AQA

ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics 5151/6151

GOV3   Features of a Representative Democracy

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – January 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.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website: www.aqa.org.uk

CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Introduction

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**
	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). Where appropriate, the candidate is able to illustrate his/her answer with relevant evidence/example(s).	**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.	**Levels 3–4 (2 marks)** The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary.
	Levels 1–2 (1–2 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight or basic knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). The candidate may illustrate his/her answer with evidence/example(s) of limited relevance.	**Levels 1–2 (1 mark)** The candidate provides a superficial or partial analysis of political data, concept(s) or term(s).	**Levels 1–2 (1 mark)** The candidate communicates with limited clarity and effectiveness using a limited political vocabulary.

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**
	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. The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.	**Level 4 (7 marks)** The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories. 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.	**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.
	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. The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.	**Level 3 (5–6 marks)** The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories. 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.	**Level 3 (3 marks)** The candidate communicates arguments and explanations using some political vocabulary. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	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. The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.	**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. The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.	**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.
	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. 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.	**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.	**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.

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

(a)   Explain the term *European Commissioner* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

Accept member of the European Commission, Peter Mandelson nominated by UK government or similar. For higher AO1 marks additional relevant information eg each Commissioner responsible for one policy area, usually prominent (former) politicians from member state, Barroso current head of Commission, obligation to pursue EU rather than national interests, etc. For full AO2 marks relevant analysis eg contrast with member of Council of Ministers, contrast with executive/bureaucracies of national government. Question is about Commissioner, not Commission. Accept relevant material on Commission as appropriate, but answer must focus on Commissioner for full marks.

(b)   'The Council of Ministers is the most influential policy-making body within the European Union.' Discuss.   *(22 marks)*

AO1. From extract: consists of national politicians served by their civil servants but a veto exists in many policy areas. From own knowledge: information may focus on composition (relevant ministers from member countries); existence of parallel functional councils; powers; voting procedures (eg QMV; unanimity still needed on some major issues); relations with European Council/ national government/ other EU institutions; procedures usually meets in Brussels, etc.

AO2 should include discussion of relationship of Council of Ministers with other EU institutions (Court of Justice is relevant but full marks possible without this). Reward relevant, accurate analysis of relationships with other EU institutions and national governments/ legislatures, but for higher mark ranges answers must address 'most influential'. Possible to argue that COM is most influential; that other institutions more influential (eg European Council); that influence varies according to function (eg COM with legislation; EU Parliament with removing Commission; Commission with European, rather then national, considerations, budget) that influence varies over time or according to particular issues and alliances. Reward also wider analysis of the Council of Ministers' role (ie executive or legislature, split executive with Commission; forum for defence of national interests) and discussions relating to democratic legitimacy as long as these do not take over the answer. Reward accurate use of concepts (intergovernmental, accountability).

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

(a)   Explain the term *free votes* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

Accept votes/divisions in House where MPs have freedom to decide for themselves how to vote/ freedom from party discipline. For higher marks additional relevant information eg often allowed on moral/social issues and Private Member's Bills, not usually allowed on major government bills or policies in party manifesto; absence of whips, examples of free votes, etc.

(b)   'Although governments are dependent on parliamentary support, in practice they usually dominate Parliament and control its business.' Discuss.   *(22 marks)*

AO1. Knowledge of role, composition and functions of Parliament. Answers should focus on requirements of government on parliamentary support and means and effectiveness of government controls over Parliament (eg whips, party loyalty) and parliamentary business. Examples of controversial votes (eg Iraq) government defeats (eg 1979) should be rewarded where appropriate, as should knowledge and understanding of parliamentary 'business' (eg legislation, standing/select committees). Main focus will be on House of Commons, but House of Lords is also relevant and should be rewarded.

AO2. Answers should focus on analysis of i) dependence of governments on parliamentary support (eg why dependent?) and ii) of extent to which governments a) dominate Parliament and b) control its business. All of these aspects should be covered for top level marks. 'In practice' (e.g. if party discipline holds) and 'normally' (eg if government has a majority) are triggers so reward relevant discussion). Reward analysis of why backbenchers normally obey whip (promotion, patronage, party loyalty,etc) and why sometimes they might rebel, but do not over-reward answers that are turned into a 'powers of the Prime Minister' response. Reward analysis which as well as the House of Commons addresses House of Lords (eg party discipline weaker, crossbenchers, etc). Answers that develop a comparative dimension should be rewarded but, again, beware of undue 'Presidential Prime Minister' focus. Reward also relevant use of concepts (eg separation of powers, legitimacy, mandate).

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

(a)   Explain the term *permanence* in the context of the civil service.   *(8 marks)*

Accept career civil servants/officials who do not change with governments/ministers or similar. For higher marks some additional information such as links with other civil service features eg neutrality, anonymity; enables civil service expertise in advising ministers and implementing policy; contrast with special advisers/spoils system

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(b)   'In disagreements over policy, ministers are always likely to win over their civil servants.' Discuss*.*   *(22 marks)*

AO1. From extract: listed resources of civil servants and ministers plus knowledge and understanding of roles of ministers and civil servants plus example(s) etc from own knowledge. For higher marks, knowledge and understanding of other resources (eg civil service control of information and implementation; legitimacy of ministerial decisions) and of other factors (eg political circumstances; ministerial reshuffles) which affect minister/civil service relationships. Also recent developments such as ministerial use of alternatives to civil service advice such as task forces and special advisers. Reward use of relevant (especially developed) *policy* examples.

AO2. At minimum, analysis of ministers and civil servants' resources underlying ministerial and civil service influence. 'Policy' is a trigger which must be addressed specifically for higher marks. Possible to argue for or against contention in stimulus, or to support other possibilities (eg alliances of civil servants and ministers, differences within and between departments; significance of personalities and circumstances; political salience of policies). Reward accurate and relevant use of models of minister/civil service relationships in support of analysis and discussion. Also reward relevant analysis of relative influence of ministers and civil servants in other fields(eg policy implementation); of other actors (eg special advisers; task forces, prime minister, MPs, party); and of comparative dimensions (eg no spoils system) – but main focus of answer must be on policy making and relative influence of ministers and civil servants. Reward also relevant use of concepts (accountability, legitimacy etc).

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

(a)   Explain the term *collective responsibility* used in the extract.   *(8 marks)*

Accept all ministers must support government policy or resign (or similar). For higher marks relevant additional information, eg contrast with individual responsibility, examples of ministerial resignations, instances where collective responsibility waived/breached; effect of strengthening government, circumvented/undermined by informal leaks etc.

(b)   Discuss the view that the Cabinet is 'the supreme decision-making body in the government'.   *(22 marks)*

AO1. From extract: Cabinet at centre of British political system, number of members, no legal powers. From own knowledge: composition, resources, functions and powers of Cabinet, Cabinet committees, Cabinet Office, etc. Question is about decision-making within 'the government' so for higher marks knowledge and understanding should be demonstrated of other decision making agencies within central government (including Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office, bilaterals, civil service, special advisers, task forces, etc) although relevant also to include discussion of external (eg party, pressure groups, media) influences which impact upon Cabinet and government decision-making. Reward answers which demonstrate knowledge and understanding supported by examples, and especially for higher marks examples from different recent governments. (eg Thatcher, Major, Blair, Brown).

AO2. At minimum, explanation of Cabinet's role in government decision-making with recognition of the Cabinet's formal role as final authority in government. For higher marks there should be some analysis/discussion of factors underlining this authority (eg Cabinet contains senior party members, Cabinet ministers supported by departmental expertise and resources) and undermining it (eg power of Prime Minister to by-pass/ override Cabinet, constraints of size, time, etc). Prime ministerial/presidential/Cabinet government debate etc is relevant but only limited credit will be given if analysis does not go beyond this, so particularly reward analysis of powers and influence of decision making actors outside Cabinet system elsewhere within government (but also outside government where relevant). 'Supreme' is a discriminator so reward answers that address this specifically. Possible to argue both in support of contention in stimulus (ie Cabinet is supreme as can overrule PM) or against (as other actors such as Prime Minister, civil servants, departments can be dominant). Other arguments (eg Cabinet very powerful but not supreme; issues/circumstances/personalities, etc determine outcomes in particular cases; authority of Cabinet varies over time, etc). Reward analysis supported by relevant policy examples and accurate use of concepts eg (collegiate, presidential).