



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2015**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

TUESDAY 9 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.

		AVAILABLE MARKS
1	Two marks for each type identified. Candidates may refer to Public Bill, Departmental Select, other Select, Liaison Committee, All-Party Committees. (AO1: 4 marks)	4
2	Background Patronage refers to the power to appoint individuals and within the British system it is the Prime Minister who has the most extensive patronage powers. This ability to appoint is a legacy of absolute monarchy. The PM can choose members of the Cabinet and other, more junior, ministers; party whips and other party functionaries; senior civil servants; a range of other state officials. An answer that does not include a relevant example can be awarded a maximum of 5 marks. (AO1: 6 marks)	6
3	Background Representation of constituents is a key function of MPs. They can perform this function in a wide variety of ways: writing to ministers or civil servants; asking questions in the House; speaking in debates; holding surgeries and accompanying constituents to tribunals are just some of the ways. MPs also act as representatives of their party and of interest groups. Candidates may also refer to how they carry out their role in representing these bodies. Weaker answers will tend to focus on one way in which MPs can perform their representative role and lack evidence. Stronger answers will clearly identify two ways and present relevant evidence. One mark for identification and 4 marks for explanation of two ways. An answer that does not include a relevant example can be awarded a maximum of 8 marks. (AO1: 10 marks)	10
4	Background In addition to its judicial functions, the judiciary has a function that involves acting as a check upon executive power. There are a number of ways in which they can do so. Judicial Review occurs when, in response to a petition, the Supreme Court decides if the executive has exceeded or abused its powers. The government may act upon a decision that challenges their policy. Judicial Inquiries involve a member of the judiciary conducting an investigation into an aspect of government policy and can result in extremely critical reports on the executive's behaviour. Judges may also make critical comments on executive policy and in this way they can hold the government to account. Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range. An answer that does not include a relevant example can be awarded a maximum of Level 3. An answer that makes reference to only one example can be awarded a maximum of Level 4. An answer that refers to only one method 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 how the judiciary can hold the executive to account 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 how the judiciary can hold the executive to account 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 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 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 how the judiciary can hold the executive to account 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 how the judiciary can hold the executive to account 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 how the judiciary can hold the executive to account 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

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, Public Bill 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. There is considerable evidence that, in recent years, MPs have been willing to make more use of these powers than was previously the case. Peers have for many years taken their scrutiny role very seriously and, with the reforms of the Lords, have displayed a renewed enthusiasm.

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.

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

An answer that is totally unbalanced 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 role of Parliament in checking 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 role of Parliament in checking 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 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

AVAILABLE MARKS

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the role of Parliament in checking 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 role of Parliament in checking 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 role of Parliament in checking 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

The idea that the British Prime Minister is becoming more and more presidential was first voiced over 40 years ago. Given that Clement Attlee ignored most of his Cabinet in taking the decision that Britain should have atomic weapons, the idea could have been put forward even earlier. The idea itself is that the PM is no longer “primus inter pares” but now dominates Cabinet. Collective cabinet government is effectively defunct. Recent years have seen the growth of evidence to support such a conclusion with fewer and shorter cabinet meetings, the use of one-to-one meetings with ministers to determine policy, the growth of the PM’s office and the increase in special advisers being just some of the reasons cited.

However, there is much evidence to suggest that the PM is not a president and cannot ignore cabinet. The role of their cabinets in bringing about the premature departure of both Thatcher and Blair supports such a conclusion. The setting up of a coalition government in 2010 has added a range of other limitations on the PM in dominating the cabinet and has led many to talk of the revival of cabinet government.

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

An answer that is totally unbalanced 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 Prime Ministerial domination of 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 ([6]–[10])

AO1: 3 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about Prime Ministerial domination of 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 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 Prime Ministerial domination of 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 ([16]–[20])

AO1: 5 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about Prime Ministerial domination of 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).

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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 Prime Ministerial domination of 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 a logical conclusion is reached (AO3).

[24]

Total**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

24

60