



Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2025

Pearson Edexcel GCE Advanced Subsidiary
In Politics

Paper 1: UK Politics (8PL0/01)

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General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the last candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the first.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than be penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme – not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification/indicative content will not be exhaustive. However, different examples of responses will be provided at standardisation.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, a senior examiner must be consulted before a mark is given.
- Crossed-out work should be marked **unless** the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Marking guidance for levels-based mark schemes

How to award marks

The indicative content provides examples of how students will meet each skill assessed in the question. The levels descriptors and indicative content reflect the relative weighting of each skill within each mark band. Confirmation of the marks assigned to Assessment Objectives is provided at the top of each mark scheme. This has been provided to further reflect the balance between the assessment objectives as described in the relevant level descriptors.

Capping statements

Where applicable and to ensure that candidates are awarded marks for fully meeting the requirements of the question, additional capping statements have been indicated in the mark schemes. Such statements indicate where and how candidates will be limited in their achievement if they fail to fully address the requirements of the question. For instance, where questions require candidates to refer to 'thinkers' or 'engaging with sources'.

Finding the right level

The first stage is to decide which level the answer should be placed in. To do this, use a 'best-fit' approach, deciding which level most closely describes the quality of the answer. Answers can display characteristics from more than one level, and where this happens markers must use the guidance below and their professional judgement to decide which level is most appropriate.

Placing a mark within a level

After a level has been decided on, the next stage is to decide on the mark within the level. The instructions below tell you how to reward responses within a level. However, where a level has specific guidance about how to place an answer within a level, always follow that guidance. Statements relating to the treatment of students who do not fully meet the requirements of the question are also shown in the indicative content section of each levels based mark scheme. These statements should be considered alongside the levels descriptors. 3 Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Politics – Sample Assessment Materials – Issue 2 August 2022 © Pearson Education Limited 2022 Markers should be prepared to use the full range of marks available in a level and not restrict marks to the middle. Markers should start at the middle of the level (or the upper-middle mark if there is an even number of marks) and then move the mark up or down to find the best mark. To do this, they should take into account how far the answer meets the requirements of the level:

- if it meets the requirements fully, markers should be prepared to award full marks within the level. The top mark in the level is used for answers that are as good as can realistically be expected within that level
- if it only barely meets the requirements of the level, markers should consider awarding marks at the bottom of the level. The bottom mark in the level is used for answers that are the weakest that can be expected within that level
- the middle marks of the level are used for answers that have a reasonable match to the descriptor. This might represent a balance between some characteristics of the level that are fully met and others that are only barely met.

When a candidate has produced an answer that displays characteristics from more than one level, examiners must use their professional judgement to decide what level should be awarded.

Paper 1: UK Politics mark scheme

Section A

Guidelines for marking Questions 1a and 1b
Marks are awarded for AO1 only.
Marks are awarded for showing depth of knowledge and understanding.

Level	Mark	AO1 Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories, and issues. • Makes superficial links of knowledge and understanding to a particular context. • Uses a narrow range of knowledge and understanding to support arguments/ideas.
Level 2	4–7	• Demonstrates some accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories, and issues. • Makes some effective links of knowledge and understanding to a particular context. • Uses a broad range of knowledge and understanding to support arguments/ideas.
Level 3	8–10	• Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories, and issues. • Makes fully effective links of knowledge and understanding to a particular context. • Uses a comprehensive range of knowledge and understanding to support arguments/ideas.

Question number	Indicative content
1(a)	Describe what is meant by the term class dealignment. AO1 (10 marks) Candidates may refer to the following description of the term class dealignment: • Class dealignment is the process whereby the link between voters' social class and their party identification and vote declines. • This can be connected to a change in the meaning of, or decline in, class identification, as the meaning of class changes over time and it becomes more difficult to define. • In practice this means that the proportion of the working class who support the Labour Party declines, whilst the proportion of the middle class who support the Conservative Party also declines. • The overall impact of this is that political parties, especially the major ones, lose their previous 'core vote', and minor parties may grow. • A further impact of this is that political parties are compelled to alter their traditional ideas and policies in order to connect with a broader base of support. Accept any other valid responses.

Question number	Indicative content
	Describe the role of lobbyists.
1(b)	AO1 (10 marks) Candidates may refer to the following aspects regarding the role of lobbyists: • Lobbyists are a dedicated and professional set of organisations who receive money from clients to act on their behalf in Parliament to influence MPs, Peers, and members of the government; and sometimes other levels of government. • The term 'lobbyist' has its roots in the right of citizens to 'lobby' their own MP in Parliament and petition/plead for assistance. • As lobbyists are paid by and act for their clients, they may seek to influence the process of legislation, as well as government decisions. This could be to prevent harm to their clients or enhance their client's position. • On some issues lobbyists may be more present on one 'side' of the issue, especially the better funded side, or there may be lobbyists on both sides of an issue. • Since 2014 it has been a legal requirement that lobbyists who act for a third party register their activity, if they are consulting or discussing policy and legislation and having meetings with members of the government or senior civil servants. Material will only be credited insofar as it is a valid description of the role lobbyists, rather than the role of pressure groups in general. Accept any other valid responses.

Section B

Guidelines for marking Question 2
Marks are awarded for AO1 and AO2 only.
Marks are awarded for showing depth of knowledge and understanding (AO1) but this has to be based on the material presented in the source.
Marks are awarded for illustrating clarity of analysis (AO2) but this has to arise from the context presented by the source.
No marks are available for making a judgement or reaching any form of conclusion (AO3).

In AO2 political information means source.		
Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	• Demonstrates superficial knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, with limited underpinning of analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Limited analysis of political information with partial logical chains of reasoning, which make simplistic connections between ideas and concepts (AO2).
Level 2	4–7	• Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, many of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Mostly focused analysis of political information with clear, logical chains of reasoning, which make mostly relevant connections between ideas and concepts (AO2).
Level 3	8–10	• Demonstrates comprehensive and precise knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, which are carefully selected in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Consistent and sustained analysis of political information, with coherent logical chains of reasoning, which make convincing connections between ideas and concepts (AO2).

Question number	Indicative content Using the source, explain the disadvantages of the Additional Member System (AMS)
2	AO1 (5 marks), AO2 (5 marks) Candidates may demonstrate the following knowledge and understanding (AO1) when considering the disadvantages of the AMS system: • By retaining an element of FPTP, AMS keeps 'safe seats'. • The level of proportionality can still be limited with AMS. • It puts power into the hands of political parties. • It creates two types of representatives. • It is more likely to produce coalitions. Candidates may refer to the following analytical points (AO2) when considering the disadvantages of the AMS system: • The FTPT element of AMS retains constituencies, albeit a smaller number. This means that the problems of safe seats, including a lack of accountability and representation, remain. • AMS has only limited proportionality which can vary depending on circumstances and the size of the party list. • AMS gives too much power to political parties. For instance, they decide who is a list or a constituency candidate, and the higher up the party list the more likely a person will be elected. • AMS produces two types of representatives: one who has a connection to a local community or area, and therefore constituency casework; the other who has no local commitments and burdens and thus an easier task. • AMS is much more likely to produce a coalition than a one-party government, which can be seen to weaken government. Accept any other valid responses.

Guidelines for marking Question 3	
Marks are awarded for AO2 and AO3 only.	
Marks are awarded for illustrating clarity of analysis (AO2) but this has to arise from the context presented by the source.	
No AO1 marks are available for repeating knowledge or understanding from the source or for introducing own knowledge and understanding if it is not linked to providing clarity to the AO2 & AO3 points arising from the source.	
AO2 and AO3 require candidates to analyse and evaluate the sources and develop their answers, showing comparative analytical and evaluative skills to address the question.	
Candidates should focus their comparison on analysing the similarities and differences of the viewpoints given in the sources.	
Candidates who <i>do not</i> undertake any comparative analysis of the source cannot achieve beyond Level 1.	
There are no AO1 marks available. <i>Do not</i> give credit to responses where candidates demonstrate knowledge alone. Any knowledge used must support their analysis and evaluation.	

In AO2 and AO3 political information means source.		
Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–3	- Limited comparative analysis of political information with partial logical chains of reasoning, referring to similarities and/or differences within political information, which make simplistic connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). - Makes superficial evaluation of political information, constructing simple arguments and judgements, many which are descriptive and lead to limited unsubstantiated and unjustified conclusions (AO3).
Level 2	4–7	- Mostly focused comparative analysis of political information with clear, logical chains of reasoning, drawing on similarities and/or differences within political information, which make mostly relevant connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). - Constructs mostly relevant evaluation of political information, constructing mostly focused arguments and judgements, many which are substantiated and lead to some specific conclusions, that are sometimes justified (AO3).
Level 3	8–10	- Consistent and sustained comparative analysis of political information, with coherent logical chains of reasoning, drawing on similarities and differences within political information, which make convincing connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). - Constructs coherent and sustained evaluation of political information, constructing effectively substantiated arguments and judgements, which are consistently substantiated and lead to precise conclusions that are fully justified (AO3).

Question number	Indicative content
3	Using the sources, assess if voting should be made compulsory. A02 (5 marks), A03 (5 marks) Candidates may refer to the following comparative analytical points (A02) when assessing the similarities and differences between the sources: • A similarity is that both sources agree that declining turnout at elections is a worrying development. • Another similarity is that both sources agree that sitting (incumbent) governments have always rejected compulsory voting. • Source 2 argues that voting is a form of civic duty akin to other duties imposed on citizens in the UK, and operates successfully in other countries. By contrast Source 3 rejects compulsory voting and declares this as being against British political culture. • Source 2 makes a strong call to make first time voting compulsory in the UK. Source 3 in contrast rejects this and argues that there would be considerable problems with enforcing participation. Candidates may refer to the following comparative evaluative points (A03) when assessing the similarities and differences between the sources: • We can conclude that declining turnout can cause major problems in terms of the legitimacy of governments and MPs, and that this damages the fabric of democracy in the UK. • We can reach a verdict that when in office governments decline to act and introduce compulsory voting. This could be based on objective consideration of the arguments, but could arguably be due to fear of a different electoral outcome. • We can conclude in agreement with Source 2 that voting is a civic duty akin to jury serve and paying taxes – part of being a member of society and an active citizen; OR we can agree with source 3 that compulsory voting runs alien to our political culture based on freedom of choice, and contracting citizens option not to vote for various reasons. • If we support the conclusion of Source 2, the imposition of compulsory voting on first time voters would create a lifelong pattern/habit of voting and make a huge difference to political participation; OR We can support Source 3's conclusion that compulsory participation is simply too much to monitor and enforce. Accept any other valid responses.

Section C

Guidelines for marking Questions 4a and 4b
AO1 (10 marks) Marks here relate to knowledge and understanding. It should be used to underpin analysis (AO2) and evaluation (AO3)
AO2 (10 marks) Candidates should form analytical views which support and reject the view presented by the question.
AO3 (10 marks) Candidates are expected to evaluate the information and arguments presented. They may rank the importance of the prior analysis. They should be able to make and form judgments and they should reach reasoned conclusion.
Candidates must consider both views in their answers in a balanced way. The judgement a candidate reaches about these views should be reflected in their conclusions. Candidates who have <i>not</i> considered both views in a balanced way cannot achieve marks beyond Level 2.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
	0	No rewardable material.
Level 1	1–6	• Demonstrates superficial knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, with limited underpinning of analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Limited analysis of aspects of politics with partial logical chains of reasoning, which make simplistic connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). • Makes superficial evaluation of aspects of politics, constructing simple arguments and judgements, many of which are descriptive (AO3).
Level 2	7–12	• Demonstrates some accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, some of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Some emerging analysis of aspects of politics with some focused, logical chains of reasoning, which make some relevant connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). • Constructs some appropriate evaluation of aspects of politics, constructing occasionally effective arguments and judgements, some are partially unsubstantiated and lead to generic conclusions, without much justification (AO3).
Level 3	13–18	• Demonstrates mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, many of which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Mostly focused analysis of aspects of politics with logical chains of reasoning, which make mostly relevant connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). • Constructs mostly relevant evaluation of aspects of politics, constructing mostly focused arguments and judgements, many are substantiated and lead to some focused conclusions, that are sometimes justified (AO3).
Level 4	19–24	• Demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, which are selected appropriately in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Focused analysis of aspects of politics with logical chains of reasoning, which make relevant connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). • Constructs relevant evaluation of aspects of politics, constructing focused arguments and judgements, which are substantiated and lead to focused conclusions that are mostly justified (AO3).
Level 5	25–30	• Demonstrates comprehensive and precise knowledge and understanding of political institutions, processes, concepts, theories and issues, which are carefully selected in order to underpin analysis and evaluation (AO1). • Consistent and sustained analysis of aspects of politics, with coherent, logical chains of reasoning, which make convincing connections between ideas and concepts (AO2). • Constructs coherent and sustained evaluation of aspects of politics, constructing effectively substantiated arguments and

		judgements, which are consistently substantiated and lead to precise conclusions that are fully justified (AO3).
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Question number	Indicative content 'The media now largely determines the outcomes of general elections.' How far do you agree that the outcomes of general elections are determined by the media?
4(a)	AO1 (10 marks), AO2 (10 marks), AO3 (10 marks) Candidates may demonstrate the following knowledge and understanding (AO1) in response to the view: Agreement • Presentation and media image, particular of party leaders and other senior figures, are the most important factor by which how people form their voting intentions. • The expansion in the variety of media - across press, broadcasting and social media – means more opportunities to connect with the electorate. • The media also shapes the political agenda, deciding what issues are discussed, which can benefit some parties over others. • Various demographic voting factors (such as class and region) have declined in importance leaving a 'gap' filled by the media. Disagreement • Outcomes of elections are determined more by events or policy than by image. • The media is given far more credit than it deserves, because it confirms or follows voters' views rather than shaping or leading them. • A voter's class remains a crucial factor, equal to or more important than the media, which determines how people vote and thus the outcome of elections • Gender and age, or other demographic factors, also remain pivotal factors in how people vote. Candidates may refer to the following analytical (AO2) and evaluative (AO3) points when agreeing with the view: • The image and impression made by the media, especially of key figures, is paramount and is the major factor in determining voters' intention and election outcomes, especially as more voters are willing to change allegiances (AO2). We can conclude that this may be seen as a triumph of style and presentation over substance or political reality, whereby the media manipulates voter perceptions (AO3). • The media has changed enormously from what was 50 years ago, widening and diversifying its reach. For instance, spending by political parties on social media has exploded in recent years (AO2). We can reach a verdict that the political parties with the most disposable income can buy influence and thus a person's vote through a number of media routes. (AO3)

- The media can promote certain political issues over others – for example Brexit, or the economy, or indeed perceived 'gaffes' or scandals (AO2) We can conclude that by shaping the political agenda, the media effectively determines the outcome of elections (AO3)
- The decline of class and party alignment has meant that media is more likely to exert influence than a voter's family or identity (AO2). We can conclude that this dealignment has not declined but instead it has increased in recent years thus making the media much more influential (AO3).

Candidates may refer to the following analytical (AO2) and evaluative (AO3) points when disagreeing with the view:

- Whilst the media can relay and report events, they cannot change the performance of the economy or the impact on the UK of foreign wars, or the party policies on these (AO2). We can conclude that the media is a channel for raising awareness of what happens rather than an independent force (AO3).
- The media gains far more credit than it merits, as voters' select the media they consume, which re-enforce their opinion rather than changing it - social media for example is often an 'echo chamber' (AO2). As such any changes that appear to be driven by the media, are in fact a reflection of the media following the changing views of voters (AO3).
- A voter's social class often is still a major factor in how they will vote, albeit the boundaries and definitions of class have changed (AO2) We can conclude that whilst home ownership or occupational status may matter more than traditional definitions, class remains significant, especially post Brexit (AO3)
- Age has become a clearer indicator of how a person will vote. Young people are much more likely to vote Labour and older generations Conservative. In the same way gender can give clear indicators of how a person will vote (AO2). These patterns concerning age and gender has emerged after many more recent elections and has not altered – thus is more significant than the media (AO3).

Candidates who do not make accurate reference to at least two different types of media (press, broadcast, social media) cannot go beyond a level 3 mark.

Accept any other valid responses.

Question number	Indicative content
	'The dominance of the established parties, the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats and Labour, means that minor parties have little influence in UK politics'. How far do you agree that minor parties have little influence in the UK?
4(b)	AO1 (10 marks), AO2 (10 marks), AO3 (10 marks) Candidates may demonstrate the following knowledge and understanding (AO1) in agreement and disagreement with the view: Agreement • Minor parties have several obstacles to overcome, such as the current Westminster electoral system. • Minor parties have very little in terms of regular and constant funding which the established parties enjoy. • The established parties have an established framework or network of personnel both paid and voluntary who run their offices and give support for canvassing at election time. • The established parties gain more media attention which robs minor parties of their voice and ideas. Disagreement • Minor parties have made a big difference in UK politics by making the established parties adopt their ideas and policy. For example on constitutional issues such as EU membership. • Minor parties are established and productive at a local or devolved level. • Membership of minor parties has grown as that of the established parties has fallen. • Partisan and class dealignment have meant that the established parties can no longer be guaranteed swathes of safe seats in elections. Candidates may refer to the following analytical (AO2) and evaluative (AO3) points when agreeing with the view: In general elections minor parties find it almost impossible to receive a fair share of seats in return for their votes received. UKIP and the Brexit Party / Reform UK all gained millions of votes but few seats, and the same discrimination applies to the Green Party. (AO2) We can conclude that this is a major barrier for minor parties, indeed some argue that people either do not vote feeling their vote will not count or vote tactically (AO3). The financial capability of minor parties is dwarfed by the capacity of the established parties. This means that minor parties cannot afford the advertising or campaigning 'reach' of their established rivals. (AO2). It is easy to reach a verdict that it is very hard for minor parties to compete on equal terms in political contests (AO3).

The established parties have over a long period of time constructed a developed network of offices across the country and can pay experienced staff to work in them (AO2). This clearly gives established parties a vast operational advantage for elections and promoting their ideas (AO3).

Established parties policy and ideas are guaranteed media attention, as are their major figures, whereas minor parties are often ignored (AO2). Thus the established parties can shift to meet voters' changing priorities, whereas minor parties struggle to connect (AO3).

Candidates may refer to the following analytical (AO2) and evaluative (AO3) points when disagreeing with the view:

Many argue that minor parties have an agenda setting capability in that they force the debate and make the established parties provide policy alternatives. Minor party success can be seen with the SNP obtaining a referendum on Scottish independence or UKIP in securing an EU referendum which ensures their core aim (AO2). We can conclude that far from having little influence minor parties are at the heart of major changes in the UK (AO3).

Whilst first-past-the-post denies minor parties a fair share of the seats for the vote they gain, more proportional systems at sub national level allow minor parties to breakthrough; similarly smaller voting areas and more frequent elections allow local breakthrough such as Reform UK in 2025 (AO2). We can conclude that if and when voting systems change, inevitably minor parties will have more impact, especially as local success knocks-on to national success (AO3).

Membership of the established parties has dramatically fallen over the last 50 years: whilst we can see minor parties whose membership has grown at a faster rate such as the Green Party, SNP and Reform UK (AO2). This decline indicates that the established parties are no longer seen by the general public as worthy of joining, and that minor parties will continue to grow in influence (AO3).

The electoral battlefield has changed with the process of class and partisan dealignment. This means the decline of safe seats and, more floating voters with less attachment as voters look more at issues and personalities: this has for example benefited Nigel Farage and Reform UK. (AO2) We can conclude that the compound impact of these changes all benefits minor parties and damage the established ones, and will continue to do so. (AO3)

Candidates who do not accurately reference to at least two different minor parties in the UK (parties other than Labour, the Conservatives or the Liberal Democrats) cannot go beyond a level 3 mark.

Accept any other valid responses.