

New
Specification



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

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 2

The British Political Process

[SGP21]

MONDAY 5 JUNE, MORNING

**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 demonstrate:

- 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.

Section A: The UK Executive and Legislature

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

- 1** Two marks for each type of committee identified, including Select, Public Bill and All-Party Committees, Ad-hoc, Standing, Grand Committees, Departmental and non-departmental Select Committees will be considered to be two different types. *(AO1: 4 marks)* [4]

4

2 Background

Backbench MPs can influence legislation in many ways. Candidates may refer to Private Members Bills; Public Bill Committees; proposing amendments; voting on Bills and any other relevant means.

Level 1 ([1])

The candidate identifies a valid way with little or no development.

Level 2 ([2]–[3])

The candidate offers a limited explanation of a valid way. There will be some supporting evidence.

Level 3 ([4]–[5])

The candidate provides a full explanation of a valid way. Relevant evidence will support the response.

Apply criteria for each valid way.

(AO1: 2 × 5 marks)

[10]

10

3 (a) Background

The idea that the British system of government has become a “Prime Ministerial” one, rather than Cabinet Government, has a long history. Observers, such as Foley, have argued that the PM has become increasingly “presidential.” The argument is that the PM is no longer “primus inter pares” but now dominates Cabinet. Collective cabinet government is effectively defunct. Recent years have seen the growth of evidence to support such a conclusion with fewer and shorter cabinet meetings, the use of one-to-one meetings with ministers to determine policy, the growth of the PM’s office and the increase in special advisers being just some of the reasons cited.

However, there is evidence that challenges the idea of Prime Ministerial government and which supports the view that the Cabinet is still central. The role of their cabinets in bringing about the premature departure of both Thatcher and Blair supports such a conclusion. Further evidence includes the limitations imposed upon the PM by coalition government between 2010 and 2015 and the monumental inability of Cameron to manage his Cabinet, leading to his departure and the UK’s exit from Europe. Candidates may refer to any other relevant evidence of the continuing significance of cabinet.

Weaker answers may be unbalanced or contain little evidence. Better answers will be balanced and contain a range of evidence.

- If there is no reference to evidence/examples a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.
- If an answer is unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the powers of the Prime Minister 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 ([7]–[11])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the powers of the Prime Minister 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 ([12]–[16])

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the powers of the Prime Minister 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 ([17]–[21])

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the powers of the Prime Minister 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 ([22]–[26])

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the factors affecting the powers of the Prime Minister 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.

[26]

(b) Background

Scrutiny of the executive is one of the key functions of Parliament. It has long been argued that the power of Parliament to do so has been steadily eroded as the power of the executive has been expanded. Party discipline has ensured that governments are able to control what happens in the Commons and MPs have been reduced to the role of party drones. MPs are increasingly career driven and are party loyalists as a result Opposition MPs are even more irrelevant. The Lords has seen its powers reduced so that it is little more than a 'delaying' body.

On the other hand, there is evidence that Parliament has become a more effective scrutiniser in recent years. MPs are becoming more rebellious and are more prepared to defy their party leaders. Select Committees have emerged as powerful critics of the government, exposing failures in policy and holding Ministers and civil servants to account. The Lords is taking its role of scrutiny very seriously and has inflicted defeats on governments on key policy issues.

Weaker answers may be unbalanced or contain little evidence. Better answers will be balanced and contain a range of relevant evidence.

- If there is no reference to evidence/examples a maximum of Level 3 can be awarded.
- If an answer is unbalanced a maximum of Level 4 can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1]–[6])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of Parliament's record in scrutinising 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. 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 ([7]–[11])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of Parliament's record in scrutinising 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. 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 ([12]–[16])

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of Parliament's record in scrutinising 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. 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 ([17]–[21])

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of Parliament’s record in scrutinising the executive 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 ([22]–[26])

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of Parliament’s record in scrutinising the executive 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.

[26]

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

26

Section A

40

Section B: The UK Judiciary

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 4 The independence of the judiciary from executive control is central to its ability to check executive power. A number of mechanisms exist and candidates may refer to these. Candidates may refer to appointment; tenure; salary; restrictions on judges involvement in political parties or any other relevant mechanism.

If no supporting example is given, a maximum of 4 marks can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1])

The candidate offers a basic explanation of judicial independence.

Level 2 ([2]–[3])

The candidate offers a more developed explanation of judicial independence. There will be some supporting evidence.

Level 3 ([4]–[5])

The candidate provides a full explanation of judicial independence. Relevant evidence will be provided.

(AO1: [5] marks)

[5]

5

5 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. Candidates should refer to examples of reviews that challenged executive decisions. 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.

Candidates should identify the ways in which the judiciary can perform the role of checking the executive and provide examples of how it has done so in practice. Weaker answers will be limited in range and evidence. Stronger answers will have a broader range.

Level 1 ([1]–[3])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the judiciary's record in checking 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. 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 the judiciary’s record in checking 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. 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 the judiciary’s record in checking 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. 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 the judiciary’s record in checking the executive 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.

Level 5 ([13]–[15])

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the judiciary’s record in checking the executive 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. [15]

Section B

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

15

20

Section C: Pressure Groups in the UK

AVAILABLE
MARKS

- 6 Interest and Pressure groups are frequently divided into insider and outsider groups. Outsider groups, also sometimes referred to as ‘cause’ or ‘promotional’ groups are those that lack close connections with the executive and with policy makers. They are, therefore, unable to directly influence those responsible for making decisions. As a result, their tactics frequently involve trying to influence public opinion through some highly visible methods. Insider groups tend to employ very different methods in seeking to influence public policy and these tend to be much less visible.

If no supporting example is given, a maximum of 4 marks can be awarded.

Level 1 ([1])

The candidate identifies a valid way with little or no development.

Level 2 ([2]–[3])

The candidate offers a limited explanation of a valid way. There will be some supporting evidence.

Level 3 ([4]–[5])

The candidate provides a full explanation of a valid way. Relevant evidence will support the answer.

(AO1: [5] marks)

[5]

5

7 Background

One view is that pressure and interest groups are able to exercise far too much influence over policy makers to ensure that their interests are protected. Critics argue that many “insider” groups enjoy privileged access to policy makers and that this is not as a result of the strength of their popular support. However, candidates should focus on the argument that pressure and interest groups are vital to the democratic process. This is a view put forward by Pluralist theorists. In this view, groups promote political participation and action. They enable ordinary citizens to influence policy makers. Defensive groups act to protect their members’ interests against arbitrary policy decisions. Groups act to hold the executive to account. Pressure and interest groups act as a vital channel of communication between ordinary people and the political elite.

Candidates should illustrate the Pluralist argument with reference to the actions of pressure groups in the UK.

Level 1 ([1]–[3])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the argument that pressure groups are essential to the democratic process 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 ([4]–[6])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the argument that pressure groups are essential to the democratic process 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 the argument that pressure groups are essential to the democratic process 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 the argument that pressure groups are essential to the democratic process 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.

Level 5 ([13]–[15])

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of the argument that pressure groups are essential to the democratic process 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.

[15]

Section C

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

15

20

60