



Rewarding Learning

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

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

THURSDAY 16 JUNE, AFTERNOON

**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. 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.

The British Political Process

		AVAILABLE MARKS
<p>1 Select Committees have a range of functions that arise out of their role as scrutiny bodies. They are charged with examining the record of the department they scrutinise, examining its policies and their implementation. They can call for ministers and civil servants to come before them to answer questions. They can ask for papers and documents to allow them to investigate matters. They can publish their findings and make recommendations for change; determine their own agenda; appoint specialist advisers.</p> <p>AO1: [4]</p>	[4]	4
<p>2 Background Legislative scrutiny refers to the critical examination of legislation before it is passed into law. Most legislation in the UK is Executive legislation and legislative scrutiny is primarily carried out by the Commons and Lords. The scrutiny takes place in the various stages of the legislative process. MPs and Peers have the opportunity to debate on legislative proposals, to criticise them and to ultimately vote against a Bill or part of a Bill. This power to examine legislation is a key feature of Parliamentary democracy. General or Public Bill Committees have the task of scrutinising Bills in detail at the Committee stage.</p> <p>If no example is included a maximum of [5] can be awarded</p> <p>AO1: [6]</p>	[6]	6
<p>3 Background Judicial Review is intended to be a mechanism that enables the judiciary to check the misuse of power by the Executive and other public bodies. Critics argue that it fails to achieve this goal. One criticism is the expense involved in seeking Judicial Review which deters possible applications. Many applications are rejected by the judiciary and so do not make it to the Review stage. Most Review decisions go in favour of the Executive and against the applicant. If the Review does find that the Executive has acted ultra vires the government can simply change the law. For these, and other reasons, Judicial Review can be said to not act as an effective check on the Executive. The power that Judicial Review gives to unelected judges is another relevant criticism.</p> <p>Weaker answer will tend to focus on one criticism or to present multiple differences, none of which is explained. Stronger answers will clearly identify two criticisms and present relevant evidence.</p> <p>[1] for each criticism identified and up to [4] for explanation of each difference</p> <p>AO1: [10]</p>	[10]	10
<p>4 Background As elected representatives of a constituency, MPs have the responsibility to represent all members of their constituency. There are numerous ways in which MPs can do this. Most, if not all, MPs will meet their constituents on a regular basis in a “surgery” to provide advice and to receive representations. MPs may contact public bodies on behalf of constituents; they may seek meetings with members of the Executive to press</p>		

constituents' issues; they may attend public meetings; engage in meetings with potential investors. In Parliament, MPs can ask questions on behalf of constituents; seek meetings with ministers; appeal to the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

MPs can also perform a representative function as party members and as representatives of a pressure group or other organisation.

If only way form of representative action is given a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded

If no evidence or example is included a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the representative function of MPs 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 representative function of MPs 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 representative function of MPs 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 representative function of MPs 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 representative function of MPs 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

In principle, British Government is one of Cabinet Government. This means that Executive decisions are taken collectively rather than by a single individual as is the case in Presidential systems. For nearly half a century the demise of Cabinet Government has been predicted yet there is still clear evidence that this is not the case. On the other hand, the argument that the British Prime Minister has control over his/her Cabinet has many vocal supporters. The extensive range of powers enjoyed by the PM is the basis of this argument. Recent developments such as the growth of personal advisers, the downgrading of the Cabinet under Thatcher and Blair, the “Presidential” style of recent PMs, have added to the case for Prime Ministerial dominance. Supporters of the idea that Cabinet Government still operates would point out that both Thatcher and Blair lost power when they lost the support of their Cabinets. Weaker answers will be limited in terms of argument and especially evidence. Stronger answers will display understanding of the issues and be able to support this with evidence.

If there is no reference to examples or evidence a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded

If an answer is totally or largely unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded

Level 1 ([1]–[5]) AO1: [2]; AO2: [2]; AO3: [1]

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]; AO2: [5]; AO3: [2]

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]; AO2: [8]; AO3: [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about Cabinet Government 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 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]; AO2: [13]; AO3: [5]

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]

5 (b) Background

A key feature of any democratic political system is the principle that the actions and policies of the Executive are subject to detailed scrutiny, principally by the legislature. This is intended to prevent the “absolute corruption” of power that will result if there is no effective check on government. The system of Parliamentary democracy that exists in the UK grants the legislature significant scrutiny powers to investigate and challenge the Executive. Parliament can do this through debates, questions, General Committees and Select Committees. It can also subject the government to a No Confidence Vote. Parliament, on paper, has a significant range of scrutiny powers. Critics argue that these powers have been steadily eroded as the power of the Executive has increased over the past century. Rather than acting as check on government, Parliament is now little more than a means of legitimising Executive action. The Lords’ scrutiny powers are particularly limited. Weaker answers will be limited in terms of argument and evidence. Stronger answers will display a stronger grasp of the issues raised by the question.

If there is no reference to examples or evidence a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded

If an answer is totally or largely unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded

Level 1 ([1]–[5]) AO1: [2]; AO2: [2]; AO3: [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the relationship between the Executive and Parliament 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 Parliament 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 Parliament 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 Parliament 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 Parliament 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**60**