



General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics

5151/6151

GOV1 Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour

Mark Scheme

2005 examination – June series

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.

Government and Politics

CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2

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 to address 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>

Electoral Systems and Voting Behaviour GOV1

1.

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *political agenda* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

Issues or policies which are being most discussed in Parliament and the media. The salience of events may depend upon the political agenda of the day. The dynamics of what issues appear on, rise up or disappear from the political agenda are disputed. Some argue that the tabloids play an influential role in selecting agenda issues, which are then the subject of the broadcast media. Role of public opinion. The 'hidden face of power' argument that an interest or bias determines which issues are put onto or kept from the political agenda, such as 'social security scroungers' on but 'tax evaders' off.

(b) 'Newspapers have greater political influence over the electorate than radio and television.'
Discuss.

(22 marks)

The role of the media in general in shaping, or reflecting, public attitudes or opinions is a disputed area. Some studies have argued that TV in particular is more trusted by the public in terms of providing more truthful accounts than the press. Candidates may cite legal obligations of TV to strike a political balance, or that TV offers opportunities to 'see' evidence, whilst the press is openly partisan. Others have argued that the press strikes a particular climate in reporting, for example, economic news, which influences both public perceptions as well as then pervading the broadcast media. Examples might include 'Black Wednesday', which led to the prolonged Labour honeymoon both in the media and with the electorate or the media battle over Iraq and the Kelly affair. The impact of anti-EU attitudes in the tabloid and broadsheet press might be explored, with consequent implications for party and national politics.

Politicians have always been sensitive to perceived media bias, from Tebbit's attack on the BBC, later dubbed Blair's Broadcasting Corporation, to Campbell's attack on the BBC. Is this because of the overwhelming influence of the broadcasting media? New Labour courted the Murdoch press prior to the 1997 general election. Was this because of the overwhelming influence of the press? Some candidates are likely to strike a qualified balance in their concluding assessment.

2.

Total for this question: 30 marks

(a) Explain the term *class parties* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

Parties with platforms reflecting the interests of specific social classes, memberships formed overwhelmingly from those classes, and traditions reflecting the values of those classes. Candidates might, for example, refer to old Labour's collectivist policies, links with the trade union movement, and socialist party constitution containing the old Clause 4. However, resulting from changes in society and the electorate as well as changes within the parties, the goal of winning elections means that parties must have to appeal beyond any single class. Indeed, they must become 'catch-all' parties.

(b) 'Voting behaviour is increasingly influenced by short-term factors.' Discuss.

(22 marks)

Factors which influence voting behaviour will be analysed in terms of long-term (primacy) and short-term (recency). The former might include: gender, age, ethnicity but primarily class. The latter might be explored in terms of the 'rational' model of decisions made according to perceptions of party/leader image, competence to govern, economic 'feelgood' factors, or 'pocket-book' calculations. Some candidates might stress the collective nature of the former factors and the individualistic nature of the latter. Candidates will examine processes and changes which have affected the impact of such factors on voting behaviour. For example, voting may be portrayed in terms of declining class influence – eg the dealignment thesis of Crewe et al – or simply in terms of an absolute decline of the traditional working class along the lines of HJC. Recent voting statistics may be referred to, and possibly compared with those of the early postwar 'aligned' elections. Some may refer to declining partisan attachment and the rise of electoral volatility, large swings, tactical voting etc. Some candidates may attempt to identify causation of identified trends and refer to the increasing significance of the mass media, the rising levels of mass education, the end of scarcity and emergence of the constituency of contentment etc. It is possible that some candidates will refer to changes in the political culture which have disrupted the old alignment – eg cross-cutting issues such as Europe. Credit should be given to candidates who make reference to referendums/secondary elections and/or challenge the statement with plausible arguments.

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

(a) Explain the term *referendum* used in the extract.

(8 marks)

Candidates should refer to issues being put to the electorate which require a yes/no answer. Such issues tend to be concerned with constitutional issues in Britain – examples including devolution, continued membership of the European Community, directly-elected mayors, euro, etc. Some local government referendums on issues. The increased usage of referendums in Britain. Consultative referendums. There may be brief reference to the advantages or disadvantages of referendums (as amplification).

(b) Analyse the factors that have led to demands for changing the system of elections to the House of Commons.

(22 marks)

There may be reference to ‘historic’ demands/proposals for electoral reform. Candidates are likely to discuss the perceived unfairness of FPTP in terms of winning popular support and winning parliamentary seats – the over-representation of the winning party and the under representation of others, particularly third parties. The ‘divide and rule’ opportunities of FPTP – parliamentary dominance based on a 42% level of public support (36% in 2005). The perceived increasing public disaffection towards the existing system based on declining turnout statistics, etc. The influence of European practice on British electoral politics, particularly experiments with regional lists in the elections to the European Parliament. Opportunities for experimentation provided by the devolution elections (also the special case of Northern Ireland) and the London Assembly. Pressure inside the Labour Party (Plant and Jenkins) as well as other active campaigners, such as the Electoral Reform Society. Some candidates may present Britain as a laboratory for electoral reform experiments, which ties in with other modernising reforms to the constitution. In other words, reform of the Lords, devolution, local government reforms and electoral reform are all expressions of a drive to modernise the constitution and must be seen as a package rather than isolated developments. There may be an assessment of the likely success of such demands given Labour’s dominance of the Commons.

4.

Total for this question: 30 marks

- (a) Explain what is meant by the term *manifesto* used in the extract. (8 marks)

Parties offer manifestos at the outset of an election campaign which are published as documents containing rival policy proposals. In theory, these documents should play a key role in influencing voters, but in reality few read party manifestos. However, they may influence the media's campaign agenda. Specific manifestos may be referred to, such as Labour's in 1983 (some called it 'the longest suicide note in history') or Conservatives in 2001 (the only one not to feature a picture of the party's leader on the cover).

- (b) 'The doctrine of the mandate is more appropriate to the First Past The Post system than to systems based on proportional representation.' Discuss. (22 marks)

Parties as organisations which attempt to put together election-winning coalitions of support from all parts of the electorate; for example, New Labour's attempt to appeal to women and the young and Conservative attempts to capture the anti-EU and low tax vote. No one section of the electorate can deliver victory, so rainbow coalitions constructed (after Rose). Alternative view is Downs' maximising support model, with major parties competing for the same vote with much the same policies. The election of a party having majority support enables it to form a government which can claim a mandate to implement its manifesto in terms of legislation. In theory, the electorate have selected that party's manifesto proposals above those of its rivals, giving the governing party authority to put them into practice. However, where the result or outcome of an election is the formation of coalition government, the theory of the mandate becomes more difficult to discern. Candidates will argue that coalition partners will negotiate, 'wheel and deal', or give and take so that policies which are implemented are a result of compromise and bargaining. Small parties may have a disproportionate influence in this process, making it difficult to claim that a mandate exists to implement the final package of policies. Policies have been chosen by parties after the election rather than by voters on election day. Candidates may argue that First Past The Post has a history of, or tendency towards, producing single party government and reasons why this happens in terms of the votes/seats relationship. They might also argue that more proportional systems tend to result in coalition formation, with reasons. Examples might be provided which include elections to the Commons, possibly to the Lib-Lab pact, or to the coalitions of the devolved assemblies. Some candidates may challenge the statement and credit should be given for plausible arguments.