
A-LEVEL

Government and Politics

GOV4B Political Issues: Ideologies in Action
Mark scheme

June 2016

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Assessment Writer.

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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from 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 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.

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. 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 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>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. 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>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>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
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 4 (10–12 marks)</p> <p>The student demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them.</p> <p>A synoptic approach is fully developed, drawing appropriately on knowledge, perspectives and examples from a wide range of studies in government and politics.</p> <p>The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>The student demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/ institutions and processes and the relationships between them.</p> <p>A synoptic approach is well developed using a range of knowledge, perspectives and examples gained elsewhere in the study of government and politics.</p> <p>The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>The student communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations.</p> <p>The response should be legible but there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>The student communicates arguments and conclusions adequately, with a limited use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>There are frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and legibility may be a problem.</p> <p>A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
<p>Level 1 (1–3 marks)</p> <p>The student demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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)</p> <p>The answer relies upon narrative which is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be intrusive and the response may not be legible.</p> <p>A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p>
<p>0 marks</p> <p>No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks</p> <p>No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks</p> <p>No relevant response</p>

Topic 1: Ethnicity and Gender

0 1 Consider the differences between integration and assimilation.

[10 marks]

Students are likely to view integration as a process by which different cultures are accommodated within society, without losing their defining characteristics or sense of cultural identity. Many will link the idea of integration to the concept of multiculturalism. In contrast, assimilation is likely to be seen as an attempt to break down cultural identity and encourage those living and settling in the UK to conform to a set of cultural norms. In this context it is likely that students may refer to the concept of 'Britishness' and efforts to tackle the ghettoisation or Balkanisation said to be affecting parts of the UK. Students may also make reference to the experience in other countries. For example, some may comment on efforts to integrate Hispanic immigrants in many US states, or make reference to terms such as 'melting pot', 'stew pot' or 'salad bowl'.

At the higher levels of response it is likely that students will look to comment on the extent to which the UK can be said to have pursued a policy of integration or assimilation in recent years. Students may also raise the question of whether the UK is in fact a multicultural society. Some may touch on the question of whether multiculturalism has failed, therefore demanding an approach based on a greater degree of assimilation. In this context students may make mention of the electoral rise of parties such as the BNP, the recent positions taken by the main UK parties on the issue of immigration and integration/assimilation and the thoughts of leading figures (eg Norman Tebbit's 1990 'cricket test').

AO1 = 4 marks

AO2 = 4 marks

AO3 = 2 marks

0 2 'More things divide feminists than unite them.' Discuss.

[30 marks]

Whilst students at the lowest level of response may see feminism as a single coherent ideology, it is likely that most will see it as a label commonly applied to a broader social movement comprising a number of 'strands' or 'waves'. In consequence, it is likely that most of those tackling this question will seek to provide some overview of the different shades of opinion that might fall under the broader umbrella of feminism.

Theorists have identified three major strands of feminism: liberal feminism, socialist feminism and radical feminism.

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.

Socialist feminists see the plight of women as being inextricably linked to the class oppression experienced under an exploitative capitalist government and system. Women

are seen as a 'reserve army of labour'. 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 ignoring patriarchy and being 'gender blind'. The most extreme radical feminists, some of whom would describe themselves as lesbian feminists, advocate a total separation from men, with sperm banks facilitating birth without direct male participation.

Some would contend that a fourth strand also exists, that of conservative feminism:

Conservative feminism emphasises roles which are equal but different – with a natural division between the 'public' and 'private' spheres of life. Conservative feminists take the view that women should have sovereignty within their own sphere of life, particularly with regards to the family. They stress the vital role that women play in child-rearing and home-making.

Students may take a broadly chronological approach in answering the question, offering definitions and discussion of the various strands/waves of feminist thought and considering the extent to which their core ideas and approaches are coherent with one another. Alternatively, they may approach the task from a more theoretical perspective, eg considering how different groups view men.

In order to achieve the higher levels on AO2, students will need to offer an explicit focus on the central question of whether the differences between different varieties of feminism are greater than any irreducible core of beliefs that are held central by all.

AO3 marks on this question must be awarded to reflect the extent to which an answer is clearly expressed, is well-structured, leads to a conclusion that is consistent with the preceding knowledge and analysis and uses relevant political vocabulary, including theories and concepts, as identified in the mark scheme.

AO1 = 12 marks

AO2 = 12 marks

AO3 = 6 marks

Topic 2: The Environment**0 3** Examine the role of the UK Environment Agency.**[10 marks]**

The Environment Agency (EA) is mentioned by name on the Specification – so it is likely that students at all levels of response will have some awareness of its origins and main roles.

- According to the EA website in January 2015, the agency is a non-departmental public body (NDPB), sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It is charged with the task of creating ‘better places for people and wildlife, and support sustainable development’.
- Established in 1996 and with its headquarters in Bristol, the EA employs c10 000 individuals working in offices across England. Its chair in 2015 was Sir Philip Dilley.
- Within England the EA is responsible for: regulating major industry and waste treatment of contaminated land; water quality and resources; fisheries; inland river, estuary and harbour navigations; conservation and ecology.
- The EA is also responsible for managing flood risk from rivers, reservoirs and the sea.

The question asks students to examine the role of the Agency. At the lower levels of response on AO2 it is likely that this ‘examination’ will consist of little more than a description, along the lines set out above. At the higher levels of response there will be some attempt to offer analysis and evaluation of the Agency in its various roles. Such a discussion may focus on issues of ‘delivery’, eg taking in recent instances of flooding and the EA response to it. Alternatively, there may be some consideration of the way in which the Agency operates in relation to DEFRA.

AO1 = 4 marks

AO2 = 4 marks

AO3 = 2 marks

0 4 Evaluate the view that the concept of sustainability has no place in ‘dark green’ thinking.**[30 marks]**

Students at all levels of response are likely to seek to define the key terms identified in the question. In the context of environmentalism, sustainability is the belief that human activity needs to operate within parameters that allow for the long-term survival of the species. Whilst the notion of sustainability is one that is common to both light green and dark green thinking, it is more commonly associated with more anthropocentric (light green) positions because it focuses on the idea of stewardship and the survival of humanity, as opposed to the more holistic, ecocentric, ‘dark green’ view taken by writers such as Arne Næss and James Lovelock.

As the content and amplification section of the specification refers to “ideological divisions within the environmental movement including ‘light’ and ‘dark’ green thinking”, it is likely that students at all levels of response will be able to offer a definition of the two terms in question. At the lower levels of response, it is likely that students will discuss the difference between the two shades of environmentalism in general terms – identifying

light green environmentalists as being less ideological in their approach than those of a dark green persuasion. At the higher levels of response, it is likely that students will explore the characteristics of each tradition in more detail with a view to explaining precisely why the former might be more receptive to the concept of sustainability than the latter:

- Light greens will be characterised as those seeking to make lifestyle choices that bring environmental benefits without, perhaps, committing to a more fundamental re-ordering of the relationship between ‘man’ and the environment; and
- Dark greens will be defined as those who see contemporary environmental problems as a function of capitalism and therefore take a more ideological approach, favouring fundamental changes in the way in which society is organised.

It is likely that students will want to consider the concept of sustainable development, defined by the Brundtland Commission as ‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’. Thus, it is argued, those seeking to mine valuable ecosystems for scarce resources should consider the damage they might do to other environmental resources – the value of which is as yet unknown. Sustainable development therefore involves provision for resource management and the replacement of those resources consumed. It requires individuals, institutions and organisations of all types to look at their own environmental impact (their ‘environmental footprint’) and adjust their behaviour accordingly. The development of environmental technologies, such as those associated with renewable energy, allows sustainability and economic development to work hand-in-hand. Sustainable development stresses the importance of balancing the ‘three Es’ (environment, social equity and economy). In this context, students may also make reference to the acronym ELF (environment, local people, future).

At the higher levels of response, it is possible that some students may refer to writers such as the American Alex Steffen and the more constructive ‘bright’ green approach they advocate, which focuses less on protest and apocalyptic prophesy and more on using the available technology to find practical solutions.

NB: students may use terms such as ‘shallow’ and ‘deep’ ecology as analogous to ‘light’ and ‘dark’ green environmentalism. This can be credited under AO3.

AO3 marks on this question must be awarded to reflect the extent to which an answer is clearly expressed, is well-structured, leads to a conclusion that is consistent with the preceding knowledge and analysis and uses relevant political vocabulary, including theories and concepts, as identified in the mark scheme.

AO1 = 12 marks

AO2 = 12 marks

AO3 = 6 marks

Topic 3: Education

0 5 Consider the view that the case in favour of school league tables is mainly ideological. **[10 marks]**

It is likely that many students will seek to define the phrase ‘school league tables’ before they move on to consider the view set out in the question. As the phrase ‘league tables’ is included in the Key Concepts column of the Education section of this unit in the specification, it is a term that most students should be able to define.

At all levels of response, students are likely to be aware that government-collated league tables have been published annually on the basis of the performance of schools against predetermined criteria. At the higher levels of response, students may be aware of a range of different school league tables, for example those based on the so-called Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) and those compiled on the basis of GCSE and A-level results. Students may also refer to the separate ‘league tables’ produced by many newspapers in the wake of public examination results. Though these league tables are not produced by government, they are in part a product of the competitive environment that has emerged as a result of government policy and are therefore clearly ‘on-Spec’.

Pupils at all levels of response are likely to be aware that although school league tables were introduced under the government of John Major in 1992, they were rooted in the education policies pursued by Margaret Thatcher’s Conservative administration towards the end of the 1980s. In this context, pupils may well make reference to Thatcher’s neo-liberalism and the Conservatives efforts to bring about a ‘marketisation of education’, by placing the emphasis on competition and parental choice – against the backdrop Major’s ‘Citizens’ Charter’. Those looking to provide a more deep-rooted ideological justification of league tables might refer back to the Black Papers of the 1970s or the traditional conservative desire to place emphasis on the transfer knowledge and uniform testing to ‘sift and sort’.

Whilst it is likely that many students will focus entirely on the ideological arguments in favour of league tables, it is possible that some will see the use of league tables in more neutral ideological terms. There may, for example, be an awareness of the willingness of New Labour to retain and develop the use of such measures from 1997. In this context, league tables might be seen simply as a way of raising educational standards for more intrinsic educational reasons. However, some students may move beyond this point to argue that, far from being a tool of conservative ideologues, league tables are in fact an important lever in delivering social justice; by allowing the government to identify and tackle ‘failing schools’. School league tables might also be seen as a means by which governments of all political hues at Westminster have sought to exercise a degree of central government control over the provision of education.

NB: whilst it is anticipated that many students will focus their discussion on the use of league tables within the UK, relevant discussion of such league tables in use outside of the UK will be credited fully.

AO1 = 4 marks

AO2 = 4 marks

AO3 = 2 marks

0 6 'The two main UK parties both now pursue a broadly right-wing approach to education policy.' Discuss.

[30 marks]

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 a self-perpetuating elite and with the right criticising comprehensive education as a tool for social engineering and the 'dumbing down' of academic education. Such left-right conflict was also reflected in the perspectives that those on each wing took in respect of teaching methods and the existence of private education.

The implication in the question posed is that such intense ideological conflict between left and right has been replaced with a broadly right wing consensus on the direction of education policy in the UK. There are a number of arguments that might be advanced in support of this view.

By the 1980s it could be said that both of the major UK parties had come to view education as a mechanism for producing economic well-being rather than a more equal society. Education was expected to produce school leavers who were equipped to succeed in an increasingly competitive global labour market. The Labour government of the late 1970s had eschewed ideology in favour of pragmatism so that pupils would be better prepared for employment; hence the party's advocacy of 'New Vocationalism'. The Conservatives, in turn, echoed this emphasis on vocationalism with qualifications such as NVQs.

The emergence of a competitive market in education, initially through LMS and GMS and later through standardised tests (SATS), school league tables and the oversight of OFSTED, could also be seen as an acceptance of what might be considered an essentially right wing agenda.

Labour's failure to take on fee-paying schools or force the conversion of the remaining state grammar schools into comprehensives might be seen as an abandonment of left wing principles. New Labour's academy programme, its extension under the Coalition and the creation of so-called Free Schools might also be offered in support of the view that the main parties were of a single mind on education.

The Conservatives' introduction of student loans, Labour's decision to introduce university top-up fees and the Coalition's decision to treble them might be offered as evidence of a right wing consensus in higher education – as might the increasingly mechanistic way of assessing the performance of university departments.

It is likely that those at the higher levels of response on AO2 might look to challenge the assertion in the title. They might, for example, argue that although both parties supported school league tables, they did so for different reasons: the Conservatives wanted to empower parents and encourage a competitive market; Labour wanted to improve the quality and consistency of education available to the masses with a view to allowing for greater social mobility and social justice. Students might also argue that both Labour and Conservative administrations shied away from adopting a number of proposals advanced by think-tanks on the right, eg voucher schemes.

NB whilst many students will inevitably approach the question from the perspective of

party policy, those who adopt a more determinedly ideological/theoretical approach will be able to achieve the higher levels on the mark scheme, where such discussion is explicitly linked to the question posed.

AO3 marks on this question must be awarded to reflect the extent to which an answer is clearly expressed, is well-structured, leads to a conclusion that is consistent with the preceding knowledge and analysis and uses relevant political vocabulary, including theories and concepts, as identified in the mark scheme.

AO1 = 12 marks

AO2 = 12 marks

AO3 = 6 marks

Topic 4: The Economy

0 7 Consider the differences between progressive and regressive forms of taxation.

[10 marks]

The specification makes a number of references to taxation. It also includes a reference to 'the role of welfare spending and taxation'. It is likely, therefore, that students at all levels of response will be able to offer a definition of the two terms in question.

The term progressive taxation is generally applied to any form of taxation that takes more from those with a greater ability to pay than it does from those on lower incomes. Thus income tax, with its personal allowances, exemptions, tax credits and tiered rates, could be seen as a more progressive form of taxation. Regressive taxation, in contrast, hits those on lower incomes far harder than those on higher incomes because it is generally applied at a fixed rate.

Thus whilst a Mansion Tax or a purchase tax applied only to luxury goods may be used to redistribute wealth from the wealthiest to the most needy, more universal purchase taxes such as Value Added Tax (VAT) are clearly regressive – because the government takes the same sum from low earning consumers when they purchase a given item as they take from those consumers who are most able to pay.

At the higher levels of response students will need to move beyond simple definitions, however well-illustrated, to offer a more developed explanation of the differences between the two approaches to raising government revenue. Such a discussion may involve a more detailed examination of specific, named taxes – accompanied by some assessment of the extent to which they may be considered progressive/regressive. Alternatively, the question of 'differences' may be approached more from the perspective of the impact of more progressive and more regressive forms of taxation on specific socio-economic groups.

AO1 = 4 marks

AO2 = 4 marks

AO3 = 2 marks

0 8 'Government should play no part in economic management.' Discuss.

[30 marks]

Whereas questions in earlier examination series have focused on the question of whether governments **can** ever control the domestic economy, the question posed here asks students to consider whether the government **should** play any part in economic management. It is likely that those writing at the lower levels of response on AO2 may not make this distinction.

Students at all levels of response are likely to seek to identify and/or discuss the ways in which previous governments have sought to control the economy. A number of the 'levers' available to government are explicitly identified in the specification, eg controlling taxation, taking or relinquishing control over the base rates, privatising or nationalising key industries. It is equally likely that students will seek to demonstrate an understanding

of some conventional approaches to economic management, eg ‘demand-led’ and ‘supply-side’.

At the higher levels of response, students will need to move beyond a generalised discussion of the ways in which successive governments have sought to manage the economy, to consider the question of whether the ‘government **should** play no part in economic management’.

In tackling this central question, many students will inevitably take an ideological approach, perhaps setting out the merits of a neo-liberal (or a true classical liberal) free market approach. Others might argue against the statement, perhaps by highlighting the benefit of a mixed (Keynesian) approach – or state control of the commanding heights. Although there is no requirement for students to explicitly pit ‘free-market capitalism’ against a Marxist dictatorship of the proletariat or command economy, such a discussion/debate is likely to be creditworthy where it leads to an explicit judgement on the proposition advanced in the title.

It is possible that some students may seek to argue that government should play no part because government intervention is doomed to fail – or at least have little measurable impact on economic outcomes, ie that it would be a waste of time and resources. This approach obviously falls well within the terms of the question posed and should be credited.

AO3 marks on this question must be awarded to reflect the extent to which an answer is clearly expressed, is well-structured, leads to a conclusion that is consistent with the preceding knowledge and analysis and uses relevant political vocabulary, including theories and concepts, as identified in the mark scheme.

AO1 = 12 marks

AO2 = 12 marks

AO3 = 6 marks