



Rewarding Learning

ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
January 2014

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

assessing

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

THURSDAY 16 JANUARY, 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 awarding 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. In 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	[2] for each power identified. Candidates may refer to leading their party, selecting the shadow cabinet, holding the Government to account, questioning the PM, or any other relevant function.		
		<i>(AO1: 4 marks)</i>	[4]	
2	Background	A backbench revolt occurs whenever MPs reject the instructions of their party leadership and of the party whips. The most visible form of such a revolt involves MPs voting against the express instructions of their party. The most significant revolts are those involving the governing party or parties as this can result in the government losing a vote that could see defeat for a key piece of legislation. If an answer does not contain a relevant example a maximum of [5] can be awarded.		
		<i>(AO1: 6 marks)</i>	[6]	6
3	Background	There has been a dramatic increase in the number of judicial reviews sought over the past twenty years. One argument in favour of this method of holding the executive to account is that it is being increasingly used, suggesting citizens and organisations are familiar with it. A second argument is that a judicial review can be sought by any individual or organisation and is open to all. If successful, a judicial review can force the executive to change its policy or can lead to new legislation. A judicial review case can also highlight an issue and bring it to the attention of the public.		
		[1] for each argument identified and up to [4] for explanation of each argument. If an answer does not contain a relevant example a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.		
		<i>(AO1: 10 marks)</i>	[10]	10
4	Background	Select Committees are seen to be one of the most important parts of the UK Parliament because of their role in scrutinising the executive. One strength, therefore, is the high status of the Committees with their activities being highly regarded by MPs and members of the public. Ministers are not obliged to respond to Committee requests for them to attend but their moral authority usually results in their attendance. The prospect of a grilling by a Committee may act as a deterrent to Ministers or Civil Servants. Committee hearings are televised and attract considerable attention from the media. Recent reforms of Committees have also added to their strengths including: establishment of the Business Committee; pre-legislative scrutiny in the Treasury Committee; the setting up of the Liaison Committee; the independent election of Committee Chairs.		
		Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range.		
		If an answer contains no relevant evidence or examples a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. If an answer contains only one relevant example a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.		

Level 1 ([1]–[4])**AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 1 mark; AO3: 1 mark**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the strengths of Select Committees 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 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the strengths of Select Committees 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 3 ([8]–[10])**AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of how the Select Committees can hold the executive to account the strengths of Select Committees 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 the strengths of Select Committees 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 the strengths of Select Committees 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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5 (a) Background

One of the major principles of the British political system is Cabinet Government. This principle states that executive power is to be exercised by a cabinet of ministers as opposed to a single individual. The principle is best expressed in the description of the Prime Minister as “primus inter pares.” Decisions are collective and all ministers within the cabinet agree to support the policies that arise out of those decisions.

The death of cabinet government and its replacement with Prime Ministerial or Presidential power is the subject of long term debate among students of British politics. Candidates should consider argument and evidence that supports the view that the cabinet has ceased to be central to the British system and also the alternative case for the continued existence of cabinet government.

Weaker answers will be limited in terms of argument and especially evidence. Stronger answers will display understanding of the issue and be able to support this with evidence.

If an answer contains no relevant evidence or examples a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. If an answer is totally unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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 marks; AO2: 8 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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 marks; AO2: 13 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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]

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5 (b) Background

Part of the argument that the British political system is now executive dominated is that the Commons has become a mere legitimating body that rubber stamps government legislation. Legislative power, it is argued, lies with the government: opposition parties and government backbenchers are powerless. The degree of executive dominance over legislation has increased with only the Lords offering any resistance.

The alternative view is that the Commons retains real legislative power. Governments must carry their own MPs with them in order to secure their legislation. Backbench revolts have always occurred and have become more frequent. MPs are displaying a greater degree of independence. Public Bill Committees have enhanced powers to scrutinise legislation. Finally, the advent of coalition government has created new opportunities for the Commons to affect legislation.

If an answer contains no relevant evidence or examples a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. If an answer is totally unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about whether the Commons retains any legislative powers 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about whether the Commons retains any legislative powers 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 marks; AO2: 8 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about whether the Commons retains any legislative powers 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 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about whether the Commons retains any legislative powers 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 marks; AO2: 13 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about whether the Commons retains any legislative powers 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]

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Total

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