



GCE

Government and Politics

Unit **F852**: Contemporary Government of the UK

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

Mark Scheme for June 2016

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

















Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme.

© OCR 2016

Annotations

These are the annotations, (including abbreviations), including those used in scoris, which are used when marking

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page – this annotation must be used on all blank pages within an answer booklet (structured or unstructured) and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Unclear
	Wrong
	Correct/good. Page seen
	Source (use of source in Q1a and Q1b)
	Spelling/punctuation/grammar/QWC
	To show the area of response referred to by another annotation
	Focus (lack of)
	Repetition
	Balance (lack of)
	Detail/depth (lack of, eg points not fully/relevantly developed or lacking examples/evidence)
	Range (lack of)
	Spelling/QWC
	Case for
	Case against
	To indicate key points made

Here are the subject specific instructions for this question paper

When marking, assessors must use both this mark scheme and the Assessment Matrix (see Appendix 1).

Broadly speaking, and depending on the question, look for:

- a balanced and well-focused answer;
- which correctly identifies a number and range of relevant and important factors;
- in detail;
- and communicates these clearly in a logical, fluent and coherent style;
- containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling;

Assessors should also credit answers which display knowledge and understanding of:

- current examples;
- political concepts, theories and language;
- other political systems including the EU;
- parallels, connections, similarities and differences.

The Mark Scheme

The mark scheme provides an indication of a range of points which might be made, however, because of the nature of the subject, it cannot be regarded as complete and individual assessors are expected to use their professional judgement and the guidance provided at the standardisation meeting.

Assessors who have any concerns about an individual script should contact the Principal Examiner immediately.

The Assessment Matrix

For each of the assessment objectives the Assessment Matrix sets out the principal characteristics of each level of performance (see appendix).

Assessment objectives 1 and 2

Award marks as follows:

Level	Descriptor	Mark Range
4	very good/excellent	10–12
3	good	7–9
2	limited	4–6
1	basic	0–3

Assessment Objective 3

- Where a full-length answer is provided:
 - half of the available AO3 marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments using appropriate political vocabulary;
 - half should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.

The Mark Scheme

The mark scheme is indicative of the kinds of points likely to be raised by candidates in answering the questions. However, because of the nature of the subject, it cannot be regarded as definitive and the professional judgement and training of individual examiners will apply.

All substantive issues surrounding the paper will be settled at the standardisation meeting and through the arrangements made by OCR to ensure a consistent approach by all examiners. Examiners should contact the Principal Examiner if they have any concerns about the way an individual script should be marked.

Question		Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
1	a	<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the composition of the UK cabinet. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the names of a variety of cabinet positions (Source A and own knowledge); the names of individuals who hold, or have held, cabinet positions (Source A and own knowledge); the number of cabinet positions; the qualifications/requirements to be appointed; the make-up of the cabinet in terms of party membership (Source A and own knowledge); the make-up of the cabinet in terms of its political, regional, ethnic or gender balance (Source A and own knowledge); non-full cabinet members who can attend cabinet meetings (such as chief whip or attorney general). 	12	<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> full marks should be awarded to candidates who are able to clearly describe the main features of the composition of the cabinet. for L4, expect three features, with examples. for L3, expect two features, with examples. for L1 and L2 expect one feature, with examples. if only one of ‘sources’ or ‘own knowledge’ is used, award up to a maximum of 8 marks. credit candidates who have knowledge of more recent reshuffles credit candidates who have knowledge of the Conservative / Liberal Democrat split in the coalition cabinet. credit candidates who have knowledge of the cabinet after the 2015 general election focus should be on composition, and not role(s) of, cabinet.

Question		Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
1	b	<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the roles and functions of the cabinet. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • its role as the ultimate decision-making body of government; • co-ordination between government departments; • managing disputes between government departments; • policy endorsement; • policy discussion; • discussing issues and hearing reports; • deciding on government business in parliament; • crisis management; • limiting the prime minister's power; • the role of cabinet committees; • the role of the Cabinet Office; • the role of individual cabinet ministers; • the relationship between the prime minister and cabinet. 	28	<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if only one of 'sources' or 'own knowledge' is used, award up to a maximum of 8 marks. • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.
		<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates assess the extent to which the cabinet has become more important since 2010, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <p>For example, they may argue that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more use has been made of cabinet meetings (Source B); • cabinet has been used more because of the coalition; • even if role of cabinet has been reduced, individual ministers remain very important; • cabinet retains theoretical role as main decision-making body. 		<p>AO2 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reward focus, range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • L4 for candidates who discuss the extent to which cabinet has become more important since 2010, typically making five or six points. • L3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss the extent to which cabinet has become more

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>On the other hand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • growth of prime ministerial power largely unchanged by coalition; • key Conservative and Liberal Democrat ministers bypass cabinet (the quad); • the role of other institutions like the Policy Unit, cabinet committees and special advisors undermines cabinet; • outcome of 2015 election, which may mark return to pre-2010 role. 		<p>important, typically making three or four points, even if an answer has to be inferred.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some/limited discussion of the question, or where such discussion lacks range, depth or balance. • maximum L2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking in range or depth. • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who compare the coalition era to the Blair/Brown era. • credit candidates who employ theories of executive power. • expect candidates to discuss the role of the prime minister, but L4 answers should clearly focus on discussing cabinet in relation to the prime minister • credit candidates who discuss changes or continuity in the importance of cabinet since the 2015 general election.
			<p>AO3 [4]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – two marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary – wo marks should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
			must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.
2	<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the functions and powers of the House of Commons. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposing legislation, including private members' bills; • scrutinising bills, including debates and public bill committees; • voting on bills; • scrutinising the executive, including select committees, PMQs, the Liaison Committee; • debates; • role of the opposition, including opposition days, urgent questions; • Relationship with other institutions, e.g. House of Lords, EU, devolved bodies. 		<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who demonstrate knowledge of the House of Commons since the 2015 general election.
	<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates discuss the view that the House of Commons has too little power, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <p>For example, they may argue that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • executive control of the legislative process undermines the Commons; • the Commons' powers of scrutiny have few 'teeth'; • the Commons can do little more than discuss issues; • MPs vote according to the instructions of the whips; • Loss of power to other institutions, such as devolved bodies, House of Lords, EU. 		<p>AO2 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reward focus, range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • L4 for candidates who discuss the view that the House of Commons has too little power, typically making five or six points. • L3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss the question, typically making three or four points, even

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>On the other hand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commons can effectively hold the executive to account; • backbenchers have become more rebellious; • Commons can set the agenda; • reforms to the committee system have enhanced their role; • the impact of coalition and the rise of minor parties which have had a significant impact on the ability of the majority party to control the Commons. 		<p>if an answer has to be inferred.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some/limited discussion of the question, or where such discussion lacks range, depth or balance. • maximum L2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking in range or depth. • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who consider what ‘too little’ might mean. • credit candidates who discuss any changes or continuity in the power of the House of Commons since the 2015 general election.
			<p>AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary – three marks should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
3	<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of constitutional reforms since 1997. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rights (Human Rights Act, Freedom of Information Act); • devolution and decentralisation; • UK's relationship with EU • electoral reform; • Parliament (Lords and Commons reforms, Fixed Term Parliament Act); • judiciary (Supreme Court); • participation (referendums, PPERA); • Reforms undertaken by the Cameron government of 2015. 	30	<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • L4 does not require knowledge of all constitutional change, but should feature knowledge of some reforms of Labour (1997-2010) and the coalition (2010-). • credit candidates who are aware of incomplete or failed reforms, like those of the House of Lords. • credit candidates who demonstrate knowledge of constitutional change proposed by the government elected in 2015.
	<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates discuss the view that the constitution has been transformed since 1997, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <p>For example, they may argue that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the breadth of reforms has transformed the constitution; • the depth of reforms has transformed the constitution; • the reforms are largely irreversible; • the reforms have produced a semi-codified constitution. • the move towards federalism or quasi-federalism 		<p>AO2 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reward focus, range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • L4 for candidates who discuss the view the UK constitution has been transformed since 1997, typically making five or six points. • L3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss the question, typically making three or four points, even if an answer has to be inferred. • maximum bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some/limited discussion of the question, or where such

Question		Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
		<p>On the other hand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> any change can be reversed; Parliament remains sovereign; the reforms are in many areas unfinished; the reforms are not coherent. 		<p>discussion lacks range, depth or balance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> maximum L2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking in range or depth. credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. credit candidates who consider what 'transform' might mean
				<p>AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary three marks should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar. where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.
4		<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the judiciary in the UK system of government. This may include:</p>	30	<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>Its specific roles and powers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpreting and applying the law, both domestic and European, originally and on appeal; • 'making law' (common law); • deciding on sentencing; • judicial review; • chairing public inquiries and commissions; • changes introduced by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. <p>More broadly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parliamentary sovereignty; • the rule of law; • the separation of powers; • checks and balances; • judicial independence; • judicial neutrality; • the nature of the UK constitution; • the existence of separate judicial systems in Scotland and Northern Ireland. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who can name specific Supreme Court cases
	<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates assess the role of the judiciary in the UK system of government, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <p>For example, they may consider the extent to which the judiciary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acts as a check on the executive; • acts as a check on the legislature; • protects rights and liberties; 		<p>AO2 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reward focus, range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • L4 for candidates who assess the impact of the Supreme Court, typically making five or six points. • L3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss

Question		Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is independent; • is neutral; • is constrained, or not, by the sovereignty of parliament; • is constrained, or not, by membership of the EU; • is constrained, or not, by membership of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998. 		<p>the question, typically making three or four points, even if an answer has to be inferred.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximum bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some/limited discussion of the question, or where such discussion lacks range, depth or balance. • maximum L2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking in range or depth. • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples.
				<p>AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary – three marks should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.
5		<p>AO1</p> <p>Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the ways membership of the EU has affected democracy in the UK. This may include:</p>	30	<p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of democracy; • the UK's role in the EU institutions, including the EU Parliament, the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the European Council and the European Court of Justice; • the UK's role in the decision making process and in the institutions; • the principle of subsidiarity; • the role of parliamentary sovereignty; • European elections. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who clearly understand the role of the various EU institutions and the UK's role within them. • credit candidates who demonstrate knowledge of changes in the UK's relationship with the EU since the 2015 general election.

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>AO2</p> <p>Candidates discuss the extent to which continued EU membership undermines democracy in the UK, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <p>For example, they may argue that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the EU undermines parliamentary sovereignty; • the EU has a ‘democratic deficit’; • some unelected EU institutions, like the Commission, have too much power; • QMV undermines national governments; • the elected EU Parliament is weak; • turnout in EU elections is low. <p>On the other hand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the UK elects representatives to the EU Parliament; • the Council of Ministers, the main decision-making body, is made up of elected representatives; • some decisions are better made at EU-level; • QMV favours UK; • parliamentary sovereignty means the UK can leave the EU. 		<p>AO2 [12]</p> <p>L4 (10–12) = very good/excellent L3 (7–9) = good L2 (4–6) = limited L1 (0–3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reward focus, range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • L4 for candidates who discuss the extent to which membership of the EU undermines democracy, typically making five or six points. • L3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss the question, typically making three or four points, even if an answer has to be inferred. • maximum bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some/limited discussion of the question, or where such discussion lacks range, depth or balance. • maximum L2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking in range or depth. • credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • credit candidates who consider what ‘democracy’ means. • credit candidates who are able to discuss the proposed EU referendum and negotiations.

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
			<p>AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary – three marks should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar. • where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.

APPENDIX 1

AS GCE Assessment Matrix

There are **four** levels of assessment of all three AOs in the AS units. Level 4 is the highest level that can reasonably be expected from a candidate at the end of the first year of study of an Advanced GCE course.

Level	Assessment Objective 1	Assessment Objective 2	Assessment Objective 3
4	Thorough and accurate knowledge and clear and detailed understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide convincing comparisons between them.	High level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Ability to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason effectively towards an individual and informed conclusion.	Ability to distinguish relevant and important factors correctly and integrate these into a balanced, well-focused argument. Ability to communicate this clearly and present it legibly and logically in fluent coherent style containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3	Good knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide good comparisons between them.	Good level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Some attempt to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason sensibly towards a sound conclusion.	Ability to identify the most important factors and present a relevant argument legibly and clearly if, at times, lacking incisiveness. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
2	Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Limited awareness of standard points of comparison.	Limited level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Limited attempt to explain a few of the more obvious points central to the question and to recognise and describe some differing viewpoints. Reasoning may be incomplete and, while opinions may be offered, they are unlikely to be supported by argument.	Limited attempt to distinguish relevant material, which is assembled into a limited argument with some sense of order and legibility. There may be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
1	Basic and generalised knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Such knowledge and understanding will be incomplete and/or of tenuous relevance and may contain significant errors. Basic awareness of standard points of comparison.	Basic skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of some of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Basic attempt to explain the simpler points central to the question and it is likely that only one viewpoint will be recognised. There will be little evidence of reasoning.	An attempt is made to shape an argument at a basic level, which lacks coherence, legibility and direction, and is unselective. Contains intrusive errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Appendix 2: Performance Descriptions

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

AS performance descriptions for government and politics

Assessment objective 1

Assessment objective 2

Assessment objective 3

Assessment objectives

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories and debates.

Analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations, and identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the political systems studied.

Construct and communicate coherent arguments, making use of a range of appropriate political vocabulary.

A/B boundary performance descriptions

Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate full and accurate knowledge of political institutions and processes and a sound understanding of political concepts, theories and debates;
- b) produce answers that deploy relevant knowledge to answer the question;
- c) demonstrate clear contextual awareness;
- d) use relevant evidence and, where appropriate, contemporary examples to illustrate points made.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) provide analyses that display a sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues;
- b) evaluate political institutions, process and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories;
- c) make valid comparisons.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) construct and communicate clear, structured and sustained arguments and explanations;
- b) use accurate political vocabulary.

E/U boundary performance descriptions

Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate a basic knowledge of political institutions and processes and begin to show some understanding of political concepts, theories and debates;
- b) make a limited attempt at answering the question;
- c) produce at least one piece of relevant evidence, which may be drawn from source material provided.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) show some basic awareness of differing viewpoints;
- b) attempt simple evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour;
- c) make simple comparisons.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) attempt to communicate and develop an argument or explanation;
- b) use basic political vocabulary.

Appendix 3: Levels of Assessment in Question Papers – The Assessment Matrix

AS GCE Assessment Matrix

There are four levels of assessment of all three AOs in the AS units. Level 4 is the highest level that can reasonably be expected from a candidate at the end of the first year of study of an Advanced GCE course.

Level

Assessment Objective 1

Assessment Objective 2

Assessment Objective 3

4

Thorough and accurate knowledge and clear and detailed understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide convincing comparisons between them.

High level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Ability to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason effectively towards an individual and informed conclusion.

Ability to distinguish relevant and important factors correctly and integrate these into a balanced, well-focused argument. Ability to communicate this clearly and present it legibly and logically in fluent coherent style containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

3

Good knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide good comparisons between them.

Good level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Some attempt to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason sensibly towards a sound conclusion.

Ability to identify the most important factors and present a relevant argument legibly and clearly if, at times, lacking incisiveness. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

2

Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Limited awareness of standard points of comparison.

Limited level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Limited attempt to explain a few of the more obvious points central to the question and to recognise and describe some differing viewpoints. Reasoning may be incomplete and, while opinions may be offered, they are unlikely to be supported by argument.

Limited attempt to distinguish relevant material, which is assembled into a limited argument with some sense of order and legibility. There may be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

1

Basic and generalised knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Such knowledge and understanding will be incomplete and/or of tenuous relevance and may contain significant errors. Basic awareness of standard points of comparison.

Basic skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of some of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Basic attempt to explain the simpler points central to the question and it is likely that only one viewpoint will be recognised. There will be little evidence of reasoning.

An attempt is made to shape an argument at a basic level, which lacks coherence, legibility and direction, and is unselective. Contains intrusive errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

OCR Customer Contact Centre

Education and Learning

Telephone: 01223 553998

Facsimile: 01223 552627

Email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

www.ocr.org.uk

For staff training purposes and as part of our quality assurance programme your call may be recorded or monitored

Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations
is a Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England
Registered Office; 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU
Registered Company Number: 3484466
OCR is an exempt Charity

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations)
Head office
Telephone: 01223 552552
Facsimile: 01223 552553

© OCR 2016

