



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
January 2011**

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## **Government and Politics**

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

**[AQ121]**

**TUESDAY 18 JANUARY, AFTERNOON**

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# **MARK SCHEME**

## General Marking Instructions

These mark schemes are intended to ensure that the AS/A2 examinations are marked consistently and fairly. The mark schemes provide examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidate responses likely to be worthy of credit. They also set out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses. The mark scheme should be read in conjunction with these general marking instructions which apply to all papers.

### Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners will be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of 17-year-olds, which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their AS examinations.

### Flexibility in marking

The mark schemes which accompany the specimen examination papers are not intended to be totally prescriptive. For many questions, there may be a number of equally legitimate responses and different methods by which the candidates may achieve good marks. No mark scheme can cover all the answers which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner for the paper concerned.

### Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for valid responses rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected for 17-year-old GCE candidates. Conversely, marks should only be awarded for valid responses and not given for an attempt which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

### Types of mark schemes

Mark Schemes for questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication. These questions are indicated on the cover of the examination paper.

Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

## Levels of Response

Questions requiring extended written answers are marked in terms of levels of response. When deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the “best fit” bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners:

**Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.

**Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.

**High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

## Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates' responses to all questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication which is incorporated within the marks awarded for AO3. Where the quality of candidates' subject knowledge and understanding is not matched by the quality of written communication, marks awarded will not exceed the maximum for Level 4.

- 1 [2] for each way identified. (AO1: [4])  
 Candidates may refer to the Lords' power to introduce legislation, to scrutinise executive legislation, to delay Bills forwarded from the Commons, to amend Bills.  
 (AO1 [4]) [4] 4
- 2 **Background**  
 A cabinet reshuffle is when the Prime Minister exercises his/her power of patronage to change the composition of the cabinet. Some ministers may be sacked from the cabinet altogether, while some junior ministers may be promoted to cabinet rank. Other ministers may be moved from one department to another and remain in the cabinet.  
 PMs certainly use reshuffles to exercise control over their colleagues but also to ensure that factions within the party are represented at cabinet level. The capacity of a PM to reshuffle is more limited in circumstances of coalition government.  
 (AO1 [6]) [6] 6  
 No relevant example, maximum [5].
- 3 **Background**  
 [1] for each difference identified and up to [4] for explanation of each difference.  
 (AO1 [10])  
 In spite of the ongoing struggle by the major political parties to find and occupy the centre ground in British politics, there are still some differences between them in terms of policy. There is, for example, a more positive attitude on the part of the Tories towards private enterprise. They also retain a greater suspicion of the state and its capacity to unacceptably interfere in individuals' lives. There is still evidence of residual differences over the European Union, education policy, welfare policy and taxation and spending policies.  
 Weaker answers will tend to focus on one difference or to present multiple differences, none of which is explained. Stronger answers will clearly identify two criticisms and present relevant evidence. [10] 10

#### 4 Background

As the Official Opposition, it is the job of the party that is not in power to act as a check upon the government. There are many ways in which this function can be carried out. The job of members of the Shadow Cabinet is to closely monitor the work of individual departments and ministers and to highlight failures. Within Parliament, the Opposition can scrutinise the activities of the government during debates, at Question Time, in Select and Public Bill Committees, and through using the time allocated to it to challenge executive policy and performance. Outside of Parliament the Opposition can use the media in all its forms to question government policy and to point out failings. Other ways in which the Opposition can hold the government to account are also acceptable.

Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range and contain more supporting examples and evidence.

Responses which have no examples or supporting evidence can attain a maximum top level 3.

##### **Level 1 ([1]–[4])**

AO1 [2]; AO2 [1]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the role of the Opposition in holding the government to account and makes little attempt to answer the question. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence. (AO1) There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary. (AO3)

##### **Level 2 ([5]–[7])**

AO1 [3]; AO2 [2]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the role of the Opposition in holding the government to account but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material. (AO1) There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary. (AO3)

**Level 3 ([8]–[10])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [3]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the role of the Opposition in holding the government to account but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material. (AO1) There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited. (AO3)

**Level 4 ([11]–[13])**

AO1 [5]; AO2 [4]; AO3 [4]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the role of the Opposition in holding the government to account and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. (AO1) There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached. (AO3)

**Level 5 ([14]–[16])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the role of the Opposition in holding the government to account and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. (AO1) There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached. (AO3)

[16]

16

## 5 (a) Background

One feature of any democratic system is an independent judiciary that is able to hold the executive to account and prevent it exceeding its powers. In the UK the judiciary has the power of Judicial Review and candidates should describe what is involved in such reviews. The judiciary can also carry out Judicial Inquiries into major areas of concern involving the operation of the executive. Recent events such as the extension of Human Rights legislation, the creation of a Supreme Court and the setting up of an independent Judicial Appointments Committee would seem to support the view that the judiciary can and do act as a check on the executive. The alternative view is that neither Judicial Reviews nor Inquiries are particularly effective. Control over the legislature ultimately allows the executive to push through its policies. The judiciary is, at best, a nuisance to the executive rather than a serious constraint. Recent institutional reforms will do little to increase the power of the judiciary to check the executive.

Weaker answers may present an unbalanced account of the relationship between the executive and judiciary, with little supporting evidence. Stronger answers will be both balanced and well supported. A totally one sided response can attain a maximum top level 4. Responses which have no examples or supporting evidence can attain a maximum top level 3.

### Level 1 ([1]–[5])

AO1 [2]; AO2 [2]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the executive and judiciary and of recent reforms, and makes little attempt to answer the question. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence. (AO1) There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary. (AO3)

### Level 2 ([6]–[10])

AO1 [3]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the executive and judiciary and of recent reforms, but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material. (AO1) There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary. (AO3)

**Level 3 ([11]–[15])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [8]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the executive and judiciary and of recent reforms, but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material. (AO1) There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited. (AO3)

**Level 4 ([16]–[20])**

AO1 [5]; AO2 [11]; AO3 [4]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the executive and judiciary and of recent reforms, and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. (AO1) There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached. (AO3)

**Level 5 ([21]–[24])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [13]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the executive and judiciary and of recent reforms, and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. (AO1) There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached. (AO3) [24]



Or

**(b) Background**

In theory, the UK political system operates under the principle of Parliamentary sovereignty, with Parliament having ultimate power and control and the executive being subject to it. This has not been the reality for a very long time and many believe that executive control has, if anything, been increased in recent years as Parliament has been increasingly by-passed by governments. This has led to the accusation that Parliament is a mere “talking shop” or a “poodle” rather than the “watchdog” that it is supposed to be. Candidates should identify and explain this argument and present the evidence of executive domination. The answer should be balanced by the identification and explanation of ways in which Parliament can resist executive control. This should be supported with reference to examples of Parliament doing this in practice.

Weaker answers will be limited in the account of the relationship between the executive and Parliament. Stronger answers will be detailed, balanced and supported with evidence.

A totally one sided response can attain a maximum top level 4. Responses which have no examples or supporting evidence can attain a maximum top level 3.

**Level 1 ([1]–[5])**

AO1 [2]; AO2 [2]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Parliament and the executive and makes little attempt to answer the question. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence. (AO1) There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary. (AO3)

**Level 2 ([6]–[10])**

AO1 [3]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Parliament and the executive but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding, and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material. (AO1) There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary. (AO3)

**Level 3 ([11]–[15])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [8]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Parliament and the executive, but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material. (AO1) There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited. (AO3)

**Level 4 ([16]–[20])**

AO1 [5]; AO2 [11]; AO3 [4]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Parliament and the executive and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. (AO1) There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached. (AO3)

**Level 5 ([21]–[24])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [13]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the relationship between Parliament and the executive and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. (AO1) There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. (AO2) Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached. (AO3)

[24]

24

**Total**

**60**