



General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics 6151

GOV5 The Politics of the USA

Mark Scheme

2006 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.

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.

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (a) (Total: 8 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a good to excellent knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). Where appropriate, the candidate produces accurate and/or relevant examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (3–4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate applies a good to excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary. The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion.</p>
	<p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). The candidate produces few or inaccurate examples and/or limited evidence to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1–2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes little or limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark)</p> <p>The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit.</p>

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (b) (Total: 12 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (5–6 marks) The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate fully addresses the requirements of the question and provides developed and effective to comprehensive interpretation. The answer also provides clear to accurate evidence and, where appropriate, good to excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (3–4 marks) The candidate applies a good to excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary. The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (3–4 marks) The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate clearly addresses the requirements of the question and provides sound interpretation and contextual awareness. The answer includes good examples to illustrate points made.</p>		
	<p>Levels 1–2 (1–2 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight to basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question and provides little to partial and reasonably effective interpretation. Answers offer limited or little evidence and few or inaccurate examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1–2 marks) The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes little or limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit.</p>

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (c) (Total: 20 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (7–8 marks) The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7–8 marks) The candidate displays excellent awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is an excellent focus on the specific question asked. There is a clear evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a sophisticated awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>Appropriate parallels and connections are clearly identified together with comparisons. A wide range of concepts is used.</p>	<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions with clarity. Excellent use is made of political vocabulary to construct cogent and coherent arguments. The answer has a clear sense of direction, culminating in a conclusion that flows from the preceding discussion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (5–6 marks) The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes good examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5–6 marks) The candidate displays sound awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is a clear focus on the question. There is a sound evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays good awareness of viewpoints and issues. There is good recognition of parallels and comparisons. Appropriate concepts are used.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations.</p> <p>The candidate produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (c) (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 2 (3–4 marks) The candidate demonstrates outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The answer makes a limited attempt to address the question and demonstrates contextual awareness covering part of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes simple examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3–4 marks) The candidate displays limited awareness of the implications and demands of the question resulting in a restricted focus. There is a limited evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays partial awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons with a limited use of concepts.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and conclusions adequately with a limited use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
	<p>Level 1 (1–2 marks) The candidate demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. There is little attempt to address the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes few, if any, examples which may be inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1–2 marks) The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial, with little awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is little, if any, recognition of parallels and comparisons. The use of concepts is superficial and naïve.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The answer relies upon narrative, which is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p>

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Questions 2, 3 and 4 (Maximum 40 marks)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 4 (13–16 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made. The answer includes detailed and comprehensive interpretations or explanations as well as accurate evidence and relevant examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (13–16 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays excellent awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is an excellent and sustained focus on the specific question asked. There is clear and full evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a sophisticated awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues.</p> <p>Appropriate parallels and connections are clearly identified together with well-developed comparisons. A wide range of concepts is used and developed.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7–8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions with clarity. Excellent use is made of political vocabulary to construct cogent and coherent arguments and explanations. The answer has a clear sense of direction, culminating in a conclusion that flows from the preceding discussion.</p>
	<p>Level 3 (9–12 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes developed and effective interpretations or explanations and also clear evidence and good examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (9–12 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays sound awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is a clear focus on the question. There is a sound evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays good awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues. There is good recognition of parallels and comparisons. Appropriate concepts are used and developed.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5–6 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations.</p> <p>The candidate produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Questions 2, 3 and 4 (continued)

	Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
	AO1	AO2	AO3
	<p>Level 2 (5–8 marks) The candidate demonstrates outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The answer makes a limited attempt to address the question and demonstrates contextual awareness covering part of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes a partial and reasonably effective attempt at interpretation or explanation with some examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 2 (5–8 marks) The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question resulting in a restricted focus. There is a limited evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a partial awareness of differing viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons. Arguments and explanations are undeveloped with a limited use of concepts.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3–4 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and conclusions adequately with a limited use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
	<p>Level 1 (1–4 marks) The candidate demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. There is little attempt to address the requirements of the question. There is only superficial awareness, if any, of the context of the question, with little interpretation and few, if any, examples often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1–4 marks) The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial.</p> <p>Analysis shows little awareness of differing viewpoints and issues. There is little, if any, recognition of parallels and comparisons. Arguments, explanations and use of concepts are superficial and naïve.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1–2 marks) The answer relies upon narrative, which is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p>

1**Total for this question: 40 marks**

- (a) Explain the term *electoral college votes* used in the extract. (8 marks)

The term relates to the fact that US presidential elections are won on the votes of the electoral college, rather than the popular vote throughout the USA. The electoral college is a device for the indirect selection of the US president through the votes of the electors from the States. The electoral college vote relates to the congressional representation of the states, ie the ‘constant 2’ for the senators, plus the votes of the Districts. The vote is therefore related to the population size of the states and gives advantages to the large electoral college votes states such as California, Florida and Texas. This affects campaigns in the US, as candidates campaign in the large ‘swing states’ with high electoral college votes and neglect the smaller or ‘safe’ states. Good candidates will be aware of the impact of the electoral college vote and the fact that it is possible to win the electoral college vote but lose the popular vote as Bush did in 2000. At the highest level, statistics will be given to illustrate points (eg 538 electoral college votes and 270 needed to win). Knowledge of the faithless elector + Maine + Nebraska differences could be identified by better candidates.

- (b) Using the extract and your own knowledge, consider the ways in which US parties are trying to attract the increasing minority vote. (12 marks)

This question relates to the need for the US political parties to attend to the needs of the growing minority vote, and its importance in some of the key electoral college vote states (extract) which will impact on the ‘national debate about race’ (extract) and ‘force the mainstream parties to tailor their messages to the needs of minority voters’ (extract). The question demands knowledge and analysis of the fact that the Democrat and Republican parties need to have policies and platforms which will address issues such as language (Hispanic), affirmative action and other issues which impact more on minority voters, such as poverty and welfare. Growing numbers, especially in key states, will force the parties to take more of a stand on issues which have been neglected in the past because of the high abstention of such groups and their tendency to vote for the Democrats rather than the Republicans. One danger is that the minority groups are themselves divided (extract) and it is hard to tailor messages to divided communities (eg affluent African Americans who would support low taxes, or catholic Hispanics with pro-life views on abortion, for example). The focus of the question is on the parties and their ideologies and campaigns rather than the minority voters themselves. Examples from electoral campaigns by the candidates and the parties from recent elections are expected such as Bush’s campaign speeches in Spanish in 2004. Candidates at the higher levels of response may refer to registration drives, ticket balancing and cabinet construction to reflect diversity.

- (c) Evaluate the importance of ethnicity as a factor affecting voting behaviour in the USA. (20 marks)

This question focuses on the numerous factors that affect the way in which Americans vote, and candidates are invited to evaluate these factors. Candidates should focus on race and ethnicity as one factor only amongst the many short-term and long-term influences such as party identification, age, religion, gender and socio-economic status or the impact of the candidates, issues, images and events surrounding each election and the voters who vote in them. The importance is in the evaluation and the recognition that race and ethnicity is only one factor amongst many at work on voter choice.

Answers are distinguished by the use of statistical evidence from VB studies and the explanations given for differences.

2

Total for this question: 40 marks

‘A key characteristic of the US political system is the strength of the two major parties and the insignificance of third-party candidates.’

Consider the reasons for the strength and durability of the two-party system in the USA. (40 marks)

Here the focus is on the dominant two-party system in the USA, and the reasons for its strength and durability. This can be approached by either using arguments which will explain why there are only two parties at all levels of US Government, eg the strength of party identification, the historical duopoly, financial advantages of the two parties and their ‘big tent’ nature with a broad and pragmatic appeal leaving little ‘ideological space’ for other parties or candidates (unless perhaps with a single issue appeal such as Nader’s Green Party in 2000, or the Perot candidacy in 1992 and 1996). The question leaves open the possibility of a focus on the weakness of third parties or independent candidates with their lack of funding, media attention, name recognition, etc. There is also the opportunity to refer to the effects of a first past the post electoral system, the workings of the electoral college and the difficulties of making electoral breakthroughs in established systems. The mark depends on the strength of the evidence presented relating to either or both the two main parties or third parties either at recent elections (Perot and Nader) or the past (Wallace in 68). It is open to good candidates to challenge the description of third parties as ‘insignificant’ or the description of the two major parties as ‘strong’.

3**Total for this question: 40 marks**

Consider whether direct participation in decision making through the use of referendums, initiatives and propositions helps or hinders democracy in the USA. *(40 marks)*

This question invites candidates to pick up on the debates surrounding the existence of direct democratic devices used in some American states such as the initiative (questions triggered by the voters themselves) or the referendum propositions (which may come from state legislatures themselves). Candidates should know the differences between the concepts of direct and representative democracy and their relative merits and demerits, using examples of these different kinds of democratic decision making from recent or past elections. There are some very clear arguments that suggest that democracy is ‘helped’, eg arguments about ‘popular sovereignty’, and direct involvement and participation in decisions that closely affect voters lives (examples). At the higher levels, candidates may suggest that direct democratic devices avoid some of the problems of representative democracy such as ‘blanket votes’ at elections, the power of special interests, and the pre-occupation with short termism and electoral advantage of many elected representatives. However, there are powerful arguments also on the ‘hinder democracy’ side which could be presented as a defence of elected representatives (who are accountable through the electoral process) taking decisions, using their judgement (Burke or the arguments about ‘trustees’) to take long term (and often difficult) decisions ‘on behalf of’ the electorate (not just the ones who have voted). There are many arguments on both sides of the debate and answers will be graded on the strength of the evaluation and analysis backed up by evidence and examples from US direct democracy in recent years.

4

Total for this question: 40 marks

Evaluate the view that pressure groups are now more powerful than political parties in US politics.

(40 marks)

The answers to this question should be focused on the key debate in American politics regarding the power of pressure groups relative to the power of political parties within the political and electoral system. There is much evidence pointing to the weakness of US political parties and their decline in functions (candidate selection, finance for example) and also of the growing power of pressure groups. Candidates should present evidence which shows an understanding of the clear differences between the two types of representative political institutions and their different roles within US politics. Having done this, the analysis should be on their relative power. Candidates may present evidence relating to party weakness, such as the growth of primaries to select the candidates, the emphasis on personal and individualised campaigns, and the fact that candidates no longer rely on the party for finance (decline of ‘machine politics’ and growth of candidate centred organisation). Having said this better, candidates will be aware of debates showing that the parties are ‘fighting back’ and there is some evidence of the increasing role of the national committees. No candidate can be elected without party backing and the party label, which could be presented as evidence that parties are still important political organisations. Candidates can present a case that pressure groups (and their PACs) are growing in power through their electoral impact (funding of candidates) or their general political importance (access points within the system, which gives them opportunities for influence over decision-making at all levels of US government). Examples of powerful groups, such as the Christian Coalition, the National Rifle Association, pro-choice and pro-life groups or the various corporate lobbies, would be necessary as evidence for ‘power’. At the higher levels of response, arguments about the ‘revolving door’ of lobbyists or the ‘iron triangles’ in decision-making are evident.