



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2014**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 1

assessing

**The Government and
Politics of Northern Ireland**

[AQ111]

MONDAY 9 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.

1 Background

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

(AO1: 4 marks)

[1] will be awarded for identification and up to [3] for explanation of other ways in which MLAs can carry out their legislative role, including activity in Statutory Committees and the introduction of Private Members Bills.

An answer that makes no reference to the Source can be awarded a maximum of 6 marks.

An answer that does not include any evidence/example can be awarded a maximum of 6 marks.

(AO1: 4 marks)

[8]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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2 Background

The Good Friday Agreement clearly intended that Assembly Statutory Committees should be a key feature of the devolved democratic institutions. The Committees were given roles and powers greater than their counterparts in both Westminster and Dublin. However, there are many who would argue that the Committees have failed to live up to expectations. In terms of legislative scrutiny, critics allege that the Committees have a very poor record in reviewing and amending Executive Bills. The Committees were given the power to initiate their own legislation but this has been an area of almost total failure to deliver. Scrutiny of Executive actions has been far from outstanding with inexperience, party politics and the lack of an official opposition being cited as reasons for this failure. Committee reports have failed to have any great impact and have not attracted much popular interest.

Candidates may focus on the operation of Committees rather than their record and this is also an acceptable approach to the question.

Weaker answers will tend to present general statements and rely heavily upon the Source. Stronger answers will be marked by use of supporting evidence and greater detail.

An answer that makes no reference to the Source can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

An answer that makes no reference to evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

Level 1 ([1]–[4])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the work of Assembly Statutory Committee. 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 marks: 2; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the work of Assembly Statutory Committees 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 the work of Assembly Statutory 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 work of Assembly Statutory 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 work of Assembly Statutory 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]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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3 (a) Background

If asked, the major Northern Ireland political parties would probably claim that their current position is entirely consistent with the party's stance in 1998. No party wishes to be seen as inconsistent and prone to policy changes. There is some evidence to support the view that the parties have stayed true to their 1998 positions. The DUP and Sinn Fein are still unionist and republican parties respectively. Both would claim that they have stayed true to central demands such as "guns before government" (in the case of the DUP) and full access to political power (in the case of Sinn Fein). The claims of The UUP and SDLP to have remained constant are probably stronger, although this constancy may well have been the cause of their demise. By contrast, Alliance's unchanging stance may have contributed to a strengthening of its position.

Others would argue that certainly Sinn Fein and the DUP are unrecognisable as the parties they were in 1998. This is particularly so with regard to their acceptance of the Union and willingness to share power with Republicans. It is anticipated that candidates will have little difficulty in identifying the ways in which DUP and Sinn Fein have moved and the ways in which the UUP, SDLP and Alliance have stayed constant.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance. An answer that makes no reference to any evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3. An answer that is unbalanced can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of how the policies of the major parties have evolved since 1998 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 how the policies of the major parties have evolved since 1998 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 how the policies of the major parties have evolved since 1998 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 how the policies of the major parties have evolved since 1998 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 how the policies of the major parties have evolved since 1998 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]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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3 (b) Background

Since 1998 the positions of the SDLP and Sinn Fein have been largely reversed. In 1998 the SDLP was still the dominant nationalist party in terms of its share of the nationalist vote and representation. Sinn Fein was in the middle of its strategic shift into constitutional politics. Over the next decade Sinn Fein was to take over as the leading nationalist party, in terms of Assembly, Westminster and local government representation. One widely expressed view for the transition is that Sinn Fein has successfully ‘stolen the clothes’ of the SDLP by transforming itself into a constitutional nationalist party. There is the view that much of the success of Sinn Fein is due to the failure of the SDLP to maintain, never mind extend, its appeal to nationalist voters. The rise of the DUP has also contributed to the growth in SF support as nationalist voters seek a more extreme party to counter the perceived extremism of the DUP. Other issues that could be referred to include leadership, the record of the party within government, the benefits to Sinn Fein of being an all-Ireland party, the effectiveness of Sinn Fein’s constituency activity and the success of the party’s electoral strategy.

Stronger candidates will be able to present a balanced discussion and will be able to produce a greater degree of evidence.

An answer that makes no reference to any evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that is unbalanced can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the reasons for the growth of Sinn Fein 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 reasons for the growth of Sinn Fein 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 reasons for the growth of Sinn Fein 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 reasons for the growth of Sinn Fein 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 reasons for the growth of Sinn Fein 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]

[26]

Total**50**AVAILABLE
MARKS