

General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics

5151/6151

Post-Standardisation

**GOV6 The Politics of Northern Ireland,
Scotland and Wales**

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Dr Michael Cresswell, Director General

CRITERIA FOR MARKING AS/A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Introduction

AQA's revised Government and Politics specification has been designed to be objectives-led in that questions are set which address the assessment objectives published in the specification. The assessment objectives for A Level and AS are the same, but the weightings are different at AS and A2. Details of the weightings are given in paragraphs 7.2 and 8.4 of the specification.

The schemes of marking reflect these objectives. The mark scheme which follows is of the *levels of response* type showing that candidates are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the skills required in the context of their knowledge and understanding of Government and Politics. Mark schemes provide the necessary framework for examiners but they cannot cover all eventualities. Candidates should be given credit for partially complete answers. Where appropriate, candidates should be given credit for referring to recent and contemporary developments in Government and Politics.

Consistency of marking is of the essence in all public examinations. It is therefore of vital importance that assistant examiners apply the marking scheme as directed by the Principal Examiner in order to facilitate comparability with the marking of other options.

Before scrutinising and applying the detail of the specific mark scheme which follows, assistant examiners are required to familiarise themselves with the general principles of the mark scheme as contained in the Assessment Matrix.

Using a levels of response mark scheme

Good examining is about the **consistent** application of judgement. Mark schemes provide a framework within which examiners exercise their judgement. This is especially so in subjects like Government and Politics which in part rely upon analysis, evaluation, argument and explanation. With this in mind, examiners should use the Assessment Matrix alongside the detailed mark scheme for each question. The Assessment Matrix provides a framework ensuring a consistent, generic source from which the detailed mark schemes are derived. This supporting framework ensures a consistent approach within which candidates' responses are marked according to the level of demand and context of each question.

Examiners should initially make a decision about which Level any given response should be placed in. Having determined the appropriate Level the examiners must then choose the precise mark to be given within that Level. In making a decision about a specific mark to award, it is vitally important to think first of the mid-range within the Level, where that Level covers more than two marks. Comparison with other candidates' responses to the same question might then suggest whether the middle mark is unduly generous or severe.

In making decisions away from the middle of the Level, examiners should ask themselves questions relating to candidate attainment, including the quality of language. The more positive the answers, the higher should be the mark awarded. We want to avoid "bunching" of marks. Levels mark schemes can produce regression to the mean, which should be avoided. A candidate's script should be considered by asking 'Is it:

- precise in its use of factual information?
- appropriately detailed?
- factually accurate?
- appropriately balanced or markedly better in some areas than others?
- generally coherent in expression and cogent in development (as appropriate to the level awarded)?
- well presented as to general quality of language?

The overall aim is to mark positively, giving credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (a) (Total: 8 marks)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|--|---|---|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The candidate demonstrates a good to excellent knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). Where appropriate, the candidate produces accurate and/or relevant examples to illustrate points made. | Levels 3–4 (3 – 4 marks) The candidate applies a good to excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument. | Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary. The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion. |
| | Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The candidate demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). The candidate produces few or inaccurate examples and/or limited evidence to illustrate points made. | Levels 1–2 (1 – 2 marks) The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes little or limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument. | Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit. |

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (b) (Total: 12 marks)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|--|---|---|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | <p>Level 4 (5 – 6 marks) The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate fully addresses the requirements of the question and provides developed and effective to comprehensive interpretation. The answer also provides clear to accurate evidence and, where appropriate, good to excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Levels 3 – 4 (3 – 4 marks) The candidate applies a good to excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p> | <p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively using appropriate political vocabulary. The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion.</p> |
| | <p>Level 3 (3 – 4 marks) The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate clearly addresses the requirements of the question and provides sound interpretation and contextual awareness. The answer includes good examples to illustrate points made.</p> | | |
| | <p>Levels 1–2 (1 – 2 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight to basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts, institutions and processes. The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question and provides little to partial and reasonably effective interpretation. Answers offer limited or little evidence and few or inaccurate examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Levels 1–2 (1 – 2 marks) The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes little or limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p> | <p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit.</p> |

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (c) (Total: 20 marks)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|---|---|--|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | <p>Level 4 (7 – 8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 4 (7 – 8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays excellent awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is an excellent focus on the specific question asked. There is a clear evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a sophisticated awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>Appropriate parallels and connections are clearly identified together with comparisons. A wide range of concepts is used.</p> | <p>Level 4 (4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions with clarity. Excellent use is made of political vocabulary to construct cogent and coherent arguments. The answer has a clear sense of direction, culminating in a conclusion that flows from the preceding discussion.</p> |
| | <p>Level 3 (5 – 6 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes good examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 3 (5 – 6 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays sound awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is a clear focus on the question. There is a sound evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays good awareness of viewpoints and issues. There is good recognition of parallels and comparisons. Appropriate concepts are used.</p> | <p>Level 3 (3 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations.</p> <p>The candidate produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p> |

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Question 1 part (c) (continued)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|---|--|---|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | <p>Level 2 (3 – 4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The answer makes a limited attempt to address the question and demonstrates contextual awareness covering part of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes simple examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 2 (3 – 4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays limited awareness of the implications and demands of the question resulting in a restricted focus. There is a limited evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays partial awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons with a limited use of concepts.</p> | <p>Level 2 (2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments and conclusions adequately with a limited use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p> |
| | <p>Level 1 (1 – 2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. There is little attempt to address the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes few, if any, examples which may be inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p> | <p>Level 1 (1 – 2 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial, with little awareness of viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is little, if any, recognition of parallels and comparisons. The use of concepts is superficial and naïve.</p> | <p>Level 1 (1 mark)</p> <p>The answer relies upon narrative, which is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p> |

**A2 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS, EXCLUDING SYNOPTIC UNIT
(GOV4, GOV5, GOV6, GOV7)**

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Questions 2, 3 and 4 (Maximum 40 marks)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|---|--|---|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | <p>Level 4 (13 – 16 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/ institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer fully addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates excellent contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes excellent examples to illustrate points made. The answer includes detailed and comprehensive interpretations or explanations as well as accurate evidence and relevant examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 4 (13 – 16 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays excellent awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is an excellent and sustained focus on the specific question asked. There is clear and full evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a sophisticated awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues.</p> <p>Appropriate parallels and connections are clearly identified together with well-developed comparisons. A wide range of concepts is used and developed.</p> | <p>Level 4 (7 – 8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions with clarity. Excellent use is made of political vocabulary to construct cogent and coherent arguments and explanations. The answer has a clear sense of direction, culminating in a conclusion that flows from the preceding discussion.</p> |
| | <p>Level 3 (9 – 12 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/ institutions and processes and the relationships between them. The answer clearly addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates sound contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer includes developed and effective interpretations or explanations and also clear evidence and good examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 3 (9 – 12 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays sound awareness of the implications and demands of the question. There is a clear focus on the question. There is a sound evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays good awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues. There is good recognition of parallels and comparisons. Appropriate concepts are used and developed.</p> | <p>Level 3 (5 – 6 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments, explanations and conclusions well. Good use is made of political vocabulary to construct clear arguments and explanations.</p> <p>The candidate produces an answer with a conclusion linked to the preceding discussion.</p> |

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for Questions 2, 3 and 4 (continued)

| | Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy | Skills: Analysis & Evaluation | Communication |
|--|--|---|---|
| | AO1 | AO2 | AO3 |
| | <p>Level 2 (5 – 8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates outline knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationships between them. The answer makes a limited attempt to address the question and demonstrates contextual awareness covering part of the question.</p> <p>The answer includes a partial and reasonably effective attempt at interpretation or explanation with some examples to illustrate points made.</p> | <p>Level 2 (5 – 8 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question resulting in a restricted focus. There is a limited evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour which displays a partial awareness of differing viewpoints and issues.</p> <p>There is some recognition of basic parallels and comparisons. Arguments and explanations are undeveloped with a limited use of concepts.</p> | <p>Level 2 (3 – 4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate communicates arguments and conclusions adequately with a limited use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion is offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p> |
| | <p>Level 1 (1 – 4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate demonstrates a slight and incomplete knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes and a limited awareness of the relationships between them. There is little attempt to address the requirements of the question. There is only superficial awareness, if any, of the context of the question, with little interpretation and few, if any, examples often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p> | <p>Level 1 (1 – 4 marks)</p> <p>The candidate displays little awareness of the implications and demands of the question and focus is lacking. Evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour is superficial.</p> <p>Analysis shows little awareness of differing viewpoints and issues. There is little, if any, recognition of parallels and comparisons. Arguments, explanations and use of concepts are superficial and naïve.</p> | <p>Level 1 (1 – 2 marks)</p> <p>The answer relies upon narrative, which is not fully coherent. There is little or no use of political vocabulary.</p> <p>A conclusion, if present, is not adequately related to the preceding discussion.</p> |

1**Total for this question: 40 marks****(a) Explain the term *Scotland's First Minister* used in the extract.****(8 marks)**

Accept chief minister of Scottish Executive or similar. For higher marks additional relevant information, eg name of incumbent; responsibilities; role.

Reward relevant analysis (eg limitations imposed by normal minority, coalition status; contrast with role of similar leaders in Wales, Northern Ireland and UK Prime Minister; political implications for nationalist agenda under Alex Salmond).

(b) Using the extract and your own knowledge, explain how the establishment of a Scottish Parliament was expected to 'make government more accountable'.**(12 marks)**

At minimum there should be brief explanation of the powers, functions, etc of the Scottish Parliament and that this is elected solely by the Scottish electorate. In terms of 'making government more accountable', there should be recognition that Scottish MPs in the Scottish Parliament and Executive now determine legislation and policy for Scotland on most domestic issues rather than Westminster, where only a small minority of MPs are elected by Scottish voters. Candidates may also explain that elections to the Scottish Parliament, unlike general elections for the Westminster Parliament, focus on Scottish only issues on which only Scottish electors vote. In addition, the Scottish media also focus heavily on proceedings in the Scottish Parliament, making the Scottish electorate more aware of Scottish political issues. Other relevant aspects of 'more accountable' (eg electoral system coalitions, committees, petitions, etc) should be accepted and rewarded. Some candidates may question whether accountability has in fact been strengthened (eg Westminster still sovereign, reserved powers, Barnett formula still determines expenditure; electoral system/minority and coalition governments blurs accountability). Reward candidates who do this although, as question asks only for explanation, full marks possible without this.

(c) 'The devolution legacy of the Blair Government has been to make Scottish independence more, rather than less, likely.' Discuss.**(20 marks)**

At minimum candidates should explain the Blair Government's devolution legacy in Scotland and outline its relevance to the debate about independence. Better candidates are likely to place this within a discussion of the background to Scottish devolution (eg referendums) and the political context which gave rise to the (re) establishment of the Scottish Parliament (eg unpopularity and 'illegitimacy' of pre-devolution Conservative Governments; opposition to Thatcherite policies; unemployment/poll tax, etc) and of subsequent developments (eg multi-party system; levels of SNP support; minority and coalition administrations, Calman Commission). Possible to argue either 'more likely' (eg Scottish Parliament a stepping stone to independence; platform for nationalists; SNP administration; potential for conflict between Holyrood and Westminster; developing distinctiveness of Scottish policies) or 'less likely' (eg electoral system unlikely to produce SNP majority; polls show majority against devolution; SNP 2007 'victory' a protest vote against Blair rather than support for independence), although both must be addressed for top level marks.

While the main focus of the answer should be Scotland, relevant discussion of Blair's devolution legacy in other parts of the UK (eg possible backlash of English voters against Barnett formula; nationalist representation in administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland in 2007; inherent instability of asymmetrical devolution/West Lothian question) should be rewarded. Also reward relevant discussion of wider aspects of the debate about Scottish independence (eg economic considerations; influence of EU; significance of Scottish MP as UK Prime Minister/Cabinet ministers; role of Joint Ministerial Council and Secretary of State for Scotland; devolution as 'a process not an event' only Westminster can grant independence; other possible outcomes such as federalism). Also reward relevant comparison/s with political effects of devolution in Northern Ireland and Wales; and use of concepts (eg sovereignty, nationalism, devolution, federalism, accountability, independence).

2**Total for this question: 40 marks**

'Welsh nationalism has no real significance in Welsh politics.' Discuss.

(40 marks)

At minimum, candidates should show knowledge and understanding of nationalism as a concept and of the main elements (eg language) of Welsh Nationalism and of levels of political support for Plaid Cymru. Better candidates are likely to develop a more detailed discussion of the nature of Welsh nationalism (eg historical and wider cultural influences; anti-English sentiment) and of the strength (eg minority electoral support; main support limited to Welsh speaking areas; Anglicisation of borders and South) and political significance of Plaid Cymru (eg traditional dominance of Labour Party in Wales; political necessity for PC to appeal beyond Welsh speaking areas). Possible to argue that Welsh nationalism has no real significance to Welsh politics (ie emphasis on language and culture rather than politics; Welsh independence an arguably unrealistic goal) and/or that it does have relevance (eg Welsh Assembly gives PC a platform; electoral system gives representation; PC/Lab coalition in 2007) although both sides of the debate should be covered for top level marks. Reward relevant comparisons and contrasts with nationalism in Scotland (eg nationalism stronger reflecting former Scottish statehood and greater economic strength; SNP far stronger politically/electorally than PC; both shared opposition to pre-devolution Conservative Governments) and Northern Ireland (strength of nationalist tradition). Also reward relevant discussion of other influences upon Welsh nationalism (eg religion) and use of concepts such as nationalism, devolution, and independence.

3**Total for this question: 40 marks**

Consider why the Northern Ireland 'problem' has proved so difficult to resolve for so long. *(40 marks)*

Knowledge and understanding is required of the main causal factors underlying the Northern Ireland conflict (historical, cultural, social, economic, etc); of the main peace initiatives and proposals advanced since the 1970s and especially the 1998 Good Friday Agreement; and of subsequent and ongoing developments including the 2006 St Andrews Agreement and the establishment of the power sharing executive in 2007.

'So difficult' should focus on the key obstacles to resolving the conflict (eg irreconcilability of contested nationality and constitutional claims; significance of historical symbolism and events; perspectives of the London and Dublin governments; religious dimensions; divided communities; legacy of paramilitary violence) although more recent obstacles (eg decommissioning, prisoner release, Patten, difficulties with power sharing) are also relevant.

'So long' may be interpreted within different time frames (eg historical origins of conflict; Stormont; direct rule; the 'troubles'; or even post Good Friday Agreement) but must be addressed specifically (along with 'so difficult') for top level marks. (However, a purely historical approach which does not also address 'so difficult' will not normally receive top level marks). Relevant knowledge of the reasons underlying failure of past peace initiatives should be rewarded; and of the circumstances leading to the 2007 power sharing executive. Factors such as voting trends and electoral developments should be rewarded, although these are not necessary to reach highest levels. The question arguably implies that the 'problem' has now been resolved. This can be contested and rewarded but is not the main thrust of the question and full marks can be received without this.

'Labour is no longer the dominant party in Scottish and Welsh politics.' Discuss.

(40 marks)

Knowledge and understanding is required of the political context of party politics in Scotland and Wales including voting patterns and electoral support for the main political parties, especially the Labour Party. Candidates will draw on information from results of elections to the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, particularly 2007. However, election and voting figures for Westminster, the European Parliament and local government are also relevant and should be rewarded when used appropriately. Analysis should include trends in electoral support of Labour and other main parties, and factors influencing those trends as well as outcomes such as party representation/alliances/relationships, etc within the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly.

'Dominant party' should normally be addressed specifically. In discussing this, candidates may focus on the Labourist tradition in both Scotland and Wales, especially in the heavily unionised industrial and mining areas, as well as the traditional weakness of other main parties such as the Conservatives (seen as an English Party, unpopularity of Thatcher, etc), Liberal Democrats (eg main support in Celtic fringes) and Nationalists (PC lacks strong support outside Welsh speaking areas; in both countries majority against independence).

'No longer' is a discriminator and must be addressed specifically for top level marks. In discussing this, better candidates are likely to go beyond the evidence of election results (eg SNP victory in 2007 Scottish Parliament election; PC in coalition in Welsh Assembly) by offering analysis of factors arguably underlying Labour's weakening support (eg decline of heavy industry and mining; devolved assemblies give other parties a platform, electoral system helps other parties win SMP and AM seats and share power, Blair's unpopularity in 2007). It is possible to argue both for the contention (eg SNP administration in Scotland and Labour/PC coalition in Wales following 2007 elections) and against (Labour only one seat short of winning in Scotland in 2007 despite Blair's unpopularity; has ruled Wales as minority or coalition continuously since devolution). It is also possible to distinguish between the outcome of devolution elections and those for Westminster where Labour still returns the overwhelming majority of Scottish and Welsh MPs. Reward answers which extend to analysis of party systems in Scotland and Wales (eg multi-party system) and/ or examine wider influences upon voting (eg religion, ideology, class, policies, especially re: devolution, (un)popularity of party leaders, nationalism, history, language and culture), although this is not primarily a voting behaviour question so should not 'take over' the answer.