



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Mark scheme January 2004

GCE

Government and Politics

Unit GOV3

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CRITERIA FOR MARKING

Introduction

The AQA's revised Government and Politics specification has been designed to be objectives-led in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the specification. The assessment objectives for A Level and AS are the same, but the weightings are different at AS and A2. Details of the weightings are given in paragraphs 7.2 and 8.4 of the specification.

The schemes of marking reflect these objectives. The mark scheme which follows is of the *levels of response* type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the skills required in the context of their knowledge and understanding of Government and Politics. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for examiners but they cannot cover all eventualities. Candidates should be given credit for partially complete answers. Where appropriate, candidates should be given credit for referring to recent and contemporary developments in Government and Politics.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other options.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the general principals of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

Using a levels of response mark scheme

Good examining is about the **consistent** application of judgement. Mark schemes provide a framework within which examiners exercise their judgement. This is especially so in subjects like Government and Politics which in part rely upon analysis, evaluation, argument and explanation. With this in mind, examiners should use the Assessment Matrix alongside the detailed mark scheme for each question. The Assessment Matrix provides a framework ensuring a consistent, generic, source from which the detailed mark schemes are derived. This supporting framework ensures a consistent approach within which candidates' responses are marked according to the level of demand and context of each question.

Examiners should initially make a decision about which Level any given response should be placed in. Having determined the appropriate Level the examiners must then choose the precise mark to be given within that Level. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think first of the mid-range within the Level, where that Level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates' responses to the same question might then suggest whether the middle mark is unduly generous or severe.

In making decisions away from the middle of the Level, examiners should ask themselves questions relating to candidate attainment, including the quality of language. The more positive the answers, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid "bunching" of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided. A candidate's script should be considered by asking "Is it:-

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced or markedly better in some areas than others?
- generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded)?
- well presented as to general quality of language?"

The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

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

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

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

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (10-11 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that deploys relevant knowledge and understanding to address the requirements of the question and that demonstrates significant contextual awareness.</p> <p>The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides analysis which displays sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with valid and precise comparisons. The answer includes relevant and convincing interpretations or explanations.</p>	<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate communicates clear arguments and explanations using accurate political vocabulary. The candidate produces answers with a clear sense of direction leading towards a coherent conclusion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (7-9 marks) The candidate demonstrates generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates adequate contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5-6 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides clear arguments and explanations and demonstrates awareness of differing viewpoints and a recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with some sound comparison.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and explanations using some political vocabulary. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 2 (4-6 marks) The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationship between them. He/she makes a limited attempt at addressing the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3-4 marks) The candidate offers a simplistic evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour and begins to construct arguments which contain basic explanation.</p> <p>The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 marks) The candidate attempts to develop an argument using basic political vocabulary. Where a conclusion is offered, its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
	<p>Level 1 (1-3 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight and/or incomplete knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and limited awareness of the relationship between them.</p> <p>The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question. Only superficial awareness of the context of the question is evident and the few examples cited are often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1-2 marks) The candidate makes a partial attempt to evaluate political institutions, processes and behaviour. Arguments offered are superficial. There is very limited awareness of parallels or comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The answer relies upon narrative which is not fully coherent and which is expressed without using political vocabulary. A conclusion is either not offered or it is not related to the preceding material.</p>

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

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

Accept work performed by MPs to assist persons, groups, organisations, etc. in constituency. For higher marks some extra detail (eg surgeries, examples, means of assisting constituents in House), or relevant concepts (eg representation, redress of grievances).

(b) “Parliament is unable to challenge the Government effectively.” Discuss. (22 marks)

From the extract candidates should identify factors which underlie government dominance, such as healthy working majority, strict party discipline. Other information might focus on party loyalty, constituency pressure, patronage, increased dominance of Prime Minister, executive control over functions of House, etc.

Having identified and explained relevant factors, candidates should discuss ‘Unable to challenge effectively’, which requires demonstration of: opportunities to challenge Executive (eg questions, select committees, debates); roles of opposition and backbenchers, etc; examples of backbench rebellions (eg Iraq); government defeats; experience of different Parliaments; role of House of Lords in challenging government.

For higher marks look for analysis of underlying reasons for weakness of Parliament in challenging government (including wider factors such as FPTP electoral system and party system); evaluation of effectiveness (eg varies according to size of majority, standing of government, issues, circumstances, constituency/party/pressures, public opinion and legitimacy, eg government mandate); and use of relevant concepts, eg executive dominance, elective dictatorship, representation, mandate, ministerial responsibility, etc.

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

- (a) Explain the differences between an *MP* and *MEP* as used in the extract. (8 marks)

Accept MP in House of Commons (Westminster Parliament), MEP as Member of European Parliament, but for higher marks some additional information, eg other differences (system of election, terms of office) or similarities (eg representative role, sit in party groups).

- (b) Discuss the view that elected local government and devolved government are important elements of democracy in Britain. (22 marks)

From the extract candidates should explain that representatives are elected, accountable, etc. They should then go on to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: role, powers and composition of local government and devolved government; elections to these bodies including electoral system, voting turnout, etc; relationship between these levels with other levels of government; central controls over local government and devolved assemblies; policies/performance of Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly; recent initiatives to increase participation in local government, eg elected mayors.

Having explained the above, candidates should, for higher marks: analyse the democratic claims of local government and devolved government (eg elected, representative, open, accessible, more locally sensitive, more opportunities for political participation locally); evaluate weaknesses or democratic claims (eg limited taxation power – none in Wales; limits imposed by sovereignty of Westminster Parliament and central government; low voter turnout, etc); observe parallels/contrasts, etc. between local and devolved government and between Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly and use relevant concepts, eg devolution, accountable, democratic.

(The Northern Ireland Assembly is relevant to the answer, but acceptable to ignore as not mentioned in the stimulus.)

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

(a) Briefly explain the term *individual ministerial responsibility* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Accept constitutional convention, minister responsible for own and departmental officials' actions. For higher marks, more detail, eg how weakened by Next Steps; contrast with collective responsibility, examples, implications for resignation, etc.

(b) Discuss the roles of Cabinet ministers in central government. (22 marks)

Candidates should identify roles of Cabinet Ministers, including from extract, determining policy and monitoring NSA's performance, and from own knowledge, other roles in government (eg Cabinet membership, cabinet committees, departmental roles, etc), parliamentary, party and constituency roles. Having explained the above, candidates should also: analyse relationships of Cabinet Ministers with other types of ministers (eg non-Cabinet, devolved executives) and other actors (eg Prime Minister, Special Advisers), including parallels and contrasts; analyse factors underlying ministerial roles (eg absence of separation of powers; party government), including constitutional roles (eg collective and individual responsibility); consider factors underlying ministerial effectiveness (eg lack of specialist knowledge, frequent reshuffles, patterns of ministerial recruitment); evaluate relative importance of different roles, and of different ministerial approaches (eg policy makers, administrators, communicators, departmental 'ambassadors, etc). Concepts, eg responsibility, accountability are appropriate.

4

Total for this question: 30 marks

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

At minimum, department of state/government with example(s). For better marks other information, eg staffed by civil servants, headed by ministers, relationship with Next Steps agencies, etc.

(b) “The influence of the Prime Minister changes according to issues and circumstances.” Discuss. (22 marks)

Candidates should identify: formal (eg appointment, dismissal, dissolution, chair of Cabinet) and informal (eg media manipulation, influence within party) powers of Prime Minister; resources (eg informational, bureaucratic) available to the Prime Minister and constraints/limitations imposed by Cabinet (as long as this does not take over the answer).

Having explained the above, candidates should then: analyse issues affecting prime ministerial influence (eg strength of party support/absence of divisions relating to issue of powerful groups/public opinion/media) and circumstances affecting prime ministerial influence (eg size of parliamentary majority, strength of standing in country, proximity of election, influence/weakness of rivals, ability to ‘spin’). For higher marks, answers should evaluate ‘changes’ in prime ministerial influence (eg between different prime ministers and varying issues and circumstances’; give examples relating to particular prime ministers and issues (eg Thatcher and Falklands and poll tax, Major and Europe; Blair and Iraq); draw parallels and contrasts (eg between UK prime ministers and US Presidents) and use relevant concepts, such as prime ministerial government, cabinet government, presidential, etc.

It is possible to agree with contention and/or to argue that the Prime Minister is powerfully placed irrespective of issue and circumstances.