



*Rewarding Learning*

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY (AS)  
General Certificate of Education  
2023**

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**Government and Politics**

**Assessment Unit AS 1**

*assessing*

The Government and Politics of Northern Ireland

**[SGP11]**

**WEDNESDAY 31 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** MLAs can take part in debates on legislation and may vote on legislative proposals. They can take part in Statutory Committees that scrutinise legislation or introduce a Bill. MLAs may introduce a Private Members Bill. They may also use party channels to influence legislation. Any other relevant way.  
**(AO1: 4 marks)** [4]

**AVAILABLE  
MARKS**

4

**2 Background**

Power-sharing, as created in Northern Ireland by the Good Friday Agreement, was a system that was designed to ensure that any future government would consist of parties from both the Unionist and Nationalist traditions. Parties would obtain positions in the Executive Committee based upon their representation in the Assembly. In this way, no one political tradition would be able to dominate government but would require the approval of those representing the other tradition. Various other mechanisms were introduced to extend the principle of power-sharing, including that of mutual consent.

**Level 1 ([1]–[2])**

The candidate offers a basic explanation of what is meant by “power-sharing”. 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 “power-sharing”. 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 “power-sharing”. 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

The Source identifies that MLAs are able to scrutinise the Executive by questioning ministers and candidates should seek to explain how this can be done. Other means of scrutiny include Statutory Committees; a variety of opportunities to engage in debates that examine the policies and performance of the Executive; using the media and social media to question policies. Any other relevant way.

**No use of source, maximum level 3 [9]. No evidence maximum level 4 [12].**

#### **Level 1 ([1]–[3])**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of how MLAs can scrutinise the Executive. 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. The use of political vocabulary is rudimentary.

#### **Level 2 ([4]–[6])**

The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of how MLAs can scrutinise 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. 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 how MLAs can scrutinise 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. 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 how MLAs can scrutinise 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. There is 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 how MLAs can scrutinise 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 consistently high standard. There is 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

AVAILABLE  
MARKS

When the Good Friday Agreement was signed in 1998 the DUP was totally opposed to the main provisions of the Agreement and campaigned for rejection in the referendum that followed. The Party opposed any power-sharing with Republicans, the release of paramilitary prisoners, the reform of the RUC and any formal links with the Irish Republic. The DUP participated in the Assembly and Executive with the express purpose of trying to “wreck from within”. It could be argued that other DUP policies such as their views on Northern Ireland’s place within the UK, Euroscepticism and their views on abortion and same-sex marriage have remained.

The DUP’s policies since 2007 would seem to be radically different from those it favoured in 1998. The Party no longer wanted to wreck the devolved institutions and actively worked within them. They shared power with Sinn Féin and continue to do so. They have engaged in co-operation with the Republic of Ireland. They have accepted the reform of policing and the release of paramilitary prisoners. The DUP would argue that it has been able to modify its policies because of fundamental changes in republicanism, most notably, the abandonment of ‘armed struggle’. The Party would assert that its policy on this matter has remained consistent.

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

**No evidence/examples, maximum of level 3 [15]. Lack of significant balance, maximum level 4 [20].**

### **Level 1 ([1]–[5])**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of how DUP policies have changed since 1998 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 extent to which DUP policies have changed since 1998 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 extent to which DUP policies have changed since 1998 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 extent to which DUP policies have changed since 1998 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 extent to which DUP policies have changed since 1998 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]

### **(b) Background**

In 1998 the SDLP was clearly the dominant Nationalist party and Sinn Féin was a distant second in terms of representation. The reversal of this situation over the past 20 years has been explained in different ways. One prominent narrative is that Sinn Féin ‘stole the clothes’ of the SDLP, in that it changed its policies to positions that the SDLP had traditionally held. A second explanation, often joined with the first, is that Sinn Féin underwent a fundamental strategic shift, the most obvious element of which was its move from armed conflict to constitutional politics. A third explanation attributes Sinn Féin’s rise to a failure of the SDLP in terms of its organisation, its Catholic conservatism and its complacency in taking the Nationalist vote for granted. A fourth possible explanation points to developments in Unionism. The rise of Sinn Féin was a response to the growth of the DUP because Nationalist voters believed only Sinn Féin was capable of standing up to the more radical Democratic Unionists.

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

**No evidence/examples, maximum level 3 [15]. Lack of significant balance, maximum level 4 [20].**

#### **Level 1 ([1]–[5])**

The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of explanations for the growth of Sinn Féin 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 explanations for the growth of Sinn Féin and 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 explanations for the growth of 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 ([16]–[20])**

The candidate demonstrates full and accurate knowledge and understanding of explanations for the growth of 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 ([21]–[25])**

The candidate demonstrates comprehensive, detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of explanations for the growth of 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 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

**Total**

**50**