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**General Certificate of Education
June 2013**

Government and Politics

GOV3A

The Politics of the USA

Unit 3

Final

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 students' 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 students' 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 students' 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 students 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. Students should be given credit for partially complete answers. Where appropriate, students 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 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, 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 students 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 students may feel able bring to the discussion. Therefore the specification of requirements outlined in the mark schemes can only be indicative. Students 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 students' 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 students' 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 student 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 student'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 students know, understand and can do.

A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**GENERIC MARK SCHEME for questions with a total of 10 marks**

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The student demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The student 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>Level 4 (4 marks) The student applies an excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The student 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>Level 3 (3 marks) The student demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The student 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>Level 3 (3 marks) The student 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>Level 2 (2 marks) The student demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The student 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>Level 2 (2 marks) The student applies a limited range of concepts and makes limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The student 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>Level 1 (1 mark) The student demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The student 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 made.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The student 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>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>

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

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
A01	A02	A03
<p>Level 4 (10–12 marks) The student 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>Level 4 (10–12 marks) The student 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>Level 4 (6 marks) The student 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>Level 3 (7–9 marks) The student 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>Level 3 (7–9 marks) The student 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>Level 3 (4–5 marks) The student 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 student produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

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

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 2 (4–6 marks) The student 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>Level 2 (4–6 marks) The student 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.</p> <p>There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons. Arguments and explanations are undeveloped, with a limited use of concepts.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2–3 marks) The student 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>Level 1 (1–3 marks) The student 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>Level 1 (1–3 marks) The student displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question, and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial.</p> <p>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>Level 1 (1 mark) 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>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>

Topic 1 The Electoral Process and Direct Democracy**Total for this topic: 40 marks**

(01) Distinguish between hard money and soft money in the financing of US elections. (10 marks)

Students must recognise, for high AO1 and AO2 marks, that, since FECA in the 1970s, a distinction has been made between the *unregulated* 'soft' money raised and spent by parties and candidates and the 'hard' money directly contributed to campaigns, which is *regulated* by federal FECA law and monitored by the Federal Electoral Commission. It was loopholes in FECA that allowed for soft money contributions to parties (for 'general political activities') and also for 'spending on behalf of' candidates (independent expenditures). This knowledge and analysis should be seen in level 3 and 4 responses.

At AO1, students should give examples and evidence of such financial contributions and their limits (or lack of), such as the (current) maximum hard money contribution of \$2,500 from individuals dating from the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA) or the maximum \$5,000 that a PAC can donate to a campaign. (Excellent students may know of 'bundling' of contributions that may overcome such legal restrictions.)

At the higher levels of response, students should know of the banning of soft money by BCRA and the landmark 2010 Supreme Court *Citizens United* decision, based on the free speech provisions of the First amendment, leading to the rise of 'Super PACs' and their unlimited raising and spending of contributions to use for campaigns, restricted only by a ban on any co-ordination with the candidates' own campaigns.

Excellent students may also refer to 501(c) groups (527s earlier) who cannot make direct hard money donations, but can spend on behalf of, or negatively against, candidates, usually through expensive TV ads, leading to allegations of rich individuals or special interests 'buying elections' and threats to democracy.

Analysis of the difficulties of restricting financial contributions to influence election campaigns because of 1st amendment rights is likely at AO2 Level 3 and 4. Weaker students at Level 2 may not get beyond simple or unclear definitions. Students should not be rewarded if their response simply focuses on campaign finance generally or has incorrect definitions of the two terms.

(02) 'Attractive in theory, but undesirable in practice.' Discuss this view of direct democracy in the USA. (30 marks)

Some definitions should be given in the answer of US direct democracy, including referendums/initiatives and propositions (and recall) found at the state level. At a minimum for AO1, students must show some understanding of these democratic devices in the states that use them and how they are initiated and voted on, with examples of their use. This could be detailed at the higher levels of response, less so at lower levels.

The question picks up on the controversies over the democratic nature of direct democracy devices. Students may argue that they can be seen as highly democratic, therefore 'attractive in theory', giving 'power to the people' and supporting ideas of popular sovereignty. They should give **explanations** for this view to achieve higher-level AO1 and AO2 marks such as:

- they are highly democratic as voters are asked direct questions initiated in bottom-up rather than top-down procedures

- they encourage wider political participation and engagement
- they consult voters on single issues that affect their lives, rather than a blanket vote for elected representatives
- they allow for votes on minority or other controversial issues that may otherwise not be raised, eg abortion or gay marriage or bond issues
- they can act as a check on unpopular decisions made by state legislatures and can allow for the recall of politicians through successful petition and vote.

However, students must also address and explain the 'undesirable in practice' part of the quotation, analysing at least some of the shortcomings and criticisms of direct democratic devices, the depth and breadth of the analysis connecting to the AO1 and AO2 marks to be given. For example, reward analysis such as:

- the possibility of manipulation by powerful special interests, such as the signature collecting methods to get initiatives on the ballot
- dominance of money and media in campaigns and the often highly unequal resources of the competing sides on the ballot
- slanted questions and low turnout that can distort the result and reduce the legitimacy of the decision
- analysis related to the advantages of political decisions made by elected and accountable representatives after legislative debate with the long term interest of ALL voters in mind (cf the short term interests of some voters made on a whim)
- possible discriminatory effects on minorities in some ballot measures
- initiative decisions are often overturned by state Supreme Courts
- the recall of recently democratically elected politicians by their opponents.

A reasoned conclusion is expected on this question. A Level 3 or 4 response would contain evidence and analysis of specific direct democratic devices and their use in several states to illustrate either their democratic advantages or disadvantages. These can be from the 2012 election cycle or from previous ones, as long as they are relevant to the argument.

Topic 2 Political Parties**Total for this topic: 40 marks**

(03) Explain what is meant by describing US parties as internal coalitions.	(10 marks)
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Students should recognise that the term refers to the ideological divisions *within* the ‘big tent’ parties of the USA. At the higher levels of response, this will be related to the size and diversity of the USA and its federal nature, and the diverse ideological views that need to be represented within these ‘catch-all’ parties in order to maximise votes in a two-party system, leading at times to a degree of ideological incoherence in Congress as well as divisions on display in the primaries.

Students should refer to their factionalised nature, with often little agreement between their liberal/moderate and conservative wings/factions on political issues. Examples of these would be required for Level 3 and 4 marks. Some students may refer to and explain the terms Rinos and Dinos (Republican and Democrat in name only) and should be rewarded for this.

Students at the higher levels of response should give evidence of ideological groupings within the parties, such as the more conservative Blue Dog Democrats alongside liberal democrats in the progressive caucus of the Democratic Party, or the Main Street partnership of moderate Republicans alongside more right-wing Tea Party Republicans, or fiscal and social conservatives in the Republican Party. Levels will be distinguished by the clear understanding of the term, the reasons for the internal ideological divisions, as well as the use of supporting evidence and examples. Some excellent students may legitimately refer to increasing partisanship and ideological coherence in parties in recent years, lessening the idea that they are internal coalitions.

(04) Assess the extent to which the two main US parties may still be characterised as organisationally weak and in decline.	(30 marks)
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The focus of this question must be on party organisation in the US and the *extent of* ‘organisational weakness’ and ‘decline’. ‘Organisationally weak’ needs to be specifically addressed in the answer for high AO1 and AO2 marks, with explanations for this. Higher level responses will be related to the constitutional system of federalism and the separation of powers, which makes this characteristic inevitable in a large country of 50 states with 50 decentralised and separate party organisations, largely operating independently from the national party and its committee (RNC and DNC). Synoptic comparisons may be made with the strong national party system in the UK and national party leaders/manifestos/discipline, etc.

For Level 3 and 4 marks, students should give evidence of the fact that in the US system there are no real party ‘leaders’, no national manifestos (as these are more candidate-based) and no organised mass membership. They may argue that candidates are *not* chosen by parties but by primaries (and parties cannot de-select or remove them). They may also refer to the lack of strong party discipline in Congress (although growing). Such evidence is likely at the higher levels of response at AO1 and AO2.

The phrase ‘**in decline**’ must also be specifically addressed in the response. Many students will refer to ‘The Party’s Over’ thesis argued by Broder in the 1970s and related to his analysis of the loss of functions of the ‘already weak’ parties such as:

- candidate-centred electoral organisations
- selection of candidates by primaries not parties

- campaign finance raised through PACs or individuals rather than parties
- weak party discipline in Congress.

The word '**still**' is a discriminator so candidates should introduce analysis and evidence relating to the '**renewal/resurgence**' of US parties in recent times, based on strengthening factors such as:

- growing influence of party over candidate selection/campaigns, eg super-delegates at the NNC, timing and organisation of primaries
- growing party input into electoral finance and funding of candidates, eg 6 for 6 in 2006 and the role of the party campaign committees in tight races
- strengthening party organisation through the role of the national committees (Dean and Brock reforms in the Democratic and Republican parties)
- strengthening of party organisation and discipline in Congress, particularly since the Contract with America in 1994
- greater polarisation of parties and ideological coherence.

The AO1 and AO2 marks for this question will relate to the focus on the specific question and analysis of organisational 'weakness' and 'decline' with supporting analysis, evidence and examples. At lower levels of response there may be uncritical acceptance of 'weakness' and 'decline', with little evidence or explanations of the organisation of US parties and/or changes in party organisation. Weaker responses may drift into ideology rather than organisation.

Topic 3 Voting Behaviour**Total for this topic: 40 marks**

- (05) To what extent does the New Deal Coalition of voting support for the Democratic Party still exist? (10 marks)

Students should explain, to a greater or lesser degree, the coalition of votes that gave the Democratic Party majority party status, particularly from the 1930s to the 1960s, when the coalition broke down under the impact of the adoption of more liberal civil rights platforms and legislation by the Democratic Party.

For high AO1 marks, students must clearly explain the kinds of voting groups that coalesced to give the Democratic Party support during this period. Good students will show understanding of the importance of FDR's New Deal economic programmes in the 1930s (but descriptions of the New Deal itself should not be rewarded) in gaining the support of various minorities, those of lower socio-economic status and blue-collar workers, as well as radicals and intellectuals. This added to the long-term support given to the Democratic Party from the highly conservative, white, southern Democratic base of votes (the 'solid south') that had existed since the Republican Lincoln's support for the abolition of slavery and support for the Union in the 1860s.

The word 'still' is a discriminator and at the higher levels of response at AO2 expect to see discussion of the **reasons** for the breakdown of this coalition in the 60s and 70s and the impossibility of holding together such a disparate base of electoral support from voters who had very different reasons for their electoral support of the Democratic Party.

Students should refer to the Democratic Party's loss of the voting support of the south through re-alignment to the Republican Party from the 1960s and also the southern wing of party. They may link this to the growing liberalism of the party after Johnson 'signed away the south'. Excellent students may also refer to the support of many blue collar democrats gained by Reagan in the 80s. Most will recognise that although the south has been lost the coalition of votes still exists and supports the Democratic Party and excellent candidates will be able to give evidence of this.

- (06) Evaluate the view that voting behaviour in the USA is determined more by the socio-economic characteristics of the voters than by issues, candidates and events. (30 marks)

This question picks up on the debate over whether voting behaviour is more influenced by the long-term 'primacy' factors connected to the voters' social characteristics (socio-economic status, region, age, gender, religious affiliation or race/ethnicity) or whether short-term 'recency' factors, such as the different candidates standing for election or the political issues and events that are different at each election, are more important in influencing voting intentions.

At the higher levels of response, expect explanations for partisanship and partisan alignment, with supporting evidence from psephological studies of US voting behaviour. Links should be made, with a greater or lesser degree of clarity and evidence, for political socialisation into Democrat or Republican voting from different voting groups and the 'habit or tribal voting' that follows because of the strong attachments formed between certain groups of voters and one of the two main parties.

This would include the greater degree of voting support for the Democratic Party from lower

socio-economic groups/females/racial and ethnic and minorities/Catholics, Jews and secular voters/younger voters/urban voters in NE and coastal states (Blue America).

This could be compared with the higher degree of voting support for the Republican Party from higher socio-economic groups/males/white voters/protestant and evangelical Christians/older voters/rural suburban voters in middle America and the south (Red America).

Credible and valid explanations should be given for several of these links to gain higher AO1 and AO2 marks. Where this is absent, the mark is likely to be at Level 2 or below.

The question also requires analysis of the impact of candidates, issues and events on voting intentions, as each election is different and there are different influences on voters, possibly changing their vote.

Examples and evidence of such influences would be expected as the results of elections are a **combination** of long-term and short-term factors impacting on voters: for example, 'It's the economy, stupid' in 1992 and 2008, or the 'national security' post-9/11 election of 2004, also dominated by the social issues of abortion and gay marriage ('wedge issues'), or the 'hope and change' message of Obama in 2008 after the economic crisis and bank bail-outs and the dominance of economic issues again in 2012.

Students may also refer to the impact of different candidates and their characteristics on voting behaviours in recent elections, or events such as 9/11 and the war on terror in 2004 or Hurricane Sandy in 2012.

For high marks, a conclusion should be reached about 'extent'. Some students may legitimately argue that it is social factors, and others that it is candidates and issues that are most important, although most students are likely to argue that it is a combination of the two kinds of factors at work in each election, giving supporting evidence from voting patterns from recent elections. Some students may refer to independent 'swing voters' as the voters who are most likely to be influenced by short-term factors and this should be rewarded. Expect psephological vocabulary and explanations and some supporting statistical evidence at the higher levels of response and over-generalised and more simplistic assertions at the bottom of Level 2 and below.

Topic 4 Groups**Total for this topic: 40 marks**

(07) Consider the importance of 'iron triangles' in US politics.

(10 marks)

For high marks, students must clearly define the term 'iron triangle', relating it to the close and continuing relationships that develop between three sides of a triangle made up of congressional committee, federal department or agency and pressure groups. Good students should explain the 'iron' part of the triangle as 'unbreakable' and refer to the 'insider' access to governmental decision-making gained by some special-interest lobbies in Washington.

For both high AO1 and AO2 marks, students must identify specific examples of such iron triangles, such as the military-industrial complex (the Pentagon, armed services committees in Congress and defence contractors) or those found in agriculture or veterans affairs, using specific examples of the three groupings involved and examples of the kinds of decisions made and the influence of the pressure groups in those policy areas.

At the very highest levels of response, students may refer to 'clientelism' or 'sub-governments', relating this to the power of such iron triangles and their dominance in certain policy areas. This relates to the 'important' part of the question which must be addressed to gain very high marks. Weaker responses may offer only a simple and not entirely accurate description of iron triangles.

A critique is to be expected at the highest level of response, although some may argue that 'the iron has gone out of the triangle' because of greater knowledge and exposure of their activities and outcomes since Eisenhower warned of their influence in 1960.

(08) 'Pressure groups are both essential and beneficial to the operation of representative democracy in the USA.' Discuss.

(30 marks)

This statement is open to acceptance or to challenge, or may include some element of both in the analysis.

Good students may demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of two types of political representation in a **representative democracy**:

- through parties (wide aims, wide representation, do not represent specific interests, want power through elections to govern and make political decisions)
- through pressure groups (narrow aims, represent narrow interests, want influence on those with power).

This leads to the argument that pressure groups complement or supplement the representation of citizens in a representative democracy and perform valuable democratic functions.

Therefore it could be argued that they are '**essential**' to speak for various groups and causes in US society not adequately represented through the 'blanket vote' for parties and candidates in elections, thus demonstrating US pluralism and diversity (numerous examples are available).

References to **pluralism** and the writings of Robert Dahl are likely at the higher levels of response and this analysis should be rewarded when accurate and fully explained.

Students should also make reference to the '**beneficial**' part of the quotation, by analysing the representative role of pressure groups, for example in:

- speaking on behalf of the diverse interests and various causes to government
- providing specialised information and expertise necessary for policy making (in Congress and its committees in particular)
- speaking for citizens who would otherwise not have a voice
- increasing engagement in and participation in political issues.

However, students may also challenge the 'beneficial' part of the quotation, by analysis which argues that pressure groups may *not* be beneficial to a representative democracy and offering a **critique** of pressure group activity (elite theory) in the USA, for example such as:

- the unequal representation of interests and causes and highly unequal resources and access possessed by some powerful groups
- the lack of focus on the 'public interest' in pressure group activity
- pressure group dominance as opposed to 'pluralist balance'
- criticisms of lobbying, revolving door, iron triangles, direct action, and electoral finance given through PACs.

At the higher levels of response, expect focus on the precise question and its discriminators, backed up by valid and plausible evidence on the role of pressure groups in a representative democracy, with examples and evidence of pressure groups and their activities in the USA. There should be a conclusion supported by the evidence and examples presented in the response. At the lower levels of response, it is likely that students will present an over-generalised response on pressure groups with little focus on the precise question. Little evidence and examples will be presented in support of the analysis.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE GRID

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