP. Discussion may include reference to the Obama administration and the nature of decision-making in areas such as foreign and economic policy at the present time.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.



**7 Evaluate the factors which influence appointments to the Supreme Court. [30]**

*(Specification: Supreme Court; membership and appointment process)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the appointment process and a range of factors and institutions involved in the appointment process which may include: the president, Justice Department, FBI, Senate Judiciary Committee, the Senate, pressure groups (ABA & Federalist Society for GW Bush), the media and public opinion. There may be some discussion of personal factors relating to potential appointments. Expect most to focus on the political outlook of the president and the potential to leave a legacy upon the Court. Reference might also be made to gender, race and religion. Personal qualities, qualifications and experience are also relevant in this regard. Details of both the successful and failed appointments such as Bork, Miers, Carswell and Haynesworth, Roberts and Alito and Thomas will provide much scope for discussion. The composition of the Senate, the threat of filibuster and the use of the cloture vote could lead to discussion of “confirmability.”

**AO2:** Expect candidates to evaluate the relative importance of factors relating to appointments to the Court. Most will focus on attempts to politicise the Court as stated above. Better candidates will discuss the impact of SJC’s hearings and recommendations, the threat and use of the filibuster in the Senate. This might be linked to “nuclear option” and compromise agreed for the Bush appointments between moderate Republicans and Democrats. The importance of gender/racial and religious balance of the Court might be discussed with the Roberts Court placed in this context.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will be able to evaluate the relative importance of a range of factors rather than writing a list. There will be an appreciation of the shared nature of this process and the complexity that this contributes to the process.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

**8 Discuss which branch of federal government has been the most effective defender of rights and liberties in the US. [30]**

*(Specification: The Supreme Court: civil rights and liberties concerning race, religion, gender, freedom of speech and expression: Congress; The Presidency)*

**AO1:** Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the constitutional powers of the three branches of the federal government as well as a range of civil rights and liberties. These will include those relating to some of the following: race, religion, gender, freedom of speech and expression. Look for a good range of well worked and up to date examples such as developments since 9/11 with the Patriot Act and rulings such as Boumediene v Bush, Hamdan v Rumsfeld and others re rights such as Gonzales v Carhart, Morse v Frederick and Baze v Rees. Better candidates will display a knowledge and understanding of the role of each branch of government and rights and liberties respectively.

**AO2:** Expect candidates to evaluate the effectiveness of the federal government in safeguarding rights and liberties. This will include: the Supreme Court's use of judicial review; Congress's use of the initiation and passage of legislation as well as committee investigations; the president's use of his powers of leadership, "the bully pulpit", policy initiation and execution. In order to reach the highest levels, candidates must make some reference to all three branches although a main focus on the Supreme Court with some reference to the other branches would be acceptable for level 3. Discussion limited to only the Supreme Court will only reach level 2.

To reach the top of level 4 candidates will consider all three branches of government relatively equally. There will be an attempt to reach a judgement as to which branch has been the most effective. This may invite consideration of other factors such as role played by political culture, the media and pressure groups.

**AO3:** Expect most candidates to reach level 3 and use 4 as a default mark. Further marks will be awarded if a candidate is able to write with flair and maintains a sharp focus on the question throughout the essay. At the top of level 4, candidates will have made good use of paragraphs to separate their arguments and have used the introduction and conclusion to good effect. At level 2 and below, candidates will make frequent and intrusive spelling and grammatical mistakes. The essay will lack focus and be disorganised.

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