

Government and Politics

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

Unit **F852**: Contemporary Government of the UK

Mark Scheme for June 2011

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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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- 1 (a) Using the sources and your own knowledge, describe the roles of the prime minister. [12]

Specification: The Prime Minister: role.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12		
L4	10-12		
L3	7-9		
L2	4-6		
L1	0-3		

AO1 [12]

AO1

- Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the roles of the prime minister.
- The sources suggest several points such as:
 - Overall direction of public policy
 - Leadership on policy
 - Media management
 - Parliamentary management
 - Head of the executive
 - Decision taker.
- Other roles could include:
 - Dispenser of patronage
 - Control of government agenda
 - Decision taker on election timing
 - Foreign policy.
- Development of points in the sources using accurate supportive detail which demonstrates depth of knowledge can get to L4.
- Candidates who ignore the sources can certainly get to L3 if their knowledge is accurate and relevant and has a clear focus on roles.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples from Blair onwards.

- (b) Using the sources and your own knowledge, discuss the view that there are too few limits to prime ministerial power. [28]

Specification: The Prime Minister: limits.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12	12	4
L4	10-12	10-12	4
L3	7-9	7-9	3
L2	4-6	4-6	2
L1	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1 [12] AO2 [12] AO3 [4]

AO1

- Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the powers of the prime minister and the limits imposed on them.
- The sources suggest several limits such as:
 - The party
 - Parliament
 - The cabinet
 - The media
 - Public opinion
 - The level of expectation on the office.
- Own knowledge might include:
 - Polls
 - Personality/rivalry
 - Size of majority in parliament
 - Electoral factors
 - State of economy/international situation
 - Opposition.

AO2

- Candidates must discuss the central issue of limits, or lack of, to prime ministerial power.
- Candidates who also consider what might be ‘too many’ limits should be credited.
- Factors which might be brought in could be the need for decisive action on a divisive issue or a speedy reaction to a threat.
- The key to L3 or L4 is a balanced and objective discussion with an obvious case each way on the need, or otherwise, to limit prime ministerial power.
- L4 answers should offer an answer which is clearly focussed on the limits to prime ministerial power and there is a clear attempt at a balanced analysis.
- L3 answers should show some balance and reasonable focus.
- Maximum L3 for a totally one sided (however good) approach.
- Maximum L2 for answers which lack balance/focus/range or depth.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

AO3

- Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where a full length answer is provided
 - Half the marks should be used to credit the ability to construct clear explanations and to communicate these in a clear, structured manner, making use of the appropriate vocabulary
 - Half the marks should be used to credit spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where answers are short, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.
- Care must be taken not to penalise candidates for stylistic failings twice over, under AO2 and AO3.

2 Discuss the view that political parties have too much power in parliament. [30]

Specification: Parties in parliament. The role of parties in parliament. The opposition and backbenchers. Whips and the whipping system. The organisation of parliament.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12	12	6
L4	10-12	10-12	5-6
L3	7-9	7-9	3-4
L2	4-6	4-6	2
L1	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1 [12] AO2 [12] AO3 [6]**AO1**

- Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the role of parties in parliament.
- Knowledge of the role of party in both the Commons and the Lords.
- The role of party in areas such as:
 - Choice of speaker
 - The whip system and voting
 - Debate
 - Committees
 - The scrutiny role
 - Time allocated to debate/legislation etc
 - Promotion of MPs/Peers to government
 - Selection and deselection of MPs.
- Credit candidates able to use recent examples effectively and relevantly.

AO2

- Candidates must discuss the role of party in parliament. Discussion is expected on whether the current 'power' is too large or not. Discussion of the most appropriate role for party will obviously merit credit.
- Candidates who simply criticise the current role in a purely negative way without showing awareness of feasible alternatives are unlikely to get beyond L2.

- If the bulk of the discussion is focussed on the Commons, then L4 is still possible, but some comment of the role of party in the Lords is needed.
- Candidates who make no mention of the Lords at all are unlikely to get beyond low L3.
- L4 answers should offer an answer which is clearly focussed on the role of political parties in parliament and there is a clear attempt at a balanced analysis.
- L3 answers should show some balance and reasonable focus.
- Maximum L3 for a totally one sided (however good) approach.
- Maximum L2 for answers which lack balance/focus/range or depth.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

AO3

- Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where a full length answer is provided
 - Half the marks should be used to credit the ability to construct clear explanations and to communicate these in a clear, structured manner, making use of the appropriate vocabulary
 - Half the marks should be used to credit spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where answers are short, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.
- Care must be taken not to penalise candidates for stylistic failings twice over, under AO2 and AO3.

3 Discuss the view that the British constitution is too flexible.**[30]**

Specification: Characteristics of constitutions. Flexible and rigid constitutions.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12	12	6
L4	10-12	10-12	5-6
L3	7-9	7-9	3-4
L2	4-6	4-6	2
L1	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1 [12] AO2 [12] AO3 [6]**AO1**

- Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the nature and degree of flexibility of the British constitution.
- There should be awareness of the ways in which the constitution is flexible, for example:
 - The recent use of referendums
 - Devolution
 - Changes to the electoral system
 - Adoption of the Lisbon Treaty.

AO2

- There should be a balanced discussion based on the merits and demerits of having a flexible constitution.
- Candidates who consider the 'too flexible' issue should be fully credited for it.
- Possible merits of the flexible constitution are:
 - Adaptability to rapidly changing needs
 - Dealing with emergencies
 - Democratic pressures can be responded to
 - No dependence on unelected/unaccountable Supreme Court as in US.
- Possible demerits of a flexible constitution are:
 - Lack of accountability
 - Over-powerful executive
 - Absence of democratic controls.
- L4 answers should offer an answer which is clearly focussed on the cases for and against having a flexible constitution and there is a clear attempt at a balanced analysis.
- L3 answers should show some balance and reasonable focus.
- Maximum L3 for a totally one sided (however good) approach.
- Maximum L2 for answers which lack balance/focus/range or depth.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

AO3

- Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where a full length answer is provided
 - Half the marks should be used to credit the ability to construct clear explanations and to communicate these in a clear, structured manner, making use of the appropriate vocabulary
 - Half the marks should be used to credit spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where answers are short, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.
- Care must be taken not to penalise candidates for stylistic failings twice over, under AO2 and AO3.

- 4 Discuss the importance of the Constitutional Reform Act of 2005 to the UK judiciary. [30]

Specification: The role and powers of the judiciary. Judicial neutrality and independence; the separation of powers, appointment and removal of senior judges, relationship between the judiciary, executive and legislature. Key developments in the judiciary.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12	12	6
L4	10-12	10-12	5-6
L3	7-9	7-9	3-4
L2	4-6	4-6	2
L1	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1 [12] AO2 [12] AO3 [6]

AO1

- Candidates will show knowledge and understanding of the Constitutional Reform Act and its impact on the UK judiciary.
- Key factors should include:
 - The appointment and dismissal of judges
 - The role of the Lord Chancellor and LCJ
 - The separation of powers
 - The supreme court
 - The insulation of the judiciary from political influence.
- Not all the above points need mention for L4, but at least three need to be fully developed, and for L3 there has to be at least reasonable awareness of three items.

AO2

- Candidates must discuss the central issue of the importance of the Act and keep the focus firmly on its impact on the judiciary.
- One approach might be to argue for and against its importance, possibly suggesting that in some areas it led to little change, while being quite revolutionary in others.
- Another approach might be to deal with a range of points along the lines suggested above, and comment on the importance, or lack of, as they go along.
- Candidates who assume that it is important, but have focussed and developed comment on a good range of points can also be considered for L4.
- Simple descriptions of the Act, without any pertinent comment, should not go beyond L1.
- L4 answers should offer an answer which is clearly focussed on the importance of the Act and there is a clear attempt at a balanced analysis.
- L3 answers should show some balance and reasonable focus.
- Maximum L3 for a totally one sided (however good) approach.
- Maximum L2 for answers which lack balance/focus/range or depth.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

AO3

- Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where a full length answer is provided
 - Half the marks should be used to credit the ability to construct clear explanations and to communicate these in a clear, structured manner, making use of the appropriate vocabulary
 - Half the marks should be used to credit spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where answers are short, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.
- Care must be taken not to penalise candidates for stylistic failings twice over, under AO2 and AO3.

5 To what extent have recent EU developments had an impact on politics in the UK?[30]

Specification: The impact of membership of the EU on the British government, politics and constitution.

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Maximum	12	12	6
L4	10-12	10-12	5-6
L3	7-9	7-9	3-4
L2	4-6	4-6	2
L1	0-3	0-3	0-1

AO1

- Candidates will display knowledge and understanding of the impact of EU membership on the politics of the UK.
- NB although it clearly states 'politics' in the question, be prepared to credit those who interpret the term 'politics' widely and consider issues which might be seen as coming under 'government' or 'constitution'. The better candidates will make it clear what they understand by 'politics' in this context, and focus accordingly.
- Issues which might be covered are:
 - Impact on Labour
 - Impact on Conservatives
 - Rise of UKIP
 - Wider electoral impact
 - Impact on policy
 - Impact on legislation
 - Impact on ministers
 - Impact on sovereignty.

AO2

- Candidates will discuss the issue of the extent of the impact.
- There would be a clear focus on the 'extent' and a clear answer to the question set.
- Likely answers will argue that its impact is substantial, using several of the points raised above.
- There should also be evidence of a case against, possibly indicating areas such as education, or foreign policy, where membership has had much less impact.

- As always the tired 'eurorants' with a focus on lost sovereignty should not get out of L1.
- Candidates who look at the overall impact of membership and do not specifically mention 'politics', but it is implicitly part of their argument, can certainly get to L3 provided there is good focus and a clear case.
- L4 answers should offer an answer which is clearly focussed on the impact of EU membership and there is a clear attempt at a balanced analysis.
- L3 answers should show some balance and reasonable focus.
- Maximum L3 for a totally one sided (however good) approach.
- Maximum L2 for answers which lack balance/focus/range or depth.
- Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.

AO3

- Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where a full length answer is provided
 - Half the marks should be used to credit the ability to construct clear explanations and to communicate these in a clear, structured manner, making use of the appropriate vocabulary
 - Half the marks should be used to credit spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Where answers are short, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer which meets the above criteria should not necessarily be awarded full marks for AO3.
- Care must be taken not to penalise candidates for stylistic failings twice over, under AO2 and AO3.

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