



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
January 2011**

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## **Government and Politics**

Assessment Unit AS 1

The Government and Politics  
of Northern Ireland

**[AQ111]**

**THURSDAY 13 JANUARY, MORNING**

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# **MARK SCHEME**

## General Marking Instructions

These mark schemes are intended to ensure that the AS/A2 examinations are marked consistently and fairly. The mark schemes provide examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidate responses likely to be worthy of credit. They also set out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses. The mark scheme should be read in conjunction with these general marking instructions which apply to all papers.

### Quality of candidates' responses

In marking the examination papers, examiners will be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of 17- and 18-year-olds, which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their AS/A2 examinations.

### Flexibility in marking

The mark schemes which accompany the specimen examination papers are not intended to be totally prescriptive. For many questions, there may be a number of equally legitimate responses and different methods by which the candidates may achieve good marks. No mark scheme can cover all the answers which candidates may produce. In the event of unanticipated answers, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement to assess the validity of answers. If an answer is particularly problematic, then examiners should seek the guidance of the Supervising Examiner for the paper concerned.

### Positive marking

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for valid responses rather than penalising candidates for errors or omissions. Examiners should make use of the whole of the available mark range for any particular question and be prepared to award full marks for a response which is as good as might reasonably be expected for 17- and 18-year-old GCE candidates. Conversely, marks should only be awarded for valid responses and not given for an attempt which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

### Types of mark schemes

Mark Schemes for questions which require candidates to respond in extended written form are marked on the basis of levels of response which take account of the quality of written communication. These questions are indicated on the cover of the examination paper.

Other questions which require only short answers are marked on a point for point basis with marks awarded for each valid piece of information provided.

## Levels of Response

Questions requiring extended written answers are marked in terms of levels of response. When deciding which level of response to award, examiners should look for the “best fit” bearing in mind that weakness in one area may be compensated for by strength in another. In deciding which mark within a particular level to award any response, examiners are expected to use their professional judgement. The following guidance is provided to assist examiners:

**Threshold performance:** Response which just merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the bottom of the range.

**Intermediate performance:** Response which clearly merits inclusion in the level and should be awarded a mark at or near the middle of the range.

**High performance:** Response which fully satisfies the level description and should be awarded a mark at or near the top of the range.

## Quality of Written Communication

Quality of written communication is taken into account in assessing candidates’ responses to all questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These questions are marked on the basis of levels of response. The description for each level of response includes reference to the quality of written communication which is incorporated within the marks awarded for AO3. Where the quality of candidates’ subject knowledge and understanding is not matched by the quality of written communication, marks awarded will not exceed the maximum for Level 4.

**1 Background**

[1] will be awarded for identification and up to [3] for explanation of the reason given in the Source.

(AO1 [4])

[1] will be awarded for identification and up to [3] for explanation of another relevant reason.

(AO1 [4])

Other reasons that candidates may refer to include the impact of the failure of decommissioning; the adoption of policy positions by their opponents; the social make-up of the parties; leadership issues and any other relevant reason.

[8]

8

**2 Background**

Even before the result of the 2007 Assembly election both the UUP and SDLP were aware that the shift in support to the DUP and Sinn Fein was not a temporary development. Both the UUP and SDLP have sought to regain some of the ground they have lost by reviewing their positions. One option that both have considered is in seeking alliances with parties in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. Another option considered has been to leave the Executive and become a true opposition to the parties that dominate it. The UUP and SDLP have also sought to establish clear policy differences between themselves and their rivals although this has yet to become apparent. There is also some evidence of attempts by both parties to change their membership profiles and to “rebrand” their party leaderships.

Weaker answers will tend to present general critical statements and rely heavily upon the Source. Stronger answers will be more detailed and contain supporting evidence.

If no implicit or explicit reference to the Source is made, a maximum of Level 3 can be achieved.

If no examples or reference to evidence is made, a maximum of Level 3 can be achieved.

If only one party is discussed, a maximum of Level 3 can be achieved.

**Level 1 ([1]–[4])**

AO1 [2]; AO2 [1]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of attempts made by the UUP and SDLP to reverse their decline. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence (AO1). There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary (AO3).

**Level 2 ([5]–[7])**

AO1 [3]; AO2 [2]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of attempts made by the UUP and SDLP to reverse their decline but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material (AO1). There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary (AO3).

**Level 3 ([8]–[10])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [3]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of attempts made by the UUP and SDLP to reverse their decline but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material (AO1). There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited (AO3).

**Level 4 ([11]–[13])**

AO1 [5]; AO2 [4]; AO3 [4]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of attempts made by the UUP and SDLP to reverse their decline and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples (AO1). There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached (AO3).

**Level 5 ([14]–[16])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of attempts made by the UUP and SDLP to reverse their decline and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented (AO1). There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached (AO3). [16]

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### 3 (a) Background

One of the key factors used to judge the success of devolution in Northern Ireland is and will continue to be the effectiveness of the Executive Committee in governing Northern Ireland. The context for this discussion will be the record of the Executive set up after 1998 and the type of government provided under Direct Rule. As an involuntary coalition, one criterion that will be used to assess the Executive is whether it has acted collectively and coherently.

A second is whether it has been successful in producing policies and generating legislation. A third is whether it has been able to move forward on divisive issues such as the devolution of policing and justice powers. For some the key question is whether the Executive has survived at all.

Weaker answers will be unclear on the record of the Executive Committee and will lack evidence. Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance.

If no reference is made to examples or evidence, a maximum of Level 3 can be achieved.

If no evaluation or assessment is included, a maximum of Level 4 can be achieved.

#### **Level 1 ([1]–[6])**

AO1 [2]; AO2 [3]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee and makes little attempt to answer the question. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence (AO1). There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary (AO3).

#### **Level 2 ([7]–[11])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material (AO1). There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary (AO3).



**Level 3 ([12]–[16])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [7]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material (AO1). There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited (AO3).

**Level 4 ([17]–[21])**

AO1 [7]; AO2 [9]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples (AO1). There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached (AO3).

**Level 5 ([22]–[26])**

AO1 [8]; AO2 [11]; AO3 [7]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive Committee and deploys this consistently to answer the question.

A range of relevant evidence is presented (AO1). There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2).

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard.

An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached (AO3). [26]

Or

**(b) Background**

Through all the momentous changes that have taken place in Northern Ireland politics and the major shifts that have occurred in party support, one thing has remained constant: the Alliance Party has continually struggled to survive never mind make progress. There are many reasons why this has been so. The existence of “moderate” and “radical” parties within both the Unionist and Nationalist camps has meant that moderate voters in both traditions have had a choice other than a centre party. The continuation of political violence and the memories of that violence have had a polarising effect upon politics that have created unsuitable conditions for the Alliance Party. More recently, the strategic shifts in the positions of the DUP and Sinn Fein to occupy more “moderate” positions has added to the difficulties faced by the Party. In addition to these reasons a wide range of other explanations are acceptable if properly argued.

The Party has survived which, in itself, is an achievement when so many other parties have disappeared. The Party has also had a significant effect upon policy debates within Northern Ireland on education, human rights, representation.

If no reference is made to examples or evidence, a maximum of Level 3 can be achieved.

If no evaluation or assessment is included, a maximum of Level 4 can be achieved.

**Level 1 ([1]–[6])**

AO1 [2]; AO2 [3]; AO3 [1]

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the Alliance Party and makes little attempt to answer the question. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence (AO1). There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is poor. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed, and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary (AO3).

**Level 2 ([7]–[11])**

AO1 [4]; AO2 [5]; AO3 [2]

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the Alliance Party but there are major gaps in this knowledge and understanding and only a limited attempt is made to answer the question. The response contains some relevant material but also significant irrelevant or general material (AO1). There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited. An argument is constructed although the level of communication and the structure and presentation of ideas are both basic. There is restricted use of appropriate political vocabulary (AO3).



**Level 3 ([12]–[16])**

AO1 [6]; AO2 [7]; AO3 [3]

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the Alliance Party but there are some gaps in this knowledge and understanding. The response makes a reasonable attempt at answering the question and contains relevant material along with more general material (AO1). There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is satisfactory. An argument is constructed although the level of communication, the structure and presentation of ideas and the use of appropriate political vocabulary are limited (AO3).

**Level 4 ([17]–[21])**

AO1 [7]; AO2 [9]; AO3 [5]

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the Alliance Party and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples (AO1). There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is generally good. An argument is constructed which displays clear communication and presentation of ideas. There is appropriate use of political vocabulary and a conclusion is reached (AO3).

**Level 5 ([22]–[26])**

AO1 [8]; AO2 [11]; AO3 [7]

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the Alliance Party and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented (AO1). There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations (AO2). Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary and a clear and logical conclusion is reached (AO3). [26]

**Total**

26

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