



ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
January 2013

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## **Government and Politics**

Assessment Unit AS 1

The Government and Politics  
of Northern Ireland

[AQ111]

MONDAY 14 JANUARY, AFTERNOON

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# **MARK SCHEME**

## General Marking Instructions

This mark scheme is intended to ensure that the AS examination is marked consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidate responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets 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-year-olds, which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their AS 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-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 marks)**

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

**(AO1: 4 marks)**

The SDLP has attempted to reverse its decline by resolving the leadership issue and electing a party leader that can mount a challenge to Adams and Maginness. It has, in particular, attempted to respond to criticism that it was a “3 Ms” party – too middle class, middle aged, middle of the road – by electing a younger leadership team. The Party has also attempted to revive its youth wing to alter its image and also to challenge Sinn Fein’s dominance of the young Nationalist vote. At Stormont, the SDLP has considered the possibility of becoming a proper opposition to the DUP/Sinn Fein dominated Executive, by resigning from the Executive. While remaining inside the Executive, the Party has adopted a much more critical approach and has been openly critical of the undemocratic control of power exercised by the DUP and Sinn Fein. The SDLP has also sought to emphasise its United Ireland credentials to establish a difference between itself and Sinn Fein. The party has stressed the positive role it has played at Westminster and has sought to promote itself as a “green” party. [8]

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## 2 Background

The Source points to the SDLP’s problems in producing an effective leadership since the retirement of John Hume and Seamus Mallon. With their association with the Civil Rights movement, Hume and Mallon had enormous authority that the SDLP has struggled to emulate. It is also argued that having achieved devolution and a power sharing government the SDLP no longer had any clear policy, and none that differentiated it from Sinn Fein. Candidates may refer to how Sinn Fein policies and tactics have undermined SDLP support. Other relevant causes of SDLP decline may be referred to including the idea that nationalist voters have increasingly looked to a more hardline party in order to counter the DUP; the political infighting within the SDLP; its lack of resources compared to Sinn Fein; its image as a “3Ms” party.

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

An answer that fails to make reference to the cause in the Source can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

An answer that contains only one cause can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that contains no evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

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

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the causes of the decline of the SDLP. 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 basic knowledge and understanding of the causes of the decline of the SDLP 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 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the causes of the decline of the SDLP 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 the causes of the decline of the SDLP 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 the causes of the decline of the SDLP 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**

The durability of the DUP/ Sinn Fein led Executive tends to conceal significant divisions within it. These divisions are not only the traditional one between unionist and nationalist. There are also significant divisions within unionism and nationalism. A third division has also arisen between the two dominant parties in the Executive and the UUP and SDLP. All of these have inhibited the Executive from acting collectively and in a co-ordinated way. Critics have alleged that Northern Ireland still lacks “joined-up government” because of the on-going disputes within the Executive.

On the other hand, it has been argued that the Executive has been a remarkable success given the history of political and civil conflict in Northern Ireland. From this point of view, the Executive has managed to overcome the difficulties it has encountered and has provided effective government. The durability of the Executive is the surest sign that this is the case. The fact that the DUP and Sinn Fein both strengthened their positions in the 2011 Assembly Elections is further evidence that the electorate are happy with the record of the Executive.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance. An answer that contains no evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that is largely or completely unbalanced can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

**Level 1 ([1]–[6])****AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 1 mark**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Executive 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Executive 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 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Executive 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 marks; AO2: 9 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Executive 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 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 7 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the debate about the effectiveness of the Executive 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**

When it was created the Northern Ireland Assembly was granted a wide range of powers to both scrutinise legislation introduced by the Executive and to also introduce its own legislation. The provision for Statutory Committees to initiate legislation gives the Assembly the opportunity to determine legislation to a much greater degree than the legislatures in Dublin and London. However, critics allege that these greater powers have been largely unused. The vast majority of legislation is Executive initiated and is poorly scrutinised by a largely subservient body of MLAs. The Committees have so far failed to exploit their powers. MLAs have produced few Private Members Bills of any significance. Party loyalty has also inhibited committees from being effective scrutinisers of legislation.

The alternative view is that it has taken some time for the Assembly to learn how to make full use of both its legislative scrutiny powers and its powers of initiation. MLAs had little experience of acting as legislators but have now grown into the role. There is more effective scrutiny of Executive legislation with Bills now being thoroughly investigated. MLAs are also making fuller use of the powers granted to them. With further experience, the Assembly can emerge as an independent and effective legislative chamber.

Stronger candidates will be able to present a balanced discussion and will be able to produce a greater degree of evidence.

An answer that contains no evidence/examples can be awarded a maximum of Level 3.

An answer that is largely or completely unbalanced can be awarded a maximum of Level 4.

**Level 1 ([1]–[6])**

**AO1: 2 marks; AO2: 3 marks; AO3: 1 mark**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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 marks; AO2: 5 marks; AO3: 2 marks**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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 marks; AO2: 7 marks; AO3: 3 marks**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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 marks; AO2: 9 marks; AO3: 5 marks**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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 marks; AO2: 11 marks; AO3: 7 marks**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the legislative record of the Assembly 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]

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**Total**

**50**