

GCE 2005
January Series



Mark Scheme

Government and Politics (GOV1)

AS Unit 1: Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Introduction

The AQA's revised Government and Politics specification has been designed to be objectives-led in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the specification. The assessment objectives for A Level and AS are the same, but the weightings are different at AS and A2. Details of the weightings are given in paragraphs 7.2 and 8.4 of the specification.

The schemes of marking reflect these objectives. The mark scheme which follows is of the *levels of response* type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the skills required in the context of their knowledge and understanding of Government and Politics. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for examiners but they cannot cover all eventualities. Candidates should be given credit for partially complete answers. Where appropriate, candidates should be given credit for referring to recent and contemporary developments in Government and Politics.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other options.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the general principles of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

Using a levels of response mark scheme

Good examining is about the **consistent** application of judgement. Mark schemes provide a framework within which examiners exercise their judgement. This is especially so in subjects like Government and Politics which in part rely upon analysis, evaluation, argument and explanation. With this in mind, examiners should use the Assessment Matrix alongside the detailed mark scheme for each question. The Assessment Matrix provides a framework ensuring a consistent, generic, source from which the detailed mark schemes are derived. This supporting framework ensures a consistent approach within which candidates' responses are marked according to the level of demand and context of each question.

Examiners should initially make a decision about which Level any given response should be placed in. Having determined the appropriate Level the examiners must then choose the precise mark to be given within that Level. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think first of the mid-range within the Level, where that Level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates' responses to the same question might then suggest whether the middle mark is unduly generous or severe.

In making decisions away from the middle of the Level, examiners should ask themselves questions relating to candidate attainment, including the quality of language. The more positive the answers, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid "bunching" of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided. A candidate's script should be considered by asking "Is it:-

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced or markedly better in some areas than others?
- generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded)?
- well presented as to general quality of language?"

The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (GOV1, GOV2, GOV3)**GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (a) questions (Total: 8 marks)**

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Levels 3 – 4 (3 – 4 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate or generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p> <p>Where appropriate, the candidate is able to illustrate his/her answer with relevant evidence/example(s).</p>	<p>Levels 3 – 4 (2 marks) The candidate provides an appropriate analysis of political data, concept(s) or term(s) showing an awareness of differing viewpoints where appropriate.</p>	<p>Levels 3 – 4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary.</p>
	<p>Levels 1 – 2 (1 – 2 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight or basic knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p> <p>The candidate may illustrate his/her answer with evidence/example(s) of limited relevance.</p>	<p>Levels 1 – 2 (1 mark) The candidate provides a superficial or partial analysis of political data, concept(s) or term(s).</p>	<p>Levels 1 – 2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates with limited clarity and effectiveness using a limited political vocabulary.</p>

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (GOV1, GOV2, GOV3)**GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (Total: 22 marks)**

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (10 – 11 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that deploys relevant knowledge and understanding to address the requirements of the question and that demonstrates significant contextual awareness.</p> <p>The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides analysis which displays sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with valid and precise comparisons. The answer includes relevant and convincing interpretations or explanations.</p>	<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate communicates clear arguments and explanations using accurate political vocabulary. The candidate produces answers with a clear sense of direction leading towards a coherent conclusion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (7 – 9 marks) The candidate demonstrates generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates adequate contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5 – 6 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides clear arguments and explanations and demonstrates awareness of differing viewpoints and a recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with some sound comparison.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and explanations using some political vocabulary. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions - continued

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 2 (4 – 6 marks) The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationship between them. He/she makes a limited attempt at addressing the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3 – 4 marks) The candidate offers a simplistic evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour and begins to construct arguments which contain basic explanation.</p> <p>The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 marks) The candidate attempts to develop an argument using basic political vocabulary. Where a conclusion is offered, its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
	<p>Level 1 (1 – 3 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight and/or incomplete knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and limited awareness of the relationship between them.</p> <p>The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question. Only superficial awareness of the context of the question is evident and the few examples cited are often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 – 2 marks) The candidate makes a partial attempt to evaluate political institutions, processes and behaviour. Arguments offered are superficial. There is very limited awareness of parallels or comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The answer relies upon narrative which is not fully coherent and which is expressed without using political vocabulary. A conclusion is either not offered or it is not related to the preceding material.</p>

1**Total for this question: 30 marks**

(a) Explain the term *protest vote* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

A form of negative voting which may register anger or frustration against aspects of the status quo. In the stimulus, the Liberal Democrat victory was secured not on the conversion of the electorate to the principles of Liberalism so much as the Lib-Dem candidate functioning as a vehicle for those disaffected by Labour (and Conservative) especially over the issue of Iraq. In a sense, protest was reflected in the poor Labour vote as well as the low level of turnout. The disaffected will include some previously core Labour voters. References may also be made to other elections, such as the recent BNP local election victories resulting from protest votes.

(b) Assess the political significance of by-elections.

(22 marks)

Knowledge and understanding of by-elections being interpreted as a local referendum on the performance of government at national level. A defeat, such as in Brent East, sends a warning message to the government that performance must improve if defeat is to be avoided at the next general election. At the same time, it is possible that by-election results reflect local conditions or local discontent, such as the selection of an unpopular candidate (Tatchell or Wood), and bear little relation to events at the national level. By-elections affect party morale, and can influence the behaviour of confident/nervous backbenchers in the Commons. For an opposition party, a good showing at the polls can have much the same impact as a victory – for example, UKIP overtaking the Conservatives at Hartlepool.

Analysis and understanding of the significance of by-elections. By-elections are only one amongst a number of measures of popularity. For example, despite Labour's defeat in Brent East it remained the most popular party in national opinion polls. As a result of media coverage, by-elections can temporarily assume a greater significance than justified since with the passage of time they may have little long term meaning. Frequently a disenchanted by-election electorate returns to supporting its 'natural' party by the time of the next general election. However, a truly dramatic defeat may carry long term significance and may later be seen as a watershed in a party's fortunes, e.g. Eastbourne 1990. Labour's responses to by-election victories seen by the party as an endorsement of policies and first defeat greeted by some with 'change or die' response – an overreaction?

2

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *class de-alignment* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Class de-alignment may include references to the problem of measuring class membership as well as comments on voting patterns. Some may illuminate de-alignment during the early post-war years when around two-thirds of the working class supported its ‘natural’ class party, Labour, and around three quarters of the middle class voted for its natural class party, the Conservatives. De-alignment occurred most noticeable during the 1970s and 1980s, when ‘tossing a coin was almost as useful as knowing someone’s class in predicting how they would vote’. There may also be reference to the more complex process of partisan de-alignment and associated issue-voting and volatility.

(b) Assess the influence of social class on voting in recent general elections. (22 marks)

Knowledge and understanding links between social class and voting in recent general elections. Candidates will not be expected to provide statistics along the following lines – here they are provided (from differing sources) for reference purposes only. In 1997 Labour increased its support across all social classes (catch-all) AB 31%(+9%); C1 47% (+19%); C2 54% (+15%); DE 61% (+9%). In 2001, Labour continued to make gains among the middle classes but lost some support from the working classes: AB 32% (+2%); C1 39% (+2%); C2 47% (-3%); DE 50% (-7%). Conservative performance in 1997 was AB 42% (-11%); C1 26% (-22%); C2 25% (-15%); DE 21% (-8%). Corresponding figures in 2001 were AB 40% (-1%); C1 35% (-2%); C2 29% (+2%); DE 27% (+6%).

Analysis and understanding of the influence of class on voting – some may argue that Labour can no longer be understood as a class-based party given its ideological shift and explicit bid to win support from ‘middle Britain’ as the size of the working class declines. Any increases in working class support must be interpreted in the context of catch-all appeal. At the same time, the Conservatives have lost much support from professional and managerial classes. Some may argue that there has been a re-alignment around other factors (gender, ethnicity, etc) whilst others will depict an increasingly volatile electorate influenced by short-term factors which is capable of ‘split-ticket’ voting without suffering cognitive dissonance. There may be a sustained debate on the changing nature of the social and economic base, from references to the embourgeoisement thesis (‘all middle class now’) or the deskilled middle class thesis (‘all workers now’) as well as comments on deindustrialisation and its impact on voting behaviour.

3**Total for this question: 30 marks**

(a) Explain the term *direct democracy* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Direct democracy may be explained in terms of individuals directly participating in decision-making as opposed to participating in forms of representative democracy. Examples may include references to the city states or contemporary referendum. Some may approach the explanation with more explicit reference to how power is shared out. There may also be comment on top-down referendums as opposed to bottom-up type arrangements in other systems.

(b) Evaluate the case against the use of referendums in Britain. (22 marks)

Knowledge and understanding of the use of referendums in Britain – with possibly local examples (local authority, drinking laws in parts of Wales, EEC, devolution, privately organised with examples of Brian Souter’s morality postal referendum or the 2003 *Daily Mail* ‘referendum’ on EU’s new constitution.) In the past a political party was formed with the sole purpose of gaining a referendum on continued membership of the EU. Some have argued that referendums sit unhappily in a representative democracy, whilst others argue that they represent a means of achieving direct democracy. Apart from the privately organised ones, referendums may have differing status from merely advisory to binding.

Analysis and evaluation on the use of referendums in Britain. In evaluating the case against the use of referendums, some candidates will present the case for. This may include giving people a chance to take specific decisions which affect their lives; exerting pressure on Parliament to act in the public interest; act as a counter to powerful special interests which may wield undue influence ‘inside government. The conventional case against this ‘unBritish’ practice is that the wording of the referendum question can be loaded; well-funded groups can influence referendum campaigns; issues under question may be too complex for an electorate likely to vote on gut feelings; referendums undermine parliamentary sovereignty; they encourage divisive single-issue politics and can work to the disadvantage of minorities; they may result in the electorate using referendums as a vote for or against the government rather than as a register of opinion on the specific referendum question.

4

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *popular vote* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

The term popular vote discounts constituency variation by treating voting patterns in the UK as if it was one constituency. In 2001, for example, Labour received 42% of the popular, or national, vote once all the votes in all the constituencies had been added together. There may be additional comment on the relationship between the popular vote and the distribution of seats. The stimulus suggests that in the unlikely event all three major parties receiving an identical share of the popular vote, the distribution of seats is roughly 3:2:1.

(b) “The Single Transferable Vote (STV) is not a suitable electoral system for Great Britain.”
Discuss arguments for and against the adoption of STV for general elections. (22 marks)

Knowledge and understanding of the Single Transferable Vote in terms of being based on multi-member constituencies in which electors rank candidates in order of preference. A quota is established as a threshold for winning a seat (in a five member constituency each party would notionally need around 20% of the vote (one-sixth of the vote plus one) to win a seat, 40% to win two seats, and so on. Candidates are not expected to provide details of the Droop or alternative formula. Votes that a candidate wins surplus to the quota are redistributed according to the second, third and fourth preferences, and so on. As the bottom candidates are successfully eliminated, their preferences are also redistributed to the remaining candidates. There is, or has been, an element of chance here in the operation of STV since surplus votes happen to be the ones counted last before their preferences are redistributed – the preferences expressed in the winning piles of votes might be quite different. Some argue that STV is not a form of PR unless the constituencies are much bigger than they are in practice in, say, Northern Ireland. Other comments may include the impact of STV on candidate selection, eg more female candidates.

Analysis and evaluation of arguments regarding the adoption of STV in Britain. Some candidates might refer to the findings of the Jenkins Commission, which rejected STV in favour of AV+, on the grounds that STV would require massive constituencies of around 350 000 electors resulting in an oppressive degree of choice. Also the counting of votes in STV is incontestably opaque, and different systems of counting can produce different results. Finally, Jenkins rejected STV because it was a different system from those used in general, European, devolution and London Assembly elections. Others have argued that STV is preferable to list systems because it retains the constituency links with the electors. In making an evaluation of STV some candidates may widen comparisons to include FPTP, Second Ballot, Supplementary Vote etc. A reflective conclusion should include an evaluation of arguments for and against the use of STV in general elections.