AQA

ASSESSMENT and

QUALIFICATIONS

ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics 5151/6151

GOV8   Synoptic Module

Mark Scheme

2007 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

**CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

Introduction

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

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

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. It is therefore of vital importance that 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, examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the general principles of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

Using a levels of response mark scheme

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

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

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

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

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

A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS SYNOPTIC UNIT – GOV8

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for all questions (Maximum 40 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	Level 4 **(13–16 marks)** The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The candidate selects material from the full range of the specification subject content with discrimination and shows that he/she clearly understands the links between the various elements. The candidate confidently demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the holistic nature of politics and identifies, and shows advanced understanding of, subsystems contained within the political institutions and processes identified in the specification. The candidate fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates a high level of contextual awareness. The answer includes detailed and comprehensive interpretations or explanations and provides accurate evidence and up–to–date, wide–ranging and imaginatively chosen examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.	**Level 4** **(13–16 marks)** The candidate confidently applies a wide range of fully developed concepts and theories. The candidate demonstrates that he/she fully understands the question and recognises the need for a synoptic perspective in their analysis. The candidate constructs cogent and coherent arguments and explanations. The candidate provides analysis that displays a sophisticated awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of contemporary issues. Parallels and connections are identified with creativity and imagination, together with well–developed comparisons. There is a clear and full evaluation of political institutions, processes, behaviour, arguments and explanations. The candidate demonstrates advanced ability to draw upon relevant material from the whole range of the specification content and uses it to inform their discussion and to construct arguments that cover the subject in the broadest sense. The candidate may integrate advanced knowledge derived from his/her wider study and appreciation of politics. Although taking a synoptic perspective, the candidate ensures that all material presented is directly relevant to the discussion. The essay shows evidence of imagination and flair.	**Level 4** **(7–8 marks)** The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions with sophisticated style and complete clarity, using a political vocabulary to analyse and synthesise information. There is a precise sense of logical progression flowing throughout the essay, leading to a clearly argued conclusion that logically derives from the preceding analysis.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for all questions (GOV8) (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
	Level 3 (9–12 marks) The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The candidate selects material from a good range of the specification content and shows understanding of the links between the various elements. The candidate generally recognises the holistic nature of politics and identifies, and shows sound understanding of, subsystems contained within political institutions and processes identified in the specification. The candidate soundly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates a competent level of contextual awareness. The answer includes detailed and comprehensive interpretations or explanations and provides clear evidence and well–chosen examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.	**Level 3 (9–12 marks)** The candidate applies a good range of concepts and theories, demonstrating a grasp of the question and recognising the need for a synoptic perspective in his/her analysis. The candidate constructs sound arguments and explanations. The candidate provides analysis that displays awareness of differing viewpoints and a recognition of contemporary issues. Parallels and connections are competently identified, together with viable comparisons. There is a clear and reasonably full evaluation of political institutions, processes, behaviour, arguments and explanations. The candidate demonstrates the ability to draw upon relevant material from much of the specification content and uses it to inform their discussion and to construct arguments that cover the subject broadly. The candidate may integrate accurate knowledge derived from his/her wider study and appreciation of politics. Although taking a synoptic perspective, the candidate ensures that material presented is largely relevant to the discussion. The essay shows evidence of advanced study and some use of imagination.	**Level 3 (5–6 marks)** The candidate communicates explanations and conclusions within a structured argument, using a political vocabulary to analyse and synthesise information. There is a sound logical progression flowing throughout the essay, leading to a clearly argued conclusion that logically derives from the preceding analysis.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for all questions (GOV8) (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	Level 2 (5–8 marks) The candidate demonstrates an outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The candidate selects material from a limited range of the specification content and shows incomplete understanding of the links between the various elements. The candidate shows a limited grasp of the holistic nature of politics and little understanding of subsystems contained within the political institutions and processes identified in the specification. The answer includes a partial but reasonably effective approach to address the requirements of the question. The candidate demonstrates a limited but useful level of contextual awareness. The use of examples is limited and the choice is not entirely appropriate.	**Level 2 (5–8 marks)** The candidate uses a restricted range of partly developed concepts and theories, demonstrating a limited grasp of the question, and is not entirely clear about the need for a synoptic perspective in analysis. The candidate constructs only embryonic arguments and explanations. The candidate provides analysis that displays some awareness of differing viewpoints and a limited recognition of contemporary issues. There is a recognition of some basic parallels and connections, together with some limited comparisons. There is a simplistic attempt to evaluate political institutions, processes, behaviour, arguments and explanations. The candidate draws upon material from a limited range of the specification content. This may be used in a general way to inform their discussion and to construct arguments. It is not always clear that a synoptic perspective is being taken and not all material presented is strictly relevant to the discussion. Where a synoptic perspective is offered, there is a tendency towards a series of disjointed points of unequal relevance and a lack of logical progression.	**Level 2 (3–4 marks)** The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions adequately, with a straightforward narrative and/or explanation, using a limited political vocabulary. A conclusion may be offered, but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit. The answer is loosely structured.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for all questions (GOV8) (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
	Level 1 (1–4 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. There is a very limited approach to addressing the requirements of the question. The candidate demonstrates a low level of contextual awareness and there is little understanding of the concept of synopticity. Few examples are introduced and these are often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.	**Level 1 (1–4 marks)** The discussion is not adequately supported by the use of concepts and theories. Arguments and explanations are not well constructed and there is virtually no attempt to apply a synoptic perspective. Analysis shows little, if any, awareness of differing points of view and very few parallels and connections are used to establish comparisons. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial and naïve. Arguments and explanations are undeveloped.	**Level 1 (1–2 marks)** The answer relies upon narrative that is not fully coherent, with little or no use of political vocabulary. The conclusion is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.

Section A: Power

A1   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'The true power of governments is demonstrated in their ability to shape policy in the face of opposition.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers are be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis is on the way governments are rarely free to do as they like and must bargain, cajole, persuade, threaten and compromise in the process of creating policy.

In the main body of the answer, candidates should introduce and define key relevant terms such as political leadership, power, influence and authority. They may also discuss styles of governance such as strong, weak, vacillating, pragmatic, ideological, populist or dominant.

They may consider bases of power such as office–holding, wealth, religion, charisma, tradition and electoral legitimacy. The analysis may be underpinned with a theoretical perspective, such as elitism, pluralism or a Marxian approach.

The analysis should entail a wide–ranging consideration of the various forms of opposition that a government might face. These may include various types of pressure group, the media and business, global economic factors, international and supranational political organisations. They may also include public opinion, mass demonstrations and the use or threat of violence. Opposition from within the governmental system would include the opposition parties, the bureaucracy, the elected assembly, and a second chamber. There may also be opposition from local government and the devolved institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A key element of the answer should be examples showing cases of opposition to proposed governmental action. Examples may be from past and present. They are often of major political events and controversies. However, they may also be of minor events that candidates may have studied.

The examples must not merely be of alternative centres of power; they must detail cases of opposition to the declared intentions of government as, say, in the case of the British government's desire to introduce legislation allowing 90–day police detention of terrorism suspects in November 2005. Alternatively, the government decision to invade Iraq would serve to illustrate government action in the face of popular opposition. Material for comparison can be drawn from other systems, such as the USA and EU.

Some candidates may introduce the idea of a clash of ideologies to the analysis. They may ask if ideologies can have relevance in a system with many conflicting sources of opposition. This could lead to the issue of pragmatism in the exercise of power in modern politics.

There should be a concluding section that derives from the preceding discussion. This may support the proposition, refute it, or argue an intermediate position.

A2   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Political power is closely linked to socio–economic power.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers are judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should be on the way in which the power individuals and groups may possess in societal terms can translate into political power. The extract offers a clear steer on this. The introduction should include definitions of both these forms of power. These should be more than broad general definitions of power such as 'the ability of A to make B do something she would not otherwise do'. The value of the extract should be recognised with respect to this. Social power can be defined in terms such as race, gender, education, professional expertise, wealth, position, willingness to resort to violence, popularity, class and family background. Political power may be defined variously but must essentially refer to the ability to influence government policy.

Candidates may develop a theoretical basis for their analysis, with reference to Marxist, elitist and pluralist approaches, and variants of these such as neo–Marxism and hyper–pluralism. This may include reference to the key thinkers, both classical and contemporary, from the various schools.

Examples to support arguments should include the identification of powerful groups and individuals within society, such as Bernie Ecclestone, David Beckham, Naomi Campbell, Rupert Murdoch, Jamie Oliver, Jeremy Paxman, the BMA. There should also be examples of key incidents in which societal power has been translated into political power, such as the Ecclestone affair, when cigarette advertising was allowed in Formula 1 racing, or when Jamie Oliver prompted changes in school meals policy.

Candidates may note the way in which successful individuals may find their way into the political process through the exercise of government patronage, such as appointment to quangos and the House of Lords. They should give examples of this, such as the case of Lord Adonis, who was having considerable influence over education policy in 2005.

Candidates may decide to argue that socially prominent figures do not necessarily have political power and may cite examples to demonstrate this. They may also note how a number of prominent figures drawn into the Downing Street embrace in the early years of the New Labour government were to become disillusioned.

Candidates may develop the argument that only certain kinds of societal power will translate into political power. For example, they may conclude that corporate power is more influential than the power of individuals. This may lead to a consideration of the position of large companies, including those with global reach.

Candidates need to assess effective political power in terms of the ability of influence public policy. This policy may be seen to emanate from various locations, including Westminster, Whitehall, the UK provincial assemblies, local authorities and the federal and state assemblies in the USA.

Candidates should also consider the obverse case, where lack of societal power results in lack of political power. This may lead into consideration of what they may see as weaker sections of society, such as the disabled, ethnic minorities, women, the poor and the 'underclass'. They may even note that such sections can gain some political power through collective action. They may also note the increasing tendency to resort to direct action as a response to political weakness.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that clearly derives from preceding discussion. This may support or refute the proposition that political power is closely linked to socio–economic power. Alternatively, the conclusion may argue that it is a contingent relationship, which depends on prevailing circumstances.

Section B: Participation and Representation

B1   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Representative government is the only viable form of democracy for the modern state.'
Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the focus of the analysis should be on the essential nature of representative democracy and its place in the modern state.

In the main body of the answer, candidates should introduce and, directly or by implication, define key relevant terms such as democracy, participation, representative democracy, the modern state. They may also analyse the nature of modern democracy.

Candidates should analyse the nature of representative democracy and note its various forms. This may lead on to a consideration of theories of representation, such as the Burkean view, microcosmic representation, representatives as delegates, representative as advocates and the theory of the mandate. There may be a critique of the fundamental idea of representative democracy (elitist, non–inclusive, non–microcosmic, etc.). Alternatively, they may raise the problem of 'mobocracy' that is present with a fully extended franchise. Some might argue that so–called representative government is, in practice, not representative at all, merely being a cloak for non–inclusion, party domination and elitism. They may address the issue of the composition of existing representative assemblies in term of ethnic minorities, class, gender and age.

It is highly likely that they will contrast representative democracy with direct democracy and praise, or explore the limitations, of the latter. Some could well explain early forms of direct democracy in the Greek city states, New England, Swiss cantons or early parish government in England. They may also note the various ways in which weaker forms of direct democracy are increasingly present in modern government, such as referendums, opinion polls, focus groups and public opinion as a background to the policy process. Again they may see such developments as welcome or unwelcome.

There could well be some focus on the representative quality of electoral systems. Some candidates may perhaps go into the merits and demerits of various systems with respect to their efficacy in terms of representation. They may cover forms of political behaviour involved in the operation of electoral systems, such as voting, campaigning, media activity, party funding and party membership.

Following this, some candidates may argue that representative democracy is indeed not the only viable form of government for the modern state and suggest that a postmodern form of 'new politics' is becoming manifest. They might find evidence for such an assertion in developments like enfeebled parliaments and assemblies, falling electoral turnouts, declining membership of political parties and more resort to forms of direct action.

Candidates may also be expected to consider alternatives to representative government, leading to a discussion of the nature of democratic participation. They may consider forms of participation beyond representative government, such as lobbying, meetings with bureaucrats, demonstrating, pressure–group membership and direct action. They will also need to consider the extent to which these can be viable alternatives to representative democracy. Some may argue that they complement representative democracy.

Candidates can introduce an ideological dimension by considering the extent to which representative democracy can achieve ideological goals. For example, can such a system satisfy a socialist, feminist or green agenda?

Candidates should seek relevant examples from throughout the specification to illustrate arguments. This can involve comparative material from other systems, particularly the USA and EU.

A conclusion should arise from the foregoing discussion and contain a clear acceptance or refutation of the proposition.

B2   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Traditional political institutions are failing to offer many citizens the participation they desire.'
Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should be on the extent to which the formal or traditional institutions of representative government may be said to be failing to offer many people the participation they desire. The extract offers a clear steer on this question, suggesting that attitudes towards this are related to a generational effect.

Candidates should define, either explicitly or implicitly, key terms relevant to the question, such as political disengagement, disaffection from politics, civic–oriented, older and younger generations, legitimacy of the political system.

The extract deals particularly with the generational aspect of political disengagement, with younger people more sceptical than their elders. Some candidates may make this the centre of their analysis, and although this is acceptable, it is more impressive to consider the matter across a wider front. Thus, for example, fuel protesters, anti–Iraq–war protesters, Fathers for Justice and the fox–hunting lobby all involve political action beyond the formal institutions of representative government and have not been a particular concern of the young.

Some candidates may decide to question the apparent aversion to formal politics amongst young people or others. They may also disagree with the explanations offered in the extract.

Candidates should be able to provide a wide range of examples to support their cases. Such examples may include instances where formal government institutions may be said to be failing, such as the use of heavily whipped voting in the Commons (where putative representatives may be said to ignore the wishes to their constituents), deficiencies in the electoral system, the existence of unelected quangos, the decline in local government, the use of government advisers who appear to have more influence than MPs and ministers, governments ignoring popular opinion and the power of civil servants. There should also be examples illustrating popular dissatisfaction in the form of protests, direct action, low electoral turnouts. Indeed, there are numerous sources of examples here. Some candidates may be able to provide electoral data to illustrate the level of support for the formal institutions of government. Some may even cite the establishment of the Muslim Parliament.

Examples may be drawn from the systems in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as from Westminster. In addition, there may be comparative examples from other systems such as the USA and EU.

Some candidates may pursue the more fundamental argument that the nature of British politics is changing, discussing the increasingly centralised and market–led campaigning methods of the political parties. They may note that such methods can exclude various sections of the community, such as ethnic minorities, disabled groups, women, those with strong ideological positions and of course the young. They may argue that this tends to leave substantial numbers marginalised, so that they see the formal system as remote and irrelevant.

Some candidates may pay attention to political agendas beyond the ambit of the main parties. This may lead them to consider the rise of the so called 'new politics' of single–issue campaigning, direct action and new social movements. They may note ideological shifts, a decline in ideological politics and may even speak of postmodernism. They may seek to argue that groups dissatisfied with the formal institutions of representative government may still be highly political in their attitudes and behaviour. Such people could be said to favour active participation rather than passive representation, making them more political than the contented majority.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that clearly derives from preceding discussion. This may support or refute the proposition that the traditional institutions of representative government are failing to offer many people the participation they desire.

Section C: Political Culture

C1   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'It is political culture that gives each nation its unique political identity.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able to bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should be on the way the concept of political culture encapsulates a nation's unique political identity. In effect, candidates are being asked to consider just what political culture is. Key terms relevant to the question, such as political culture, nation and national identity, should be defined, either directly or through their usage.

From the outset, candidate would be expected to consider the identification and examination of the wide range of elements that constitute a political culture. These may include various typologies, such as traditional, secular, participant, subject, parochial and civic. They may consider related concepts such as citizenship, deference, homogeneity and consensus.

There should be attention to key attitudes towards politics and the political system, such as trust in officialdom, pride in country, respect for political figures, respect for the law and the willingness of people to accept the actions and policies of their governments.

Candidates may also consider key social attitudes relating to political culture, such as those towards class and social stratification, elitism, egalitarianism, gender, race and geographical divide. Some may pose the question: do the concepts of political culture and national character have some affinity with xenophobia and racist thinking?

In addition, they may include an analysis of ideology as a central component of a nation's political culture, noting, say, the predominance of individualist neo–liberalism in Anglo–Saxon cultures and contrasting this with more statist, communal cultures found in some European countries. Feminist and ecological ideologies may also be profitably introduced here. Candidates can also consider developments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Comparative examples from other systems such as the USA and EU, will be particularly useful in this question.

There should be an institutional dimension to the account of political culture, considering such elements as constitutions, judiciaries, assemblies, electoral systems, public bureaucracies and levels of devolution. This could go on to look at related factors such as patterns of political recruitment to institutions and political structures.

In considering the issue of national identity, candidates may be expected to discuss such factors as major historical landmarks, patterns of immigration, salient political issues, notable political figures, the presence of ancient institutions (monarchy, aristocracy), climate, geography

(eg insularity), imperial experience and the style of media treatment of politics. This makes it possible to draw relevant examples from throughout the specification.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that derives from the preceding discussion. This must clearly relate to the proposition that political culture gives each nation a unique political character.

C2   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Political cultures are in a state of continual change.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should centre on the dynamic nature of a political culture. The extract offers a clear steer on the discussion.

Candidates may argue variously around the key proposition. Some may agree that political culture is a dynamic feature of politics, but others may argue that it is largely static, preserving fundamental value and belief systems that define a particular political system.

Analysis may focus on the classic pillars of political culture such as continuity, consensus, homogeneity and deference, and consider in detail, and with examples, the extent to which these may have varied over time.

Candidates will be able to mine a rich vein of examples of ways in which political cultures could be said to be coming under pressure. They may, for example, consider changes in education, family relationships, more permissive attitudes, more aggressive mass media, acceptance of alternative lifestyles, a more prominent place for women in the workplace and in public life, a perceived terrorist threat, increased drug use, and a perceived influx of asylum seekers. They may also consider attitudes towards figures of authority, including teachers, parents, police, the judiciary, MPs, local councillors, state officials, the medical profession, care workers and so on. The creation of provincial assemblies in the UK should provide an important example concerning the factor of homogeneity.

There is much scope for a comparative dimension and candidates may choose examples from any political culture with which they are familiar, particularly the USA. They may even argue that change in one political culture can be explained in terms of contagion from another. This could of course lead to a consideration of the thesis that British political culture is influenced by that of the USA. They may, for example, note the extent to which party campaigning styles have followed the US pattern. Again, they may discuss the alleged, 'presidentialisation' of the role of the prime minister. Some may note the US influence through film and music, perhaps with particular influence of the young.

They may focus on generational changes, identifying groups such as the post–war generation, the 1960s generation, 'Thatcher's children', and the New Labour era. Here they may consider the factors conditioning attitudes, such as the camaraderie during the war, the austerity of the early post–war years, the trauma of the Suez crisis, the 'No such thing as society' era, the damaged reputation of the monarchy, less deferential treatment of politicians by the media and the advent of Labour as a party of sustained government.

Candidates wishing to refute the proposition may seek more underlying aspect of political culture and argue that apparent changes are of a more superficial nature. They may, for example, argue that the classic pillars of continuity, consensus, homogeneity and deference remain at the heart of any stable political culture. They will of course need examples to demonstrate this. Such candidates will place particular stress on the factor of continuity.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that derives from the preceding discussion. This must clearly come back to the proposition that political culture is a dynamic rather than a static concept although it may support or refute it.

Section D: Continuity and Change

D1   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Continuity, rather than change, is the dominant feature of politics.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should be on factors causing change in politics.

Key terms and concepts relevant to the question, such as political change and continuity, should be defined, either directly or through their usage. Candidates should consider the various forms that political change can take, including policy change, institutional change, change of government and change in government personnel. They may consider fundamental change, such as that brought about by revolution and counter–revolution. A distinction may be drawn between radical change and incremental change.

There should be examples of institutions and political structures where change has taken place such as constitutions, governments, national, provincial and regional assemblies, electoral systems, monarchies, policies, laws, electoral systems, bureaucracies at various levels, local government systems, executives and judiciaries. The examples may come not only from UK politics but from other systems, particularly the USA and the EU. Candidates may explain that much political debate centres on demands for change.

Although examples of changes are necessary, it is important that candidates concentrate on *reasons* for these: that is, the forces causing change. Here they may be expected to consider factors such as pressures from within society, public opinion, the media, political parties, reformist individuals, wars, political expediency, violence, think–tanks, regional issues, extra–national forces, pressure–group activity and relations between politicians and officials. Some may look at developments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, where nationalist movements have been major agents of change.

The ideological dimension may be seen as particularly relevant, with radical ideologies such as socialism, liberalism and environmentalism regarded as promoting change and conservative ideologies seen as sources of resistance. Some may consider the conservative critique of revolution and the argument for stability. Following from this approach, some candidates may identify forces for continuity, such as tradition, bureaucratic resistance, political timidity, public opinion and fear for the new. They may also examine the extent to which self–interest often lies behind these respective positions; those benefiting from the *status quo* will argue for its continuance, while the reformers will gain from change.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that derives from preceding discussion.
This may support or refute the proposition in question.

D2   **Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Change in one part of a political system will inevitably have repercussions throughout the rest of it.' Discuss.   *(40 marks)*

In this synoptic question there are no narrowly defined limits to the areas of knowledge that a candidate may feel able bring to the discussion. Hence, any specification of knowledge requirements can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material indicated below. On the other hand, they may successfully include material not indicated here.

As in many political issues, there is no right or wrong answer to this question. Answers will be judged on factors such as the quality of the argument, the depth of knowledge and understanding, the degree of synopticity, the appropriateness of the examples and the internal logic of the discussion.

Answers should open with an introductory discussion in which candidates demonstrate a recognition that the essential focus of the analysis should be on the concept of political change and the implications of change in one part of a political system for the rest of the system. The extract offers a clear steer on the discussion.

There should be some definition of key relevant terms, such as political system, political change, evolutionary change and revolutionary change. Some candidates may develop a theoretical perspective, focusing on the concept of the 'system' as a set of inter–related parts.

Candidates may begin by identifying pressures for change within government institutions, such as modernisation pledges, manifesto commitments, reformist politicians and bureaucrats, public demands, public dissatisfaction, ideological movements, etc. They may also identify pressures for change from the informal patterns of politics, such as pressure–group demands, patterns of consultation, public opinion and the threat of civil unrest. They may also consider external pressure from the global economy.

Candidates should identify examples of change and be able to trace their effects upon other parts of the political system. The focus of the question offers a particularly good basis for a synoptic perspective, inviting candidates to range widely over institutions and political processes.

Change may be identified variously. Candidates may follow the steer of the extract and examine the constitutional reform agenda of the Blair Government. They may highlight areas such as reform of the House of Lords, the increased use of policy advisers, devolution, or reform in education or welfare provision. They may look at policies such as restrictions on fox–hunting and smoking. Alternatively, they may go further back to examine changes under Thatcher (say reduced consultation procedures, privatisation, the poll tax or the advance of a neo–liberal ideological agenda) or Major (say the development of the Next Steps agencies). They may go even further to consider, say, the UK entry into what is now the EU. Candidates may identify changes in areas of politics not directly under the control of government, such as the increase in judicial activism or the emergence of a more aggressive form of media questioning of politicians. They may also note unplanned change of a societal nature, such as the 'postmodern' rejection of traditional politics or the rise in direct action.

The implications felt throughout the political system may be seen variously. Thus legislation to combat the terrorist threat may be seen as restricting civil liberties in various ways, resulting in the formation of opposition groupings and perhaps calling for further policy initiatives.

The implications of devolution may be seen in terms of an undermining of parliamentary sovereignty. The creation of Next Steps agencies may be seen as reducing ministerial responsibility. Some candidates may be able to identify a chain of causation in which change *A* leads to change *B*, to change *C* and so on. Thus, for example, all–women shortlists lead to more women MPs, which leads to more women–friendly policies, which leads to more women in top jobs, and so on.

The 'implications' may be seen as functional or dysfunctional. There may well be some discussion of the idea of unintended consequences of policy change. Thus, for example, rail privatisation could be said to lead to more complex journey planning and some inefficiencies.

Candidates may also take examples from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and comparative examples from other systems, such as the USA and EU.

There is substantial scope for an ideological dimension in this question in that many changes may be driven by ideological considerations. There is also the issue concerning the forces of conservatism (both political and societal). Here it could be argued that the fact that changes have effects throughout the system, many of which may be unseen, is a strong argument for resisting change.

There should be a concluding section to the answer that derives from preceding discussion. This must come back to the proposition that change in one part of a political system will have repercussions throughout the system, although this may be supported or refuted.