

Version 1.0



**General Certificate of Education  
June 2010**

**Government and Politics GOV4B**

**Political Issues: Ideologies in Action**

**Unit 4B**

***Mark Scheme***

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.

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## **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 Section 4.2 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 mark 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 principles of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

At A2, generally speaking, there is no unambiguously 'right' or 'wrong' answer to the 30-mark questions. Answers will be judged on factors such as quality of the argument, depth of knowledge and understanding, a synoptic grasp of the subject, appropriateness of the examples and internal logic of the discussion. Where candidates are presented with a proposition to be discussed they may support it, reject it or adopt a balanced position.

There are no limits to the areas of knowledge that candidates may feel able bring to the discussion. Therefore the specification of requirements outlined in the mark schemes can only be indicative. Candidates are not expected to include all the material presented in order to access the full range of available marks. At the same time they may successfully include material from their particular studies which is not indicated in the scheme.

### **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****GENERIC MARK SCHEME for questions with a total of 10 marks**

<b>Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select &amp; Deploy</b>	<b>Skills: Analysis &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<p><b>Level 4 (4 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate fully addresses the requirements of the question and provides developed and effective to comprehensive interpretation. The answer also provides clear to accurate evidence and, where appropriate, good to excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 4 (4 marks)</b> The candidate applies an excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p><b>Levels 3–4 (2 marks)</b> The candidate communicates clearly and effectively in a sustained and structured manner, using appropriate political vocabulary. There are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and the response should be legible.</p>
<p><b>Level 3 (3 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate clearly addresses the requirements of the question and provides sound interpretation and contextual awareness. The answer includes good examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 3 (3 marks)</b> The candidate applies a good range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p>The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion.</p>
<p><b>Level 2 (2 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate makes a limited attempt to address the requirements of the question and provides little to partial but reasonably effective interpretation. Answers offer limited evidence and few or inaccurate examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 2 (2 marks)</b> The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p><b>Levels 1–2 (1 mark)</b> The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction.</p>
<p><b>Level 1 (1 mark)</b> The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate makes little attempt to address the requirements of the question and provides little interpretation. Answers offer little evidence and few or inaccurate examples to illustrate points.</p>	<p><b>Level 1 (1 mark)</b> The candidate applies few concepts and makes little use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p>There are frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and legibility may be a problem. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit.</p>
<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>	<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>	<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS****GENERIC MARK SCHEME for questions with a total of 30 marks**

<b>Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select &amp; Deploy</b>	<b>Skills: Analysis &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<p><b>Level 4 (10–12 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. A synoptic approach is fully developed, drawing appropriately on knowledge, perspectives and examples from a wide range of studies in government and politics. The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness. The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made. The answer includes detailed and comprehensive interpretations or explanations as well as accurate evidence and relevant examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 4 (10–12 marks)</b> The candidate displays excellent awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is an excellent and sustained focus on the specific question asked. There is clear and full evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a sophisticated awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues. Appropriate parallels and connections are clearly identified, together with well-developed comparisons. A wide range of concepts is used and developed.</p>	<p><b>Level 4 (6 marks)</b> The candidate communicates structured and sustained arguments, explanations and conclusions with clarity. Excellent use is made of political vocabulary to construct cogent and coherent arguments and explanations. The response should be legible, with few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The answer has a clear sense of direction, culminating in a conclusion that flows from the preceding discussion.</p>
<p><b>Level 3 (7–9 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. A synoptic approach is well developed, using a range of knowledge, perspectives and examples gained elsewhere in the study of government and politics. The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness. The answer includes developed and effective interpretations or explanations and also clear evidence and good examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 3 (7–9 marks)</b> The candidate displays sound awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is a clear focus on the question. There is a sound evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays good awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues. There is good recognition of parallels and comparisons. Appropriate concepts are used and developed.</p>	<p><b>Level 3 (4–5 marks)</b> The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations. The response should be legible but there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The candidate produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

**GENERIC MARK SCHEME for questions with a total of 30 marks (continued)**

<b>Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select &amp; Deploy</b>	<b>Skills: Analysis &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>Communication</b>
<b>AO1</b>	<b>AO2</b>	<b>AO3</b>
<p><b>Level 2 (4–6 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The answer makes a limited attempt to address the question and demonstrates contextual awareness covering part of the question. An attempt to develop a synoptic approach is made, using a limited range of knowledge, perspectives and examples gained more broadly in the study of government and politics. The answer includes a partial and reasonably effective attempt at interpretation or explanation, with some examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p><b>Level 2 (4–6 marks)</b> The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question, resulting in a restricted focus. There is a limited evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour, which displays a partial awareness of differing viewpoints and issues.  There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons. Arguments and explanations are undeveloped, with a limited use of concepts.</p>	<p><b>Level 2 (2–3 marks)</b> The candidate communicates arguments and conclusions adequately, with a limited use of political vocabulary. There are frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and legibility may be a problem. A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
<p><b>Level 1 (1–3 marks)</b> The candidate demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. A very limited attempt at synopticity is made, sometimes using superficial or inaccurate knowledge, perspectives and examples cited from elsewhere in their study of government and politics. There is little attempt to address the requirements of the question. There is only superficial awareness, if any, of the context of the question, with little interpretation and few, if any, examples, often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p><b>Level 1 (1–3 marks)</b> The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial.  Analysis shows little awareness of differing viewpoints and issues. There is little, if any, recognition of parallels and comparisons. Arguments, explanations and use of concepts are superficial and naïve.</p>	<p><b>Level 1 (1 mark)</b> The answer relies upon narrative that is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be intrusive and the response may not be legible. A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p>
<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>	<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>	<p><b>0 marks</b> No relevant response.</p>

**Topic 1 Ethnicity and Gender****Total for this question: 40 marks****(01) Explain what is meant by the term 'institutional racism'.****(10 marks)**

Candidates are likely to define the term 'racism' – the practice of discriminating between individuals or groups on racial grounds. 'Institutional racism' is the enstructuring of racism into the very institutions of society through laws and habitual practices. This can be found in the legal system, civil service, police force and educational institutions. Such institutionalised racism is evident in legislation designed to restrict immigration, eg the 1967 Immigration Act, the 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act and the 1981 British Nationality Act.

Candidates are likely to state that racist behaviour in key institutions is often unintended or not even appreciated by those who practice it; nevertheless, it leads to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping.

The best candidates would probably point out that this concept was developed by race theorists in the USA who believed that racism was deeply ingrained in US society as a consequence of slavery and racial segregation, leading to the dominant white groups unconsciously excluding the black subordinate group.

In the UK the term came to prominence during the Macpherson Inquiry and subsequent report (1999) into the murder of the black teenager Stephen Lawrence by white racist youths. Macpherson claimed that the Metropolitan Police's handling of the case had been influenced by values inherent in the wider British society regarding white perceptions of individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds. In the same year Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary declared racism to be endemic throughout Britain's police forces and noted a failure to recruit and retain black police officers.

**(02) 'Feminism does not adhere to a simple left-wing or right-wing view of politics.' Discuss.****(30 marks)**

Candidates would be expected to explain the meaning of the terms 'left wing' and 'right wing'. They would also be expected to appreciate that no single version of feminism exists and that approaches range from the moderate to the extreme. Basically, theorists have identified three major strands of feminism: liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism. Some would contend that a fourth strand also exists – conservative feminism – although this viewpoint is somewhat contentious. The key features of each of these variants should be covered. In doing so, candidates would be expected to point out the following:

- Liberal feminism pursues a moderate agenda framed in terms of equal legal, social and political rights. The key goal is freedom: freedom to pursue women's advancement for the benefit of all society. Although called on to share domestic duties, men are not seen by liberal feminists as the enemy and the heterosexual family remains the norm. This form of feminism has been criticised by radical and socialist feminists as amounting to little more than Western liberalism with a female dimension.
- Socialist feminism – the key aspect of this school of feminism is that the plight of women was/is rooted in class oppression and is economically based in the exploitative capitalist



system. Women are used and abused as a source of cheap or even free labour and as the producers of future generations of exploited workers. Socialist feminists argue that equality for women can only be achieved when capitalism is destroyed and with it the exploitation of the working class in general and women in particular. Socialist feminists advocate free and widespread birth control, abortion on demand, state payment for domestic work, state child care and full equality in the workplace. Families should share domestic burdens.

- Radical feminists criticise liberal (and to a lesser degree) socialist feminists for not recognising patriarchy (male dominance in political, economic and social activities) and for being 'gender blind'; they contend that the most fundamental form of discrimination in society is sex rather than class or race. The most extreme radical feminists, often lesbians, have advocated separation from men and sperm banks to facilitate birth without direct male participation. This approach is, in many ways, the most revolutionary of the four schools as it advocates fundamental societal change.
- Conservative feminism can appear as something of a contradiction in terms or even an oxymoron. Essentially, this variant emphasises roles which are equal but different and the natural division between public and private areas of social life. Thus, attempts to be equal on men's terms are doomed to failure. Conservative feminists take the view that women should have sovereignty within their own sphere of life, particularly with regards to the family. The other schools of feminism, particularly the radical and socialist variants, are attacked because they fail to recognise the vital role of women in child-rearing and home-making. Conservative feminists assert that many women are actually deeply fulfilled in such roles and find them preferable to employment and activity in the work and political spheres.

Having discussed the contrasting varieties of feminism, candidates could well conclude that feminism does not readily adhere to positioning on the left/right political axis. This would particularly seem to be the case with radical feminism.

Some, probably the strongest, candidates might even contend that feminism should not be analysed according to such ideological dimensions as it often fails to address much of the territory usually dealt with in discussions relating to the philosophy of political ideas, ie Law, the state, government and historical explanations. They might even argue that much of its language, ideas and evidence come from disparate disciplines such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, cultural studies and even socio-biology. The severest critics of feminism even go so far as to dismiss it as an indulgence of middle-class westerners. Such claims are worthy of credit but they are unlikely to be common.

**Topic 2 The Environment****Total for this question: 40 marks**

(03)	Examine the differences between environmentalism and ecologism.	<i>(10 marks)</i>
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The term 'environmentalism' is often confused with 'ecologism' but the following distinctions need to be made.

- Environmentalism is concerned with a more limited range of issues. Basically, environmentalism deals with the effects rather than the causes of environmental problems. The term generally refers to political concern for the environment that stops short of being ideology. Environmentalists do not believe that society needs fundamental transformation for them to achieve their aims; they desire to work within existing political, social and economic systems. This stance is broadly humanist towards questions such as resource depletion, climate change and pollution.
- In contrast, ecologism is ideological; it exists as a movement that seeks to change the nature of humankind's relationship to its physical environment. Ecologists propose fundamental changes to the nature of society in order to bring about equally fundamental changes to humankind's relationship with its environment. Crucially, ecologism rejects the anthropocentric stance adopted by environmentalists and instead emphasises the intrinsic value possessed by nature, ie a moral worth of its own, irrespective of whether it is useful for human purposes.

(04)	'We are all greens now.' Discuss the extent to which the mainstream political parties in the UK have come to embrace environmentalism.	<i>(30 marks)</i>
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Candidates will first need to explain/define 'environmental policies' – basically tackling the dangers to the environment within the existing political, economic and cultural order.

Having done so, candidates will then need to investigate and analyse the green policies presented in the major parties' manifestos in recent elections as well as examine the green policy pronouncements made by Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats between and during election campaigns.

Candidates could point out that:

- Until the 1980s, environmental concerns were not high on the lists of priorities. The parties tended to be more concerned about achieving sustained economic growth and avoiding inflation. In consequence environmental policies did not figure prominently in the election manifestos of 1987 and 1992.
- Events such as Chernobyl, pollution, depletion of the ozone layer and the growing popularity of both green issues and the Green Party resulted in the major parties appearing to be more 'eco-aware' by the mid 1990s. Thus, in 1997, green concerns were more evident in the election manifestos than had previously been the case, even though they still lagged behind economic and social policies in the rank order of priorities. It should also be noted that green statements tended to be generalised, eg

concerns about 'creating a decent environment', 'stemming the tide of pollution' and 'sustaining development without long term damage to the environment'.

- By 2001 all of the major parties were talking about the need to make substantial changes to life and employment styles and to safeguarding the future, but when compared with the Liberal Democrats, the Labour and Conservative statements appeared to be somewhat superficial.
- In 2005 each of the parties shared a stronger commitment to environmentalism.
  1. Labour – whilst avoiding a specific environmental section in its manifesto, outlined policy objectives and specific green targets.
  2. Conservatives – were strong on broad policy objectives but less strong on specific targets.
  3. Liberal Democrats – championed the environment in its manifesto, outlining clean policies and targets under specific headings such as 'tackling climate change' and 'cleaner power'.
- Interestingly, the Green Party is far from convinced that these parties are truly committed to environmentalism, asserting in 2005 that these policies were 'grey' rather than 'green'.
- Between 2005 and 2008 the Labour and Conservative parties moved the environmental/green package up the political agenda to the higher echelon of priorities. It could be argued that the Liberal Democrats already occupied such an elevated position with regards to green policies. Candidates are likely to refer to policies proposed to illustrate these claims.
- In the wake of the 'credit crunch' (from 2008) and the global recession that followed from 2009 the main UK parties increasingly focused their attention on measures and policies designed to revive the economy and stimulate consumer spending, therefore placing less emphasis on green policies and environmental concerns in the process. However, the 2010 party manifestos and the coalition agreement that followed the election saw environmental issues centre-stage.
- The 2010 Conservative manifesto promised: a move towards a 'low carbon economy'; incentives for recycling and loans to help energy-saving home improvements; a focus on renewable power generation, nuclear power and cleaner coal-fired power stations
- The 2010 Labour manifesto offered: 400 000 new 'green jobs'; 40% clean electricity; a ban on unnecessary landfill; a green investment bank.
- The 2010 LibDem manifesto promised: to replace Road Tax with national road-pricing scheme; 100% clean energy by 2050; help with energy-saving home improvements; to push for strict international agreements on carbon emissions.
- The coalition agreement issued by the Conservative-LibDem administration in the wake of the 2010 General Election offered a range of commitments in the sphere of environmental policy, including: the establishment of a smart grid and the roll-out of smart meters; the promotion of a huge increase in energy from organic waste through anaerobic digestion; the creation of a green investment bank; the provision of home energy improvement paid for by the savings from lower energy bills; measures to

encourage marine energy (eg tidal and wave power); preventing coal-fired power stations being built unless they meet the emissions performance standard; a high-speed rail network; the cancellation of the third runway at Heathrow; the refusal of additional runways at Gatwick and Stansted; the replacement of the air passenger duty with a per-flight duty; measures to make the import or possession of illegal timber a criminal offence; measures to promote green spaces and wildlife corridors in order to halt the loss of habitats and restore biodiversity; a national recharging network for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles; a commitment to reduce central government carbon emissions by 10% within 12 months; no public subsidy for new nuclear power stations.

**Topic 3 Education****Total for this question: 40 marks**

<p>(05) Why do many on the right of the political spectrum favour traditional teaching methods? (10 marks)</p>
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First, candidates would be expected to outline the core beliefs and values held by those who occupy a position on the right of the political spectrum – in this context, those of a conservative disposition rather than individuals who hold extreme right-wing views, eg neofascists. Such individuals believe that societies need elites in key positions of authority. They are also sceptical of values and attitudes which are intended to radically alter human behaviour and the structure of social and political institutions. Given such a mindset, right wingers would reject ‘progressive’ teaching methods and, instead, champion ‘traditional’ teaching methods.

When discussing these contrasting approaches towards teaching and learning, candidates ought to emphasise the following points, basically preferences for:

- Selective education over comprehensive education, as selection ‘sorts and sifts’ individuals at an early age, picking out those youngsters who can be groomed for future leadership.
- An academic curriculum for ‘gifted’ pupils which would provide the credentials for progression to higher education and an emphasis on literary and numeracy (‘the 3 Rs’) to skill the rest of the school population for the world of work.
- Teacher-led whole class teaching – ‘chalk and talk’ – over individualised child-centred learning and small group project work.
- Firm discipline to produce pliant conformists instead of critical individuals.
- A Christian-centred approach in keeping with dominant national cultural values and practices.
- The teaching of patriotic versions of British history.
- Conventional end-of-course examinations to assess attainment/achievement rather than modular exams and course work.

Such views appeared in publications produced by right-wing educationalists and Conservative party supporters in the late 1960s, such as the ‘Black Papers’ written by Professor Brian Cox and Rhodes Boyson. They were also evident in the Conservative Party’s 1994 ‘back to basics’ campaign which called for a return to traditional values in teaching and learning.

In the 21st century many right-wing commentators and some Conservative politicians have continued to criticise comprehensive education and what they would term ‘progressive’ methods on the grounds that such institutions and practices produce unsatisfactory examination results for many of their pupils and are also plagued by problems of truancy and indiscipline. Those who hold such views firmly believe that a return to selection and traditional methods would not only improve results but also standards of behaviour.

(06) 'Educational reforms in recent years have been driven by pragmatism rather than ideology.' Discuss. (30 marks)

Candidates clearly need to appreciate the meanings of the terms 'pragmatism' and 'ideology' if reasoned analysis is to follow.

Even though the question refers to recent years students could well point out that for much of the post-war period education was something of an ideological battleground, with the left criticising selective education for being socially divisive and producing self-perpetuating elites and with the right criticising comprehensive education as a tool for social engineering and the 'dumbing down' of academic education. Divisions over private education could also appear in these discussions.

- Candidates would also be likely to assert that since the late 1970s pragmatism rather than ideology has shaped education policy in England and Wales. By the end of that decade, and indeed in the 1980s as well, both the Conservative and Labour parties appeared to view education as a mechanism for producing economic well-being rather than a more equal society. Education should produce school leavers who were equipped to succeed in increasingly competitive global markets. Significantly, the Callaghan Labour government of the late 1970s eschewed ideology in favour of pragmatism so that pupils would be better prepared for employment, hence Labour's advocacy of the 'New Vocationalism'.
- This emphasis on vocationalism is also apparent in the Conservative government's policies in the 1980s in programmes such as TVEI and vocational qualifications such as NVQs.
- Pragmatism is also evident in the government's shying away from the New Right's drive to empower parents via voucher schemes.
- Whilst the 1988 Baker Education Act was attacked by teaching unions and members of the Labour Party as a right-wing piece of legislation, it could well be argued that this too was influenced more by pragmatism than ideology. The National Curriculum, the establishment of SATs and the examining of pupils at key stages were intended to drive up standards, measurable across the nation and based on prescriptive syllabuses intended to produce content consistency in the classroom. The ensuing league tables reflected outcomes. For the left such publications failed to recognise the challenges teachers faced in under-performing schools, usually located in areas of considerable social deprivation.
- New Labour's educational policies in government also appeared to owe little to ideology. Public schools remain and no attempts have been made to shut down the few remaining selective grammar schools. Rather, continued emphasis was on the need for high quality training so as to equip school leavers with skills suited to the modern workplace – this approach is clearly evident in the government's 'Curriculum 2000' programme with its clear commitment to the development of key skills. The creation of Academies to replace failing schools could also be viewed as a pragmatic approach to education delivery. The left would disagree because they see such institutions as undermining the role and authority of Local Education Authorities. The central planks of the 1988 Act remain intact even though the efficacy of SATs testing in early years is now more open to question.

- The 2010 Conservative manifesto promised to: reduce state control over schools; give headteachers more control over teacher's salaries and school discipline; raise entry qualifications to the teaching profession.
- The 2010 Labour manifesto promised to: take over around 1000 mediocre or failing schools; provide free schools meals for primary school children; widen access to university.
- The 2010 LibDem manifesto promised to: slim-down the curriculum; phase out university tuition fees; help the poorest students go to university; provide an additional £2.5bn to help struggling pupils.
- The coalition agreement issued by the Conservative-LibDem administration in the wake of the 2010 General Election made three broad commitments in the field of state maintained secondary education: firstly, to allow 'new providers can enter the state school system in response to parental demand'; secondly, to give schools 'greater freedom over curriculum'; thirdly, that all schools would be 'held accountable'.

It would appear sensible to conclude that the adversarial conflicts which characterised education debates in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s have not been replicated in recent years. There now appears to be little significant difference between the major parties over the purposes of education and the types of institutions needed to facilitate teaching and learning. Indeed, recent policies aimed at integrating 14-19 education and creating over-arching qualifications such as diplomas have been developed and introduced without much noise or clamour, lending further credence to the claim made in the initial statement.

**Topic 4 The Economy****Total for this question: 40 marks**

(07) Explain why those on the left tend to prefer progressive rather than regressive taxation. (10 marks)

Candidates would be expected to point out that those on the left of the political spectrum support socialism, which champions egalitarianism. Progressive taxation is utilised by left-wing governments and left-wing parties to ensure that higher income groups pay proportionately more in taxation than lower income groups. Such taxes perform a redistributive function; by charging the better-off higher rates of tax on their incomes the state acquires funds that can be used to cushion the worst effects of an unequal society, via social and welfare policies in particular.

Regressive taxes, in contrast, are flat-rate taxes which are unrelated to an individual's welfare income. The Community Charge or Poll Tax is a clear example of such a tax. The political right favour such taxes as they feel that successful entrepreneurs and the like should not be penalised but rewarded for their enterprise. They see risk-takers as the creators of 'real' jobs and the facilitators of economic growth. By taxing them excessively they are likely to lose their drive and dynamism. The left view these taxes as unfair, believing that the wealthy have a duty to help improve the lot of the less well-off by contributing more to the central coffers than those on low incomes can. Progressive taxation is associated with the democratic left rather than the revolutionary left, who would simply expropriate the wealth possessed by the capitalist ruling class and use state institutions to share it via the masses.

The key points to be covered here are:

- Progressive taxation – the system used by governments to ensure that higher income groups pay proportionately more in taxation than lower income groups do. Income tax illustrates this principle well by having exemptions for very small incomes, low rates for the first slice of taxable income and higher rates for the largest incomes. Indirect taxes can also be progressive, eg exemptions or low rates for goods heavily consumed by the poor – zero VAT rates on (say) food – and higher rates on luxury items more heavily consumed by the rich.
- In contrast, regressive taxes are flat-rate taxes unrelated to an individual's wealth or income. Under regressive taxation schemes lower income groups pay proportionately more in taxation than higher income groups do. The community charge or Poll Tax which came into operation in 1990 could be used to illustrate how this system works in practice, given that every adult resident within a local authority who appeared on the electoral register was expected to pay the same amount. Theoretically, this could result in the occupant of a stately home (who prior to 1990 would have paid his/her local council significant monies via the domestic rate) paying the same as the occupant of a small council flat. Fixed-rate value added taxes could also be utilised to illustrate regressive tax.



(08) 'There are no significant differences between the economic policies of the major British political parties.' Discuss. (30 marks)

Candidates are likely to provide an overview of the historical positions taken by the main UK parties in the area of economic policy. They are very likely to touch upon:

- The key economic policies and programmes associated with the post-war consensus – Keynesian demand-management, corporatism, the mixed economy, progressive taxation, high welfare spending and strategies to ensure full employment.
- The Thatcherite attack on this consensus based on New Right thinking with its emphasis on supply side measures, monetarism, reducing inflation (even at the cost of rising unemployment) and privatisation. Essentially policies and measures intended to produce a thriving free market and an enterprise culture – 'the business of government is not the government of business'.
- Labour's left-wing challenge to these step changes in the early to mid-1980s.
- New Labour's acceptance of many of the Thatcherite changes and policies as illustrated by the revised Clause IV, the acceptance of a dynamic market economy and the recognition of the need to control inflation by handing over control of interest rates to the Bank of England.
- The fact that until 2008 there appeared to be a broad consensus across the parties with regard to the principal tools and aims of economic policy, even though the Liberal Democrats called for tax increases and high public spending.

The state of the economy between 2008 and 2010 caused the government to fire-fight. The Labour Party resorted to policies and programmes which appeared to owe more to Keynesianism than to supply side economics in its attempt to alleviate the worst aspects of this recession. Candidates would be expected to discuss the government's massive spending programmes, the huge deficits that were run up, its partial nationalisation programmes in the banking sector and its efforts to kick-start economic recovery and consumer spending through the reduction of VAT and its quantitative easing programmes. They may also note that the Labour administration was unwilling to shore up troubled companies such as LDV, the Midland-based van producer. The 2010 Labour manifesto contained three headline pledges: no major cuts in first year; no increase in income tax; the sale of nationalised banks.

Candidates ought to be able to discuss the criticisms of the Labour administration's approach made by the Conservative Party whilst in opposition (not least their concern over the growing deficit). They should also be aware of the Party's manifesto commitments in the sphere of economic policy, specifically: an emergency budget within 50 days; up to £6bn in public spending cuts in the first year; cuts in Corporation Tax and National Insurance; a freeze on Council Tax.

In opposition the Liberal Democrats attacked the present government for 'wasteful spending', with the party calling for the cutting of taxes from the bottom up as a stimulus to boost the economy. The LibDems offered a crackdown on big business and on the rich, who, they argued, exploit tax loopholes and do not pay their fair share. The LibDem also called for better regulation of the banking system so as to prevent irresponsible lending and business practices. The Party's 2010 manifesto promised: no major cuts in first year; no income tax on first £10

000; a 'mansion tax' on properties over £2m; the closing of tax loopholes; a break-up of the banks.

Candidates may well offer a tentative outline of some of the policies offered by the Conservative-LibDem coalition during their early days in office – not least the immediate £6bn cuts in public spending, the planned cuts in departmental budgets, and the rise in VAT to 20% from January 2011. Mention may also be made of the compromises made by the coalition partners as they sought to bring their respective manifestos together into a single programme for government eg the Conservatives abandonment of their pledge on changes to the inheritance tax threshold and the commitment to move towards a personal income tax allowance of £10000.

### ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE GRID

<b>A2 Assessment Objective</b>	<b>Marks allocated by Assessment Objective 10-mark question</b>	<b>Marks allocated by Assessment Objective 30-mark question</b>	<b>Total Marks by Assessment Objective</b>
<b>AO1</b>	4	12	16
<b>AO2</b>	4	12	16
<b>AO3</b>	2	6	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>40</b>