



**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2017**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 1

assessing

The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland

[AQ111]

TUESDAY 30 MAY, 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.

1 Background

One mark will be awarded for identification and up to three marks for explanation of the reason given in the Source, that is Irish unification (**AO1: 4 marks**). One mark will be awarded for identification and up to three marks for explanation of another party policy that has remained unchanged. Areas that may be referred to include abstention from taking seats at Westminster; support for an Irish Language Act; commitment to representatives not taking full parliamentary salaries. If there is no reference to the Source, a maximum of [6] can be awarded. (**AO1: 4 marks**) [8]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

8

2 Background

The Source refers to Sinn Féin changing its constitution to allow party members to become MLAs. Other policy changes that have taken place include significant changes in the party's position on policing and justice; opposition to republican violence; participation in Dail Eireann; a reduction in the Party's euro-scepticism; willingness to meet members of the Royal Family; other relevant areas. If there is no reference to the Source, a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded. If there are no supporting examples or evidence, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[4])

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of how Sinn Féin policies have changed since 1998. 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 Sinn Féin policies have changed 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 ([8]–[10])

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

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of how Sinn Féin policies have changed 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 ([11]–[13])**AO1: 5 marks; AO2: 4 marks; AO3: 4 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of how Sinn Féin policies have changed 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 ([14]–[16])**AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of how Sinn Féin policies have changed 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). [16]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

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3 (a) Background

Many would argue that the Executive Committee was a total failure as a power-sharing government. The fact that it has lurched from one crisis to another, only to be rescued at the last minute by outside intervention, indicates that there are bitter divisions within the Executive. Power-sharing requires a degree of trust and there was none of this between the parties that make up the government. Power-sharing also needs willingness to act collectively and there was no evidence of collective responsibility between ministers. It often seemed as if ministers within the executive intentionally sought to sabotage the proposals of ministers from other parties. There was a persistent feeling that many of the parties are pursuing other agendas rather than power-sharing.

However, the fact that the DUP/ Sinn Féin led Executive has survived between 2007 and 2017 could be said to be evidence that power-sharing did work. The Executive was a remarkable success given the history of political and civil conflict in Northern Ireland. From this point of view, the Executive managed to overcome the difficulties it encountered and managed to reach agreement on important areas. Progress was slow but, until the 2017 suspension, progress there was.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance. If there are no supporting evidence or examples, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. 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 record of the Executive Committee as a power-sharing 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 ([7]–[11])

AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee as a power-sharing 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 ([12]–[16])

AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee as a power-sharing 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 ([17]–[21])

AO1: 7 marks; AO2: 9 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee as a power-sharing 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 ([22]–[26])

AO1: 8 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 7 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee as a power-sharing 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).

[26]

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3 (b) Background

It took some time for the Assembly to learn how to make full use of both its legislative scrutiny powers and its powers of initiation. MLAs had little experience of acting as legislators but grew into the role. There was more effective scrutiny of Executive legislation with Bills now being thoroughly investigated. MLAs steadily made fuller use of the powers granted to them. By 2017, the Assembly was a much stronger legislative body than it had been in 2007.

The alternative view is that the Northern Ireland Assembly was granted a wide range of powers to both scrutinise legislation introduced by the Executive and to also introduce its own legislation. The provision for Statutory Committees to initiate legislation gave the Assembly the opportunity to determine legislation to a much greater degree than the legislatures in Dublin and London. These greater powers were largely unused. The vast majority of legislation was Executive initiated and was poorly scrutinised by a largely subservient body of MLAs. MLAs were controlled by their parties. The Committees failed to exploit their powers. MLAs produced few Private Members Bills of any significance.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance. If there are no supporting evidence or examples, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. 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 legislative record of the Assembly 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 legislative record of the Assembly 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).

AVAILABLE MARKS

Level 3 ([12]–[16])**AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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 legislative record of the Assembly 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 legislative record of the Assembly 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]

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Total**50**AVAILABLE
MARKS