



Rewarding Learning

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

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

FRIDAY 13 JUNE, AFTERNOON

**MARK
SCHEME**

General Marking Instructions

Introduction

Mark schemes are published to assist teachers and students in their preparation for examinations. Through the mark schemes teachers and students will be able to see what examiners are looking for in response to questions and exactly where the marks have been awarded. The publishing of the mark schemes may help to show that examiners are not concerned about finding out what a student does not know but rather with rewarding students for what they do know.

The Purpose of Mark Schemes

Examination papers are set and revised by teams of examiners and revisers appointed by the Council. The teams of examiners and revisers include experienced teachers who are familiar with the level and standards expected of students in schools and colleges.

The job of the examiners is to set the questions and the mark schemes; and the job of the revisers is to review the questions and mark schemes commenting on a large range of issues about which they must be satisfied before the question papers and mark schemes are finalised.

The questions and the mark schemes are developed in association with each other so that the issues of differentiation and positive achievement can be addressed right from the start. Mark schemes, therefore, are regarded as part of an integral process which begins with the setting of questions and ends with the marking of the examination.

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to provide a uniform basis for the marking process so that all the markers are following exactly the same instructions and making the same judgements in so far as this is possible. Before marking begins a standardising meeting is held where all the markers are briefed using the mark scheme and samples of the students' work in the form of scripts. Consideration is also given at this stage to any comments on the operational papers received from teachers and their organisations. During this meeting, and up to and including the end of the marking, there is provision for amendments to be made to the mark scheme. What is published represents this final form of the mark scheme.

It is important to recognise that in some cases there may well be other correct responses which are equally acceptable to those published: the mark scheme can only cover those responses which emerged in the examination. There may also be instances where certain judgements may have to be left to the experience of the examiner, for example, where there is no absolute correct response – all teachers will be familiar with making such judgements.

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

Two marks for each way identified. Candidates may refer to asking Oral Questions or submitting Written Questions; corresponding with Ministers or official; taking part in debates; amending legislation; introducing a Private Members Bill; holding constituency surgeries.

(AO1: 4 marks)

[4]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

4

2 Background

A Private Members Bill is a piece of legislation introduced by an MP who is not part of the executive. There are several mechanisms that enable MPs to introduce a PMB and candidates should refer to at least one of these. PMBs often deal with issues of personal morality or with issues affecting an MP's constituency. The vast majority of PMBs fail to become law and support from the government is usually necessary if a PMB is to progress. PMBs can be a way in which MPs can raise an issue of concern.

If no accurate example is included a maximum of 5 marks can be awarded.

(AO1: 6 marks)

[6]

6

3 Background

Throughout the 20th century there was a steady reduction in the powers of the Lords as the Commons became the dominant House within Parliament. However, it still retains significant powers. These include its role in scrutinising and amending legislation; its ability to delay legislation and force the Commons to reconsider; its committees can scrutinise the actions of the executive; Peers can ask questions of Ministers based in the Lords.

Weaker answers will tend to focus on one power or provide limited explanation of two. Stronger answers will clearly identify two powers with explanation.

1 mark for each power identified. 3 marks for explanation of each power explained.

If no relevant example is included a maximum of 8 marks can be awarded.

(AO1: 10 marks)

[10]

10

4 Background

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government provides ample evidence of the problems such a government may face. At the formation stage there is the issue of marrying policies that may be very different and the question of the allocation of ministerial posts. Coalitions also face the issue of possible policy differences that might arise in response to developments or crises. Two sets of backbenchers who may be rebellious present yet another problem. The preservation of distinctive party identities and the contesting of by-elections are another two areas of difficulty. Specific policy differences have emerged over Europe, the Human Rights Act, Bank reform, NHS reform and other areas.

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

If no evidence/examples are included a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

If one piece of evidence is included a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

If only one problem is included 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 possible problems facing a coalition 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 ([5]–[7])**AO1: 3 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the possible problems facing a coalition 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 3 ([8]–[10])**AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the possible problems facing a coalition 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 ([11]–[13])**AO1: 5 marks; AO2: 4 marks; AO3: 4 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the possible problems facing a coalition 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 ([14]–[16])**AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the possible problems facing a coalition 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). [16]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

16

5 (a) Background

The political function of the judiciary is to act as a check upon the executive by upholding the rule of law. The judiciary is there to prevent the arbitrary abuse of power by the government. In order to do this the judiciary must be independent of the executive or else it becomes an instrument of executive power, as in dictatorships. The history of the relationship between the executive and the judiciary in Britain is a complicated one. There have been some elements of that relationship that clearly sought to preserve judicial independence while others seemed to undermine the principle: the position of the Lord Chancellor is an obvious example.

Reforms introduced by the Labour government after 1997 had the express intention of increasing the independence of the judiciary: abolition of the position of Lord Chancellor; creation of a Ministry of Justice; establishment of an independent judicial appointments body; creation of a Supreme Court; the creation of the Human Rights Act. It is argued that these have increased the autonomy of the judiciary and have significantly enhanced its power to act as a check on the executive. The dramatic increase in the number of judicial reviews suggests an increased faith in the mechanism on the part of the public.

The alternative view is that the ability of the judiciary to check the executive remains limited in spite of the reforms. The judiciary is an occasional nuisance rather than a constant check. Judicial reviews have limited impact and may be restricted by executive action in the future.

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 no evidence/examples are included 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 the power of the judiciary to check the executive 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 power of the judiciary to check the executive 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

AVAILABLE MARKS

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 power of the judiciary to check 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 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the power of the judiciary to check the executive 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 power of the judiciary to check the executive 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]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

24

5 (b) Background

A regular theme of some commentators on the British system is that the power of Parliament has been steadily eroded throughout the 20th century as the executive increased its control over the political process. This led some to argue that Parliament had become a largely symbolic institution with little or no real power. Increased executive control over legislation, high levels of party discipline and loyalty, the weakness of scrutiny mechanisms, the growing careerism of MPs and the reduction in the powers of the Lords were all given as causes of this decline.

Defenders of Parliament reject this claim and argue that it remains a crucial part of the political system. Governments ignore Parliament at their

peril and many defeats have been inflicted even on governments with secure majorities. Scrutiny of the executive remains strong and has been enhanced due to recent reforms. MPs have displayed a greater degree of independence and a rejuvenated Lords continues to delight in giving governments a bloody nose.

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 no evidence/examples are included 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 the decline 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 decline 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 decline 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

AVAILABLE
MARKS

of the debate about, 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 decline 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]

[24]

Total

60

AVAILABLE
MARKS

