



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

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

THURSDAY 14 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. 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.

		AVAILABLE MARKS
1	<p>[2] for each way identified. (AO1: 4 marks)</p> <p>Candidates may refer to the legitimization of legislation, the reduction of the Commons' workload, the discussion of key European developments, the scrutiny of government actions, a recruitment pool for ministers, the training of future ministers/leaders or even the provision of a safe and rewarding retirement ground for politicians.</p> <p>(AO1: 4 marks)</p>	[4] 4
2	<p>Background</p> <p>The term judicial independence refers primarily to the independence of the judiciary from executive control. One of the features of autocratic systems is that the judiciary is not independent but is simply a tool of the Executive. By contrast, in a democracy the judiciary performs the role of checking the actions of the Executive and ensuring that it does not exceed or abuse its powers. In order that it can do this effectively the judiciary must be free from executive control and interference. There are a variety of ways in which this can be achieved. Judicial reviews are not subject to government interference. The government must respect judicial decisions. Judges cannot be sacked and are independently paid. The Supreme Court has enhanced the status of judges.</p> <p>If an answer contains no relevant evidence/example a maximum of [5] can be awarded.</p> <p>(AO1: 6 marks)</p>	[6] 6
3	<p>Background</p> <p>(AO1: 10 marks)</p> <p>Prime Minister's question time is regarded as one of the key ways in which to hold the British Executive to account and many Prime Minister's after leaving office confess that they found it a difficult if not terrifying ordeal. It could be argued that PMQs is therefore a vital way in which the head of the Executive can be held to account. A second strength of PMQs is that it gives the Opposition an opportunity to present their policies and to raise the profile of their leader. As PMQs is televised and often makes news broadcasts it is an important way in which voters can judge party leaders. It also helps to generate interest in political matters.</p> <p>Weaker answers will tend to focus on one strength and lack evidence. Stronger answers will clearly identify two strengths and present relevant evidence.</p> <p>[1] for identification of each of two strengths and [4] for explanation of each of two strengths.</p> <p>An answer that makes no reference to any evidence or examples can be awarded a maximum of [8].</p>	[10] 10

4 Background

Prime Ministers do not have a free hand in choosing the members of their Cabinet as a variety of considerations need to be taken into account in appointing Ministers. Similarly, PMs cannot simply dismiss some ministers because of their status in the party and because to do so would create a powerful rival on the backbenches. Members of the Cabinet often aspire to replace the PM at some time in the future and are therefore eager to avoid being seen as a PM “puppet”. The volume of business involved in government makes it impossible for even the most control freak of Prime Ministers to disregard his or her colleagues. PMs who do ignore their cabinets can be removed by them.

Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range.

An answer that contains no relevant evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that makes reference to only one limitation can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

Level 1 ([1]–[4])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the limits to the PM’s control over cabinet 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 limits to the PM’s control over Cabinet 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 along with more general material (AO1). There is some basic analysis 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, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are both basic (AO3).

Level 3 ([8]–[10])

AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the limits to the PM’s control over Cabinet 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 limits to the PM's control over Cabinet 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 limits to the PM's control over Cabinet 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 the view of many, the role of Parliament has been reduced to that of a “poodle” or “talking shop”. The Executive has become increasingly dominant and nowhere is this more apparent than in the area of legislation. Most Bills, over 95%, are government initiated. Private Members Bills can only succeed with executive support. Government Bills are very rarely defeated. The Executive dominates the process of legislative scrutiny and manages to secure the passage of Bills with little or no change.

The alternative view is that Parliament retains an important legislative function. Backbench MPs can influence Bills before they are introduced into Parliament at meetings of the Parliamentary Party. Once introduced, MPs can and have rebelled and amended and defeated Bills.

Weaker answers may present an unbalanced account of the Executive's control over legislation, with little supporting evidence. Stronger answers will be both balanced and well supported. An answer that contains no relevant evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that is totally one-sided can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about executive control over legislation 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 executive control over legislation 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 executive control over legislation 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 executive control over legislation 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 executive control over legislation 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).

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(b) Background

The view that the UK Parliament has been in long-term decline over the past century is frequently expressed by observers. In this view the Commons has become executive dominated and reduced to a legitimising. Party discipline has enabled Executives to dominate legislation and to avoid effective scrutiny. MPs have become party drones doing the bidding of their leaders. The MPs expenses scandal has undermined popular respect for the elected representatives. The Lords has been progressively weakened and has been left with no real powers. Recently some have suggested that there has been a revival of Parliament. Backbenchers have shown a greater willingness to disobey their party leaderships and to vote according to their conscience or the interests of their constituents. The Executive is being more effectively scrutinised and its actions questioned. The revised Lords has been given a new lease of life and is making full use of its powers. The creation of a coalition government will further enhance Parliament's resurgence.

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.

An answer that contains no relevant evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that is totally one-sided can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

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

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

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

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

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

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the status of 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 a logical conclusion is reached (AO3).

[24]

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Total**60**