



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)  
June 2011**

**Government and Politics**

**GOV3C**

**(Specification 2150)**

**Unit 3C: Politics and Power**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **Unit 3 (GOV3C): Politics and Power**

### ***General***

Very few candidates entered this examination. The first three topics were more or less equally popular. Topic 4 was rarely attempted. The small entry for this unit makes it difficult to report meaningfully on the individual questions. The comments below relate to the few instances where particular issues can usefully be reported to centres.

### **TOPIC 1 – POWER IN MODERN SOCIETY**

#### ***Question 1***

This question was generally quite well done, although some answers tended to do little more than argue that elections conferred legitimacy on governments. Some also instanced the recent expenses scandal as an example of how politicians – if not actually governments – could lose legitimacy.

#### ***Question 2***

This question was better answered. Most candidates drew examples from the UK, usually instancing the coalition partners in the current government as examples of politicians modifying principles to gain power. Some also wrote of Cameron's rebranding of the Conservative Party and discussed whether this was or was not a betrayal of principles to gain power. The rise of career politicians and the decline of ideological politics in Britain were also cited by some candidates. Some also pointed out that politicians had to depart from their principles for other reasons such as the nature of government in modern times and the need to decide policy through negotiation and compromise. A number of responses also drew examples and discussion from other political systems; for example the USA where politicians are arguably less likely to be swayed away from their principles by the party whip.

### **TOPIC 2 – EXECUTIVE POWER**

#### ***Question 3***

Some candidates had little idea what the term 'collegiate government' meant, although those who did usually produced creditable answers, often drawing on aspects of British cabinet government to illustrate their answers.

#### ***Question 4***

This question produced surprisingly poor responses, with candidates too often writing about factors that constrained executives generally – the media, the EU etc – rather than specifically the interaction between executives and officials within bureaucracies. Discriminators such as 'forever' and 'modern' were rarely addressed specifically.

### **TOPIC 3 – POLITICAL CULTURE**

#### ***Question 5***

Candidates who attempted this question seemed well prepared. Most based their answers on deference within the UK, although some also discussed deferential tendencies – or the lack of them – in other political systems.

### **Question 6**

Candidates gave some good responses to this question on political culture. Most used the UK as their main focus of discussion, often using Almond and Verba as a starting point from which to discuss subsequent developments. The best answers were those which looked more widely at other political systems. The USA was the most obvious example, although examples from systems as diverse as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, and Nazi Germany were also to be found in some responses. The question invited candidates to ‘analyse’ the factors that shape a political culture. Whilst the best did this, some weaker candidates adopted more of a list-like approach which failed to bring out the relative importance of the factors identified.

### **TOPIC 4 – BRITAIN IN EUROPE**

There were insufficient responses to comment here.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html>.

### **Converting Marks into UMS marks**

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

**UMS conversion calculator** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)