

GCSE



**Chief Examiner's Report**  
**Government**  
**and Politics**

Summer Series 2024





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2024 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Subject Overview

The standard for the award overall remains very high and in line with previous series. It was encouraging to see that candidates largely produced high quality responses across both Units. This year saw a return to pre-pandemic assessment procedures and centres are to be commended for ensuring that candidates were well prepared on all topics covered by the specification. Nevertheless, there is still some evidence that the use of examples beyond those provided in the sources remains an issue. Please note that where candidates failed to do so, they incurred a mark cap which limited their overall attainment.

### Assessment Unit 1

### Democracy in Action

#### Unit Overview

The number of candidates entered for this unit has seen a year-on-year increase since the subject was first offered for examination in 2017. Many centres are now familiar with the specification and the assessment requirements, which resulted in some very impressive responses in Unit 1, particularly. This improvement was most noticeable in Section A and Section C. However, there were some identifiable common mistakes which are outlined in the more detailed report below. Nevertheless, centres and candidates should be commended for the preparation undertaken for this Unit and should be encouraged by the groundwork that has been laid for success in Unit 2.

#### Section A

- Q1** This question asked candidates to identify what the term 'MEP' stands for. Whilst most candidates correctly identified 'Member of the European Parliament', some candidates incorrectly stated 'Member of the elected Parliament' which was not a valid response.
- Q2** This question asked candidates to identify one action a citizen can take to hold the powerful in society to account. Candidates had no difficulty selecting an appropriate action, such as lobbying politicians or taking direct action.
- Q3** This question asked candidates to name one type of electoral system in the UK. The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly, citing First Past the Post or Single Transferable Vote as responses.
- Q4** This question asked candidates to name one type of pressure group. This question was answered very well with candidates correctly identifying a variety of pressure groups, such as causal or insider groups.
- Q5** This question asked candidates to state what the term 'MP' stands for and this was exceptionally well answered with nearly all candidates correctly answering 'Member of Parliament'.
- Q6** This question asked candidates to name one UK political party. Candidates were rewarded for identifying any political party that operates in the UK, including those from the devolved regions.

- Q7** This question asked candidates to name one person or group who make rules for society. Common responses included ‘the Prime Minister’ or ‘Parliament’ but a range of other valid answers were also worthy of credit.
- Q8** This question asked candidates to name one opposition party in the UK parliament. Almost all candidates correctly identified a valid opposition party, such as Labour, and responses were accurate at the time of candidates sitting the examination prior to the General Election.
- Q9** This question asked candidates about why rules are needed in society. This was one of the best answered questions on the examination paper and nearly all candidates provided a valid response.
- Q10** This question asked candidates to explain the term ‘Private Members’ Bill’. There were a variety of responses to this question, some of which showed a good understanding of the term, whilst others provided inaccurate explanations which could not be given credit.
- Q11** This question asked candidates to explain the term ‘devolved government’. As with the previous question, there was a variety of responses. Most candidates were able to show sufficient understanding to be awarded full marks, however, a minority appeared to have limited understanding of the term.
- Q12** This question asked candidates to give one way MLAs can represent their constituents. Responses were excellent and well-informed.
- Q13** This question provided candidates with a range of statements and asked them to identify which were arguments for or against the use of referenda. The vast majority of candidates scored full marks, but some candidates confused the last two statements.
- Q14** This question provided candidates with a grid and asked them to match the correct term to the definition provided. Candidates scored well in this question, although a small minority confused ‘range of political parties’ and ‘free and fair elections’.

## **Section B**

- Q15** This question required candidates to utilise the source to explain how the views of Northern Ireland’s political parties differ. Two possible differences were given in the source and the majority of candidates explained at least one of these. A failure to utilise the source resulted in some candidates’ responses being capped at Level 2. If candidates did not offer any additional points beyond those given in the source, their marks were capped at Level 2 as the question requires additional information from their own knowledge to be provided. There was no need for additional evidence in this response and therefore marks were not deducted for failing to provide evidence or examples. Better responses were able to give specific details on economic policies/ views on the NI Protocol, whereas candidates who scored lower marks tended to give general or vague explanations.
- Q16** Marks were awarded for a wide range of reasons as to why the protection of rights is important in a democracy. Top marks went to those candidates who provided a wide range of relevant reasons with explanation and some supporting evidence. There was a tendency for candidates to fail to provide evidence in this question which resulted in their mark being capped at the top of Level 2. Centres are encouraged to make clear to candidates that they should provide at least one specific example in their answers to avoid any reduction in marks. Candidates who failed to focus on the ‘protection’ of rights also tended to fall into the Level 2 band, as they did not fully address the question posed.



- Q17** Candidates were required to explain how politicians can use the media for political messaging with reference to the source provided. Those candidates who failed to refer to the source or only provided one way politicians can use the media for political messaging, were capped at the top of Level 2. Some candidates relied heavily on the source for both content and evidence and in this case, their marks were capped at the top of Level 2 for failing to provide any additional information of their own. However, on the whole, this question was answered very well with a range of points and evidence beyond the source.
- Q18** This question required candidates to explain why freedom of the press is important in a democracy with reference to the source provided. The source focused on the media questioning politicians as the main method. Many candidates dealt very well with this method and provided two or more additional features from their own knowledge. The responses to this question were amongst the best across the whole paper. Candidates presented a range of valid points with some explanation and most also provided examples beyond that mentioned in the source, with the MPs' expenses scandal proving popular. A minority of candidates had their marks capped at the top of Level 2 for failing to provide examples beyond that in the source.

### Section C

- Q19** In this question, candidates were asked to present a one-sided argument which supports the view that MPs are successful at scrutinising the government. The majority of candidates dealt very well with this question, presenting a range of valid points with relevant evidence and detailed explanation. However, some candidates digressed into discussion of the Northern Ireland political process or the work of MLAs. Those who failed to give any supporting evidence or who failed to go beyond one method were capped at the top of Level 2.
- Q20** This question required a balanced, evaluative response with a range of points on both sides of the argument and supporting evidence. This question was generally answered to a high standard, showing that candidates were well-prepared for this topic. Better responses were able to give a range of reasons as to why pressure groups are an effective way of taking action, as well as discussing their drawbacks and alternative methods. Most candidates were able to provide accurate evidence to support their arguments. However, weaker responses tended to give a narrative account of examples of pressure groups without addressing their methods. Those who provided a one-sided response or a response with no examples attained a maximum Level 3.

## Assessment Unit 2      International Politics in Action

### Unit Overview

The standard of candidate performance in this Unit continues to be very high. Most candidates performed particularly well in Section C which is commendable given that this is the most challenging section of the paper. At the top level, many candidates scored nearly full marks in Section A which shows solid knowledge of the specification content for this Unit. However, candidates should be encouraged to read questions in Section B and Section C carefully, to ensure that the responses they provide are worthy of credit and that they provide examples beyond those given in the sources.

### Section A

- Q1** The vast majority of candidates correctly answered this question as ‘United Nations’.
- Q2** This question was largely answered well, with most candidates referring to the Good Friday Agreement or another valid peace agreement.
- Q3** This was an exceptionally well-answered question with candidates having little difficulty in identifying appropriate issues that cause conflict between countries, such as land disputes.
- Q4** This question required candidates to state one type of sanction that can be imposed on a country. Candidates provided valid responses, such as economic or sporting sanctions.
- Q5** This question asked candidates to identify a divisive issue in Northern Ireland. The vast majority of candidates provided valid responses, however, a small minority cited issues that have been resolved and were therefore unworthy of credit.
- Q6** Candidates gave a variety of responses to this question and it was apparent that a sizeable minority did not fully engage with the terminology in the question. Valid responses included ‘migrant’ or ‘economic migrant’, however, ‘refugee’ or ‘asylum seeker’ could not be credited as the question clearly stated ‘better standard of living’ as the descriptive element.
- Q7** Like the previous question, there was some digression from the terminology of the question by candidates. Valid bodies that protect refugees include the UNHCR or the UN Refugee Agency. Laws that protect refugees were not deemed valid responses for this question.
- Q8** The vast majority of candidates answered this question well, showing a good understanding of the term ‘internally displaced person’. Some responses did not fully address the issue of internally displaced persons not crossing a border, which meant only one mark out of a possible two could be awarded.
- Q9** Candidates were asked to explain the term ‘human rights abuse’ with the vast majority giving valid and detailed responses, some of which were supported with evidence. However, this detail is not required to access full marks.
- Q10** The vast majority of candidates answered this question very well, showing a good understanding of the historic context of the formation of the European Union.
- Q11** This question asked candidates to explain the term ‘freedom of movement’. Better answers identified this as one of the core freedoms of the European Union, although this was not required to gain full marks. A minority of candidates left this question blank or provided incorrect explanations that could not be given credit.

- Q12** This question was answered exceptionally well, with almost all candidates correctly identifying Britain/UK's withdrawal from the European Union as the correct answer.
- Q13** This question was answered very well, showing that candidates have a good understanding of the causes of migration. However, a small minority of candidates identified 'pull' factors, which could not be given credit.
- Q14** This question provided candidates with a range of statements and asked them to identify which were social or economic benefits of migration. The vast majority of candidates scored full marks, but some candidates answered the second statement incorrectly.

## Section B

- Q15** This question required candidates to utilise the source to describe issues that may require international cooperation. Two possible issues were given in the source and the majority of candidates explained at least one of these very well. A failure to utilise the source resulted in some candidates' responses being capped at Level 2. If candidates did not offer any additional points beyond those given in the source their marks were capped at Level 2. This question requires candidates to provide additional information from their own knowledge. In this question marks are not deducted for failing to provide evidence or examples. Better responses were able to explain at least one other issue in good detail, whereas candidates who scored lower marks tended to heavily rely on the source.
- Q16** This question elicited a variety of responses. Top marks went to those candidates who explained a range of ways the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission protects citizens. Due to the nature of this question, candidates who provided general evidence were given credit. However, a significant minority of candidates either provided very general responses or gave information on the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland which could not be credited. There was some evidence that candidates had not prepared for a question on this topic.
- Q17** Candidates were required to explain how the UN Security Council attempts to maintain peace with reference to the source provided. This question was answered very well with candidates giving a variety of ways, with supporting evidence. Those candidates who failed to refer to the source or only provided one way the UN Security Council attempts to maintain peace were capped at the top of Level 2. Some candidates relied heavily on the source for evidence and in this case marks were capped at the top of Level 2 for failing to provide any additional evidence.
- Q18** This question required candidates to explain some of the ways that laws protect migrants. The best responses offered a wide range of laws including the UNCHR or the Human Rights Act and explained the protections they offered for migrants. Some candidates referred to bodies rather than laws which was digression from the question and therefore not creditworthy. Those who failed to provide examples of laws were capped at the top of Level 2.

## Section C

- Q19** In this question, candidates were asked to present a one-sided argument which supports the view that there have been many obstacles to peace in Northern Ireland. The majority of candidates dealt very well with this question, presenting a range of valid obstacles with relevant evidence and detailed explanation. However, some candidates digressed into historical material from the CCEA GCSE History specification which could not be credited as it is not covered under the CCEA GCSE Government and Politics specification. Those who failed to give any supporting evidence or who failed to go beyond one obstacle were capped at the top of Level 2.
- Q20** This question required a balanced, evaluative response with a range of points on both sides of the argument and supporting evidence. This question was generally answered to a high standard, showing that candidates were well prepared for this topic on NATO. Better responses were able to give a range of successes and failures of NATO, with some candidates giving impressive detail on current conflicts. However, a significant minority of candidates answered this question with United Nations material which could not be credited as it was inaccurate given the terminology of the question. Candidates are reminded to read questions carefully to ensure they fully understand the demands of the questions. Those who provided a one-sided response or a response with no examples attained a maximum Level 3.

## Contact details

The following information provides contact details for key staff members:

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