

New  
Specification



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
2017**

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## **Government and Politics**

**Assessment Unit AS 1**

*assessing*

**The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland**

**[SGP11]**

**TUESDAY 30 MAY, AFTERNOON**

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**MARK  
SCHEME**

## **General Marking Instructions**

### ***Introduction***

The main purpose of the mark scheme is to ensure that examinations are marked accurately, consistently and fairly. The mark scheme provides examiners with an indication of the nature and range of candidates' responses likely to be worthy of credit. It also sets out the criteria which they should apply in allocating marks to candidates' responses.

### ***Assessment objectives***

Below are the assessment objectives for GCE Government and Politics.

Candidates should be able to:

- AO1** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and debates.
- AO2** Analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and theories; identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between the political systems studied.
- AO3** Construct and communicate coherent arguments making use of a range of appropriate political vocabulary.

### ***Quality of candidates' responses***

In marking the examination papers, examiners should be looking for a quality of response reflecting the level of maturity which may reasonably be expected of a 17- or 18-year-old which is the age at which the majority of candidates sit their GCE examinations.

### ***Flexibility in marking***

Mark schemes are not intended to be totally prescriptive. No mark scheme can cover all the responses 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.

### ***Positive marking***

Examiners are encouraged to be positive in their marking, giving appropriate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do 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 of a 17- or 18-year-old GCE candidate.

### ***Awarding zero marks***

Marks should only be awarded for valid responses and no marks should be awarded for an answer which is completely incorrect or inappropriate.

### ***Types of mark schemes***

Mark schemes for tasks or 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.

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**

In 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 to 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 tasks and questions that require them to respond in extended written form. These tasks and 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.

For conciseness, quality of written communication is distinguished within levels of response as follows:

Level 1: Quality of written communication is inadequate.

Level 2: Quality of written communication is limited.

Level 3: Quality of written communication is satisfactory.

Level 4: Quality of written communication is good.

Level 5: Quality of written communication is of a high standard.

In interpreting these level descriptions, examiners should refer to the more detailed guidance provided below:

**Level 1 (Inadequate):** The candidate makes only a very limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack any clarity and coherence. There is very little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is consistently unclear.

**Level 2 (Limited):** The candidate makes only a limited selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. The organisation of material may lack clarity and coherence. There is little use of specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar may be such that intended meaning is not clear in places.

**Level 3 (Satisfactory):** The candidate makes a reasonable selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with some clarity and coherence. There is some use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are sufficiently competent to make meaning clear.

**Level 4 (Good):** The candidate makes a good selection and use of an appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a good standard of clarity and coherence. There is good use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently good standard to make meaning clear.

**Level 5 (High Standard):** The candidate successfully selects and uses the most appropriate form and style of writing. Relevant material is organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence. There is widespread and accurate use of appropriate specialist vocabulary. Presentation, spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make meaning clear.

- 1 Two marks for each of **two** departments within the Executive Committee. These can be current or previous departments. Candidates can use the “common” terms by which departments are known.

**(AO1: 4 marks)**

[4]

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

4

## 2 Background

This term legacy issues refers to a range of, largely unresolved, areas of disagreement between the main political parties in Northern Ireland. These issues are a consequence of the political conflict and the continuing divisions in Northern Irish society. The Source identifies parading as one of these issues. Others include flags and symbols, victims, how Northern Ireland’s past is to be recorded, the future of the Maze Prison site.

### Level 1 ([1]–[2])

The candidate offers a basic explanation of what is meant by “legacy issues.” There is limited or no use of the source or own knowledge.

### Level 2 ([3]–[4])

The candidate offers a more developed explanation of what is meant by “legacy issues.” There is some use of the source or own knowledge. If no reference to the source is made a maximum of [4] marks can be awarded.

### Level 3 ([5]–[6])

The candidate provides a full explanation of what is meant by “legacy issues.” There is good use of the source and own knowledge.

**(AO1: 6 marks)**

[6]

6

## 3 Background

Answers should focus on continuing areas of disagreement and not on areas that have been resolved. The Source refers to parading and it is very likely that this will remain a contentious issue and one that the DUP and Sinn Féin will continue to disagree about. Candidates may also refer to differences on the constitutional issue, membership of the EU, moral issues, flags and symbols and economic and social policies, the RHI Scandal.

If there is no reference to the Source, a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

If there is no reference to any evidence or examples, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

### Level 1 ([1]–[3])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of differences between the DUP and Sinn Féin. The answer is ill-informed and/or has a high degree of irrelevant material and/or makes general statements and/or has no evidence. There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is inadequate. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary.

### Level 2 ([4]–[6])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of differences between the DUP and Sinn Féin 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. There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political

information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 3 ([7]–[9])**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of differences between the DUP and Sinn Féin 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. There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 4 ([10]–[12])**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of differences between the DUP and Sinn Féin and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 5 ([13]–[15])**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of differences between the DUP and Sinn Féin and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a 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.

[15]

15

**4 (a) Background**

The durability of the DUP/Sinn Féin-led Executive tends to conceal significant divisions within it. These divisions are not only the traditional one between unionists and nationalists but 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, leading to the departure of both of these parties following the 2016 Assembly Election. 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 ongoing disputes within the Executive. There is much evidence to support such a conclusion and candidates may refer to any example since 2007 including the impasse over policing and justice, the failure of the Haass talks, public disagreements and any other relevant examples.

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 Féin both strengthened their positions in the 2011 Assembly Elections is, some argue, further evidence that the electorate are happy with the record of the Executive. Candidates may refer to any evidence since 2007 including agreement on Programmes for Government and on budgets, joint action on securing investment, agreement on the devolution of policing and justice powers, joint appearance of First Ministers at symbolic events and any other relevant examples.

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

If there is no reference to evidence/examples, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

If an answer is very unbalanced, a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

### **Level 1 ([1]–[5])**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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. There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is inadequate. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary.

### **Level 2 ([6]–[10])**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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. There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

### **Level 3 ([11]–[15])**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 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. There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

### **Level 4 ([16]–[20])**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

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**Level 5 ([21]–[25])**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the record of the Executive since 2007 and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a 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.

[25]

25

**(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 tend to act as “party animals” rather than “committee creatures.” MLAs have produced few Private Members Bills of any significance. The Petition of Concern has been abused to block legislation, such as that on same sex marriage. Difficult legislative issues have been ‘parked’ rather than acted upon, including academic selection, the Irish language and water charges.

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. Positive examples include the Plastic Bag Levy, Human Trafficking and Local Government Reform legislation. Candidates may note that the record of the Assembly since 2007 is significantly better than its performance on the legislative front prior to that date. 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.

If there is no reference to evidence/examples, a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.

If an answer is very unbalanced, a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

**Level 1 ([1]–[5])**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the Assembly’s legislative record 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. There is little analysis and evaluation of information, arguments and explanations. The quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar is inadequate. An argument, if present, is ill-informed and poorly constructed and the level of communication and the use of political vocabulary are both rudimentary.

**Level 2 ([6]–[10])**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the Assembly’s legislative record 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. There is some basic analysis and evaluation of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 3 ([11]–[15])**

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the Assembly’s legislative record 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. There is some limited analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 4 ([16]–[20])**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the Assembly’s legislative record and deploys this to answer the question. The answer contains relevant evidence and examples. There is sound analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. 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.

**Level 5 ([21]–[25])**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the Assembly’s legislative record and deploys this consistently to answer the question. A range of relevant evidence is presented. There is thorough analysis of political information, arguments and explanations. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a 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.

[25]

**Total**

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

25

**50**