



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
January 2012**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[AQ121]

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY, AFTERNOON

**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 [2] for each way identified. Candidates may state that the Speaker chairs proceedings in the House of Commons; calls MPs to speak; disciplines MPs for misconduct and has a variety of other functions.
(AO1: 4 marks) [4] 4
- 2 **Background**
 Coalition government is a form of government in which more than one political party participates. Students should have a clear understanding of what is meant by the term and why such a government might be formed. Weaker answers will tend to have a limited understanding of what is meant by coalition government. Stronger answers will have a range of reasons why a coalition may be formed. Answers should include at least one example.
 If there is no supporting example, a maximum of [5] may be awarded.
(AO1: 6 marks) [6] 6
- 3 **Background**
 [1] for each criticism identified and up to [4] for explanation of each criticism.
(AO1: 10 marks)
 Public Bill Committees continue to be attacked for their failure to effectively perform their principle function: the scrutiny of legislation. Criticisms that are most frequently made are that the committees are executive dominated, first because the government has a majority in each and second because the whips exercise strict control over them: the committees lack expertise and are only appointed for a single Bill; the government curtails discussions through the use of the guillotine; the Government uses “kangaroo clauses”; committee recommendations are often rejected. There are further criticisms made.
 Weaker answers will tend to focus on one criticism and lack evidence. Stronger answers will clearly identify two criticisms and present relevant evidence. [10] 10
- 4 **Background**
 In addition to its judicial functions, the judiciary has a political function that involves acting as a check upon executive power. There are a number of ways in which they can do so. Judicial Review occurs when, in response to a petition, a member of the Supreme Court decides if the Executive has exceeded or abused its powers. The government must act upon a decision that challenges their policy. Judicial inquiries involve a member of the judiciary conducting an investigation into an aspect of government policy and can result in extremely critical reports on the executive’s behaviour. Judges may also make critical comments on executive policy and in this way they can hold the government to account.
 Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range.
 If an answer includes no example/evidence a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.
 If only one way is identified a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[4])**AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 1 mark; AO3: 1 mark**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of how the judiciary can hold the Executive to account 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 ([5]–[7])**AO1: 3 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of how the judiciary can hold the Executive to account 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 3 ([8]–[10])**AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of how the judiciary can hold the Executive to account 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 marks; AO2: 4 marks; AO3: 4 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of how the judiciary can hold the Executive to account 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of how the judiciary can hold the Executive to account 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]

16

5 (a) Background

Twenty years ago the view that the Lords was of no value and should be abolished was frequently heard. Today, that opinion is heard much less frequently. This suggests that the reform of the Lords has made it a much more effective part of Parliament. Candidates should be aware of the functions performed by the Lords. They should then consider the view that the Lords is now performing its legislative, scrutiny and deliberative roles more effectively than it did in the past. Supporters argue that the modernisation of the composition of the Lords has resulted in it playing a much more useful part than in the past. Critics argue that the fundamental problems of the Lords remain: it is unrepresentative of the population; it has no democratic legitimacy; it has limited ability to check the power of the government; it is limited by the Parliament Acts and Salisbury Convention. Weaker answers will be limited in terms of argument and especially evidence. Stronger answers will display understanding of the issues and be able to support this with evidence.

If an answer includes no reference to examples/evidence a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

If an answer contains no balance/evaluation a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 1 mark

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Lords 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 ([6]–[10])**AO1: 3 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Lords 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 ([11]–[15])**AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 8 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Lords 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 ([16]–[20])**AO1: 5 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Lords 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 ([21]–[24])**AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 13 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Lords 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).

[24]

24

(b) Background

In the view of many, Prime Ministers from Margaret Thatcher onwards have increased their powers exponentially. This was especially the case with the Blair government and students will be expected to be familiar with the reasons why it is believed PMs are now so dominant. However there is evidence to counter the view that this is an irresistible trend. Thatcher herself had a divided Cabinet in the early years of her premiership. Major's Cabinet was much more difficult to control. Blair gave control over large areas of policy to Brown. Brown also had to pay more attention to his Cabinet colleagues. Both circumstance and personality of the PM play a key role in how powers are exercised and the extent to which Cabinet is dominated. Weaker answers may present an unbalanced account of the Prime Minister's control over Cabinet, with little supporting evidence. Stronger answers will be both balanced and well supported. If an answer includes no reference to examples/evidence a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded. If an answer contains no balance/evaluation a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 2 marks; AO3: 1 mark

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about the Prime Minister's control over Cabinet 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 ([6]–[10])

AO1: 3 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about the Prime Minister's control over Cabinet 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 ([11]–[15])

AO1: 4 marks; AO2: 8 marks; AO3: 3 marks

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the Prime Minister’s control over Cabinet 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 ([16]–[20])

AO1: 5 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 4 marks

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the Prime Minister’s control over Cabinet 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 ([21]–[24])

AO1: 6 marks; AO2: 13 marks; AO3: 5 marks

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the Prime Minister’s control over Cabinet 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).

[24] 24

Total 60