



Rewarding Learning

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)
General Certificate of Education
2019**

Government and Politics

Assessment Unit AS 1

assessing

The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland

[SGP11]

FRIDAY 17 MAY, AFTERNOON

**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 the Bills passed by the Assembly. These are actual pieces of legislation and not types of Bills. The precise name of the Bill is not a requirement of achieving the marks. Candidates may refer to the Taxi Bill, Human Trafficking Bill, Shared Education Bill or any other.
(AO1: 4 marks) [4]

AVAILABLE
MARKS

4

2 Background

What has become known as “victims’ Issues” is one of several areas of disagreement that has dogged Northern Ireland politics since the Good Friday Agreement and more especially since the restoration of devolution in 2007. The term broadly refers to a range of contentious issues over the recognition and treatment of victims and survivors. One of the most contentious is the definition of who victims are, with unionists and nationalists having very different interpretations. Following on from this, there is disagreement on who should receive recognition and what level of state support should be available.

Level 1 ([1]–[2])

The candidate offers a basic explanation of what is meant by “victims’ 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 “victims’ 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 the term “victims’ issues”. There is good use of the Source and own knowledge.

(AO1: 6 marks)

Any other valid material will be rewarded appropriately.

[6]

6

3 Background

It is much easier to identify areas of division between the Unionist and Nationalist parties in Northern Ireland. However, there are a number of areas where cross-party consensus was achieved. The Source identifies policing as one of these and this should be included in answers. Other areas of agreement that candidates may refer to are cross-border co-operation, opposition to Dissident Republican activity, the lowering of Corporation Tax, increased funding of the Health Service and the attraction of foreign investment to Northern Ireland.

- Candidate’s own answer on disagreement: Max L3 [9]
- No use of source (policing/UUP-Nat remain policy): Max L4 [12]

Any other relevant area.

Level 1 ([1]–[3])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of examples of agreement between Unionist and Nationalist parties since 2007. 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 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.

Level 2 ([4]–[6])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of examples of agreement between Unionist and Nationalist parties 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 ([7]–[9])

The candidate demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of examples of agreement between Unionist and Nationalist parties 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 ([10]–[12])

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of examples of agreement between Unionist and Nationalist parties 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.

Level 5 ([13]–[15])

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of examples of agreement between Unionist and Nationalist parties 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 consistently high standard. An argument is constructed which displays effective communication and presentation of ideas. There is consistent use of appropriate political vocabulary.

Any other valid material will be rewarded appropriately.

[15]

15

4 (a) Background

One of the primary functions of MLAs is to hold the Executive to account by scrutinising its actions. This was especially so when there was no official opposition in the Assembly and nearly all parties in the Assembly were represented in government. The decision of the minor parties to form an ‘Official Opposition’ went some way to addressing this issue.

No evidence/examples. Max L3 [15]

Lack of significant balance. Max L4 [20]

The devolved political arrangements provided ample opportunities for MLAs to be effective scrutinisers through debates and questions. Statutory Committees had extensive powers, were well resourced and MLAs became

increasingly competent in performing their scrutiny function as devolution continued. MLAs could also use the mechanism of a Petition of Concern. Critics argue that, in practice, MLAs failed to employ the scrutiny powers they have. Careerism, party loyalty, ignorance and incompetence have all been given as reasons for this failure. The dominance of the Assembly by the two leading parties has also been cited as a cause of poor scrutiny. For many, the RHI scandal illustrates how ineffective scrutiny was: it was a combination of whistle-blowers and the media that brought the affair to light, not the Assembly.

Any other relevant issue.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the Assembly's record in performing its scrutiny function 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 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.

Level 2 ([6]–[10])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the Assembly's record in performing its scrutiny function 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 record in performing its scrutiny function 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 record in performing its scrutiny function 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 record in performing its scrutiny function 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 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. [25]

AVAILABLE MARKS
25

(b) Background

Many would argue that the Executive Committee was a total failure as a power-sharing government. The fact that it lurched from one crisis to another, only to be rescued at the last minute by outside intervention, indicates that there were bitter divisions within the Executive. Power-sharing requires a degree of trust and there was none between the parties that made up the government. Power-sharing also needs willingness to act collectively and there was no evidence of collective responsibility between ministers. It often seemed as if ministers within the executive intentionally sought to sabotage the proposals of ministers from other parties. There is a persistent feeling that many of the parties pursued other agendas rather than power-sharing.

No evidence/examples. Max L3 [15]

Lack of significant balance. Max L4 [20]

However, the fact that the DUP/Sinn Féin-led Executive survived between 2007 and 2017 could be said to be evidence that power-sharing did work. The Executive was a remarkable success given the history of political and civil conflict in Northern Ireland. From this point of view, the Executive managed to overcome the difficulties it encountered and managed to reach agreement on important areas. Progress was slow but, until the 2017 suspension, progress was evident.

Any other relevant arguments.

Stronger answers will display clear understanding of the point of the question, will present a range of evidence and will contain balance.

Level 1 ([1]–[5])

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of the Executive’s record as a power-sharing government 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 explanation. 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.

Level 2 ([6]–[10])

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the Executive’s record as a power-sharing government 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 Executive’s record as a power-sharing government 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 Executive’s record as a power-sharing government 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 Executive’s record as a power-sharing government 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 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.

[25]

Total

**AVAILABLE
MARKS**

25

50