



**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2012**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 1

The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland

[AQ111]

MONDAY 11 JUNE, MORNING

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- and 18-year-olds, which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their AS/A2 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- and 18-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 Background

[1] will be awarded for identification and up to [3] for explanation of one area of disagreement given in the Source.

(AO1: 4 marks)

[1] will be awarded for identification and up to [3] for explanation of another area of disagreement.

(AO1: 4 marks)

No reference to area of disagreement in source, maximum [6]

No reference to evidence or examples, maximum [6]

[8]

8

2 Background

Since becoming the dominant party in unionist politics the DUP's position has continued to evolve. In 2003 the party was still adopting an overtly oppositionist position to power sharing with republicans. This changed with the party's signing of the St Andrews Agreement and then the creation of the DUP/Sinn Fein dominated Executive after 2007. This required significant shifts in DUP policy, not only on power sharing but on issues such as policing and justice, parades and relations with the Irish Republic. Weaker answers will tend to present general statements and perhaps rely upon the Source. Stronger answers will be more detailed and provide supporting evidence.

No reference to policy change in the source, maximum Level 3

No supporting evidence or examples, maximum Level 4 can be achieved

If only one policy area is discussed then a maximum Level 3 can be achieved

Level 1 ([1]–[4])

AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 1 mark; AO3: 1 mark

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of changes in DUP policy. 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 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of changes in DUP policy 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 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of changes in DUP policy 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 marks; AO2: 4 marks; AO3: 4 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of changes in DUP policy 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of changes in DUP policy 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]

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3 (a) Background

Since 2007 the Executive Committee has been largely controlled by the two most diametrically opposed parties in Northern Ireland. Many felt that the DUP and Sinn Fein could never work together as part of a mandatory coalition government and that they could never genuinely share power. Five years on sceptics may believe that they were correct. Instead of a genuine sharing of power the Executive has been marked by an absence of collective responsibility and decision making. Ministers do their own thing and still run their departments as private fiefdoms. Ministers publicly criticise one another and refuse to put the Executive before party.

The alternative view is that, given where it was coming from, the Executive has been remarkably successful. The fact that it has survived at all and continues to function is an enormous achievement. While ministers play party politics and publicly disagree there is evidence that, behind the scenes, they are working the institutions and working together.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance.

No reference to evidence or examples, maximum Level 3 can be achieved

No balance or evaluation, maximum Level 4

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 1 mark

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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 ([7]–[11])

AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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 ([12]–[16])**AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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 ([17]–[21])**AO1: 7 marks; AO2: 9 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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 ([22]–[26])**AO1: 8 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 7 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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). [26]

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(b) Background

The Northern Ireland Assembly created by the Good Friday Agreement had considerable powers to hold the Executive to account. The changes made that led to devolution being restored in 2007 increased these powers in some ways. Candidates should be aware of what the Assembly's scrutiny powers are. Some have been very critical of the Assembly's record in exercising its powers since 2007 and have pointed to several causes. MLAs remain largely inexperienced in the business of scrutiny; they are more concerned with being effective constituency representatives; sectarian and party political considerations have got in the way of MLAs being effective scrutinisers; the balance of power in terms of resources favours the Executive.

Supporters of the Assembly argue that it has come a very long way and is beginning to discharge its scrutiny function. There is more evidence of effective legislative scrutiny and of MLAs using their legislative powers; scrutiny of the Executive is becoming more professional and less partisan; the Assembly is carrying out valuable work through investigating topics that it chooses.

Weaker candidates will have a limited understanding of the Assembly's scrutiny record. Stronger candidates will be able to present a balanced discussion and will be able to produce a greater degree of evidence.

No reference to evidence or examples, maximum Level 3 can be achieved

No balance or evaluation, maximum Level 4

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 1 mark

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about the record of the Assembly in holding the Executive accountable 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 ([7]–[11])

AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about the record of the Assembly in holding the Executive accountable 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 ([12]–[16])

AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the record of the Assembly in holding the Executive accountable 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 ([17]–[21])

AO1: 7 marks; AO2: 9 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the record of the Assembly in holding the Executive accountable 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 ([22]–[26])

AO1: 8 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 7 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the record of the Assembly in holding the Executive accountable 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).

[26]

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Total

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