

**GCE**

**Government and Politics**

Unit **F852**: Contemporary Government of the UK

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

**Mark Scheme for June 2015**

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, Cambridge Nationals, Cambridge Technicals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

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This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and students, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which marks were awarded by examiners. It does not indicate the details of the discussions which took place at an examiners' meeting before marking commenced.

All examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Mark schemes should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and the report on the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this mark scheme.

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## Annotations

Annotation	Meaning
	Blank Page – this annotation <b>must</b> be used on all blank pages within an answer booklet (structured or unstructured) and on each page of an additional object where there is no candidate response.
	Unclear
	Wrong
	Correct/good. Page seen
	Source (use of source in Q1a and Q1b)
	Spelling/punctuation/grammar/QWC
	To show the area of response referred to by another annotation
	Focus (lack of)
	Repetition
	Balance (lack of)
	Detail/depth (lack of, eg points not fully/relevantly developed or lacking examples/evidence)
	Range (lack of)
	Case for
	Case against
	To indicate key points made

NB Examiners should use the above annotations to assist them in deciding their marks. They do not, however, have to use them to annotate every instance seen.

### Subject-specific Marking Instructions

When marking, examiners must use both this mark scheme and the Assessment Matrix (see Appendix 1).

Broadly speaking and depending on the question, examiners should look for:

- a balanced and well-focused answer;
- which correctly identifies a number and range of relevant and important factors;
- in detail;
- and communicates these clearly and in a logical, fluent and coherent style;
- containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

And credit answers which display knowledge and understanding of:

- current examples;
- political concepts, theories and language;
- other political systems including the EU;
- parallels, connections, similarities and difference.

### The Mark Scheme

The mark scheme is indicative of the kinds of points likely to be raised by candidates in answering the questions. However, because of the nature of the subject, it cannot be regarded as definitive and the professional judgement and training of individual examiners will apply.

All substantive issues surrounding the paper will be settled at the standardisation meeting and through the arrangements made by OCR to ensure a consistent approach by all examiners. Examiners should contact the Principal Examiner if they have any concerns about the way an individual script should be marked.

### The Assessment Matrix

Award marks as follows:

Level	Descriptor	Mark Range
4	very good/excellent	10–12
3	good	7–9
2	limited	4–6
1	basic	0–3

**Assessment Objective 3**

Where a full-length answer is provided:

- half of the available AO3 marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments using appropriate political vocabulary;
- half should be used to credit the quality of written communication – legibility, clarity of expression, structure and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Where answers are short, or simply wrong, examiners must use their judgement: a very short answer, or one which contains little relevant knowledge or evidence of understanding, should not be awarded full marks.

**The Mark Scheme**

The mark scheme is indicative of the kinds of points likely to be raised by candidates in answering the questions. However, because of the nature of the subject, it cannot be regarded as definitive and the professional judgement and training of individual examiners will apply.

All substantive issues surrounding the paper will be settled at the standardisation meeting and through the arrangements made by OCR to ensure a consistent approach by all examiners. Examiners should contact the Principal Examiner if they have any concerns about the way an individual script should be marked.

Question		Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
1	a	<p><b>AO 1</b></p> <p>Factors in the sources might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representing constituents</li> <li>• Policy development</li> <li>• Checking the executive</li> <li>• Working for outside interests</li> <li>• Party delegates</li> </ul> <p>Own knowledge might include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue advocacy</li> <li>• Opposition</li> <li>• Provision of alternative policy</li> <li>• Private members bills</li> <li>• Publicity</li> <li>• Backbench debates</li> </ul>	12	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 [12]</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent  L3 (7-9) = good  L2 (4-6) = limited  L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <p>Up to middle L3 for source use only if it is well utilised, not just copied and shows genuine understanding.</p>
1	b	<p><b>AO1</b></p> <p>Factors in the source might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The All – Party group</li> <li>• External interests of MPs</li> <li>• MP selection</li> <li>• Decision taking</li> <li>• Appointments and Whips/Whipping</li> </ul> <p>Own knowledge might include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backbench rebellions</li> <li>• Non-partisan approach of Departmental Select committees</li> <li>• Impact of coalition</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2</b></p> <p>Expect consideration of what the actual role of parties is. The best will consider what ‘too powerful’ a role might be. Those who consider the implications of what might happen if there was less party discipline and less partisan dominance ought also to do well.</p>	28	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 [12]</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent  L3 (7-9) = good  L2 (4-6) = limited  L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <p>Up to middle L3 for source use only if it is well utilised, not just copied and shows genuine understanding.</p> <p><b>AO2 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent  L3 (7-9) = good  L2 (4-6) = limited  L1 (0-3) = basic</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward focus range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2)</li> <li>• L4 for candidates who really develop a sound case each way. There should be consideration of the 'too powerful' issue and clear understanding of the difference between the power of parties and the power of the government.</li> <li>• L3 for candidates who make a genuine attempt to take on the question and issues, typically making three or four points, even if a very clear answer has to be inferred</li> <li>• Max bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some limited explanation, or where such explanation lacks range, depth or balance.</li> <li>• Max L2 for answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range or depth</li> </ul> <p>Credit candidates who are able to get the right contemporary focus/use contemporary examples</p>
2	<p><b>AO1</b> Factors which might be included are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Party influence</li> <li>• The impact of coalition</li> <li>• Impact of local, EU, regional and by-elections</li> <li>• Attitude of the mass media</li> <li>• Issues such as immigration, Syria and Libya</li> <li>• PM relationship with Cabinet</li> <li>• Role of Parliament</li> <li>• Decision on election dates</li> </ul> <p><b>AO2</b></p> <p>There needs to be a focus and reflection on the 'extent' to which prime ministerial power has changed, if at all. The</p>	30	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <p><b>AO2 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>best will consider factors where it could be argued that power has increased and factors where it could be argued that it has diminished. There is no expectation of any 'right' answer, but there should be ample comment on the impact that coalition government has had on the office. Answers may legitimately compare the pre-2010 era to 2010-2015, or concentrate solely on 2010-.</p>		<p>L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward focus range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2)</li> <li>• L4 for candidates who really develop a sound case each way on the extent of change to PM power.</li> <li>• L3 for candidates who make a genuine attempt to take on the question and issues, typically making three or four points, even if a very clear answer has to be inferred</li> <li>• Max bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some limited explanation, or where such explanation lacks range, depth or balance.</li> <li>• Max L2 for answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range or depth</li> </ul> <p>Credit candidates who are able to get the right contemporary focus/use contemporary examples. Those not discussing the impact of the 2015 election should not be penalised, but sensible discussion of it should be rewarded.</p>
3	<p><b>AO1</b> Factors which might be considered in the debate might be :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much power to the executive</li> <li>• The lack of clarity</li> <li>• Adaptability in an emergency</li> <li>• The inflexibility of the 'rigid'</li> <li>• The way changes can be implemented without consultation/referendums etc.</li> <li>• Restraint on the executive</li> <li>• Lack of demand for change</li> </ul>	30	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p><b>AO2</b></p> <p>There needs to be reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of the UK's flexible constitution. The best will consider both and then reflect on which one aspect outweighs the other. Those who reflect on both and really tackle the issue of 'extent' should do well. Definitions of flexible and inflexible constitutions should also be included.</p>		<p><b>AO2 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent  L3 (7-9) = good  L2 (4-6) = limited  L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward focus range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2)</li> <li>• L4 for candidates who really reflect on both aspects and deal with the question of 'extent'.</li> <li>• L3 for candidates who make a genuine attempt to take on the question and issues, typically making three or four points, even if a very clear answer has to be inferred</li> <li>• Max bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some limited explanation, or where such explanation lacks range, depth or balance.</li> <li>• Max L2 for answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range or depth</li> </ul> <p>Credit candidates who are able to get the right contemporary focus/use contemporary examples</p>
4	<p><b>AO1</b></p> <p>Possible threats might include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The executive itself</li> <li>• The legislature</li> <li>• Public opinion</li> <li>• Failure of the judiciary</li> <li>• Lack of a bill of rights</li> <li>• Anti-terror legislation</li> <li>• Erosion of the freedom of speech/free press etc.</li> <li>• Limitations of the HRA</li> </ul>	30	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent  L3 (7-9) = good  L2 (4-6) = limited  L1 (0-3) = basic</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threats posed by interest groups, the media and even Snowden</li> </ul> <p>There might also be a definition of rights and liberties.</p> <p><b>AO2</b> Expect a discussion on the ways in which the executive poses a threat to rights and liberties in the UK and then a discussion of whether other factors, such as those listed above, are greater or lesser threats. Candidates who differentiate between a right and a liberty and see different factors being a threat to either should be rewarded.</p>		<p><b>AO2 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward focus range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2)</li> <li>• L4 for candidates who discuss in depth the threat that the executive poses to rights and liberties in the UK and also contrasts it with other potential and actual threats.</li> <li>• L3 for candidates who make a genuine attempt to take on the question and issues, typically making three or four points, even if a very clear answer has to be inferred</li> <li>• Max bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some limited explanation, or where such explanation lacks range, depth or balance.</li> <li>• Max L2 for answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range or depth</li> </ul> <p>Credit candidates who are able to get the right contemporary focus/use contemporary examples</p>
5	<p><b>AO1</b> Candidates will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the decision making</p>	30	<p><b>Refer to the AS GCE Assessment Matrix on page 14 &amp; 15</b></p> <p><b>AO1 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent</p>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
	<p>process of the EU impacts on UK sovereignty. There should be awareness of precisely what sovereignty means.</p> <p>Possible ways include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council/s and QMV</li> <li>• The Commission</li> <li>• The ECJ ( but not the ECHR)</li> <li>• The European Parliament</li> <li>• The degree of autonomy lying with member states</li> <li>• The principle of subsidiarity</li> <li>• Areas - such as agriculture and environment - where the EU has real decision making authority- and also of areas where there is in depth national autonomy</li> </ul> <p>The standard critique of the ECHR should not be rewarded in any way.</p> <p><b>AO2</b></p> <p>There should be a real focus on 'extent' with comments on the nature and degree of EU involvement in the UK and other member states and the extent to which decision making by members is subordinate to Brussels. The ways in which any member state is actually involved in the central decision making process needs to be stressed.</p>		<p>L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <p><b>AO2 (12)</b></p> <p>L4 (10-12) = very good/excellent L3 (7-9) = good L2 (4-6) = limited L1 (0-3) = basic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward focus range and depth but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis ( AO2)</li> <li>• L4 for candidates who discuss in depth the threat that the executive poses to rights and liberties in the UK and also contrasts it with other potential and actual threats.</li> <li>• L3 for candidates who make a genuine attempt to take on the question and issues, typically making three or four points, even if a very clear answer has to be inferred</li> </ul>

Question	Answer/Indicative content	Mark	Guidance
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Max bottom L3/top L2 for answers that provide some limited explanation, or where such explanation lacks range, depth or balance.</li><li>• Max L2 for answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range or depth</li></ul> Credit candidates who are able to get the right contemporary focus/use contemporary examples

## APPENDIX 1

## AS GCE Assessment Matrix

There are **four** levels of assessment of all three AOs in the AS units. Level 4 is the highest level that can reasonably be expected from a candidate at the end of the first year of study of an Advanced GCE course.

Level	Assessment Objective 1	Assessment Objective 2	Assessment Objective 3
4	Thorough and accurate knowledge and clear and detailed understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide convincing comparisons between them.	High level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Ability to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason effectively towards an individual and informed conclusion.	Ability to distinguish relevant and important factors correctly and integrate these into a balanced, well-focused argument. Ability to communicate this clearly and present it legibly and logically in fluent coherent style containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3	Good knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide good comparisons between them.	Good level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Some attempt to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason sensibly towards a sound conclusion.	Ability to identify the most important factors and present a relevant argument legibly and clearly if, at times, lacking incisiveness. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
2	Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Limited awareness of standard points of comparison.	Limited level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Limited attempt to explain a few of the more obvious points central to the question and to recognise and describe some differing viewpoints. Reasoning may be incomplete and, while opinions may be offered, they are unlikely to be supported by argument.	Limited attempt to distinguish relevant material, which is assembled into a limited argument with some sense of order and legibility. There may be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.
1	Basic and generalised knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Such knowledge and understanding will be incomplete and/or of tenuous relevance and may contain significant errors. Basic awareness of standard points of comparison.	Basic skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of some of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Basic attempt to explain the simpler points central to the question and it is likely that only one viewpoint will be recognised. There will be little evidence of reasoning.	An attempt is made to shape an argument at a basic level, which lacks coherence, legibility and direction, and is unselective. Contains intrusive errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

# Appendix A: Performance Descriptions

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

AS performance descriptions for government and politics

Assessment objective 1

Assessment objective 2

Assessment objective 3

## **Assessment objectives**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories and debates.

Analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations, and identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the political systems studied.

Construct and communicate coherent arguments, making use of a range of appropriate political vocabulary.

**A/B boundary performance descriptions**

Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate full and accurate knowledge of political institutions and processes and a sound understanding of political concepts, theories and debates;
- b) produce answers that deploy relevant knowledge to answer the question;
- c) demonstrate clear contextual awareness;
- d) use relevant evidence and, where appropriate, contemporary examples to illustrate points made.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) provide analyses that display a sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues;
- b) evaluate political institutions, process and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories;
- c) make valid comparisons.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) construct and communicate clear, structured and sustained arguments and explanations;
- b) use accurate political vocabulary.

**E/U boundary performance descriptions**

Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate a basic knowledge of political institutions and processes and begin to show some understanding of political concepts, theories and debates;
- b) make a limited attempt at answering the question;
- c) produce at least one piece of relevant evidence, which may be drawn from source material provided.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) show some basic awareness of differing viewpoints;
- b) attempt simple evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour;
- c) make simple comparisons.

Candidates characteristically:

- a) attempt to communicate and develop an argument or explanation;
- b) use basic political vocabulary.

**Appendix B: Levels of Assessment in Question Papers – The Assessment Matrix**

## AS GCE Assessment Matrix

There are four levels of assessment of all three AOs in the AS units. Level 4 is the highest level that can reasonably be expected from a candidate at the end of the first year of study of an Advanced GCE course.

Level

Assessment Objective 1

Assessment Objective 2

Assessment Objective 3

**4**

Thorough and accurate knowledge and clear and detailed understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide convincing comparisons between them.

High level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Ability to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason effectively towards an individual and informed conclusion.

Ability to distinguish relevant and important factors correctly and integrate these into a balanced, well-focused argument. Ability to communicate this clearly and present it legibly and logically in fluent coherent style containing few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**3**

Good knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Where appropriate candidates will provide good comparisons between them.

Good level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Some attempt to recognise bias and faulty argument and to reason sensibly towards a sound conclusion.

Ability to identify the most important factors and present a relevant argument legibly and clearly if, at times, lacking incisiveness. There may be occasional errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**2**

Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Limited awareness of standard points of comparison.

Limited level of skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Limited attempt to

explain a few of the more obvious points central to the question and to recognise and describe some differing viewpoints. Reasoning may be incomplete and, while opinions may be offered, they are unlikely to be supported by argument.

Limited attempt to distinguish relevant material, which is assembled into a limited argument with some sense of order and legibility.

There may be some errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

**1**

Basic and generalised knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, ideas and political systems. Such knowledge and understanding will be incomplete and/or of tenuous relevance and may contain significant errors. Basic awareness of standard points of comparison.

Basic skill in the interpretation, analysis and evaluation of some of the relevant political information (including, where appropriate, the identification of parallels, connections, similarities and differences with other political systems including the EU). Basic attempt to explain the simpler points central to the question and it is likely that only one viewpoint will be recognised. There will be little evidence of reasoning.

An attempt is made to shape an argument at a basic level, which lacks coherence, legibility and direction, and is unselective. Contains intrusive errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

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