



GCE AS MARKING SCHEME

SUMMER 2024

**AS
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS – UNIT 1
2160U10-1**

About this marking scheme

The purpose of this marking scheme is to provide teachers, learners, and other interested parties, with an understanding of the assessment criteria used to assess this specific assessment.

This marking scheme reflects the criteria by which this assessment was marked in a live series and was finalised following detailed discussion at an examiners' conference. A team of qualified examiners were trained specifically in the application of this marking scheme. The aim of the conference was to ensure that the marking scheme was interpreted and applied in the same way by all examiners. It may not be possible, or appropriate, to capture every variation that a candidate may present in their responses within this marking scheme. However, during the training conference, examiners were guided in using their professional judgement to credit alternative valid responses as instructed by the document, and through reviewing exemplar responses.

Without the benefit of participation in the examiners' conference, teachers, learners and other users, may have different views on certain matters of detail or interpretation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that this marking scheme is used alongside other guidance, such as published exemplar materials or Guidance for Teaching. This marking scheme is final and will not be changed, unless in the event that a clear error is identified, as it reflects the criteria used to assess candidate responses during the live series.

GCE GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

UNIT 1 - GOVERNMENT IN WALES AND THE UNITED KINGDOM

SUMMER 2024 MARK SCHEME

Marking guidance for examiners

Summary of assessment objectives for Unit 1

The questions in Section A assess AO1. The questions in Section B assess both AO1 and AO2. The questions in Section C assess both AO1 and AO3. The assessment objectives focus on the ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories and issues (AO1); the ability to interpret and apply political information to identify and explain relevant similarities, differences, and connections (AO2), and the ability to analyse and evaluate the areas of government and politics studied to construct arguments, make substantiated judgements and draw conclusions (AO3).

The structure of the mark scheme

The mark scheme for Section A, Section B and Section C has two parts:

- an assessment grid advising bands and associated marks that should be allocated to responses which demonstrate the characteristics needed in AO1, AO2 and AO3.
- advice outlining indicative content which can be used to assess the quality of the specific response. The content is not prescriptive, and candidates are not expected to mention all the material referred to. Examiners should seek to credit any further admissible evidence offered by the candidates.

Deciding on the mark awarded within a band

- The first stage for an examiner is to use both the indicative content and the assessment grid to decide the overall band.
- The second stage is to decide how firmly the characteristics expected for that band are displayed.
- Thirdly, a final mark for the question can then be awarded.

Organisation and communication

This issue should have bearing if the standard of organisation and communication is inconsistent with the descriptor for the band in which the answer falls. In this situation, examiners may decide not to award the highest mark in the band.

Level Descriptors

Using 'best-fit', decide first which set of level descriptors best describes the overall quality of the answer. The following grid should inform your decision as to which band the answer belongs. (N.B. The majority of questions follow a four-band structure. However, when the question has three bands 'Adequate' as a descriptor has been removed.)

	AO1	AO2	AO3
Thorough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aware of a wide range of detailed and accurate knowledge. • Demonstrates fully developed understanding that shows relevance to the demands of the question. • Evidence/examples are well chosen. • Precision in the use of terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding are consistently applied to the context of the question. • Is able to form a clear, developed and convincing interpretation of evidence that is fully accurate. • Is able to fully identify and explain similarities, differences and connections where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation skills are used in a consistently appropriate and effective way. • An effective and balanced argument is constructed. • Detailed and substantiated evaluation that offers secure judgements leading to rational conclusions.
Reasonable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a range of detailed and accurate knowledge. • Demonstrates well developed understanding that is relevant to the demands of the question. • Evidence/examples are appropriate. • Generally precise in the use of terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding are mainly applied to the context of the question. • Is able to form a clear and developed interpretation of evidence that is mostly accurate. • Is partially able to identify and explain similarities, differences and connections where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation skills are mostly used in a suitable way and with a good level of competence and precision. • An accurate and balanced argument is constructed. • Detailed evaluation that offers generally secure judgements, with some link between rational conclusions and evidence.
Adequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some accurate knowledge. • Demonstrates partial understanding that is relevant to the demands of the question. • Evidence/examples are not always relevant. • Some use of appropriate terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding are partially applied to the context of the question. • Is able to form a sound interpretation of evidence that shows some accuracy. • Makes some attempt to identify and explain similarities, differences and connections where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation skills are used in a suitable way with a sound level of competence but may lack precision. • An imbalanced argument is constructed. • Sound evaluation that offers generalised judgements and conclusions, with limited use of evidence.
Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge with some relevance to the topic or question. • Little or no development seen. • Evidence/examples are not made relevant. • Very little or no use of terminology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and understanding are applied in a weak manner to the context of the question. • Can only form a simple interpretation of evidence, if at all, with very limited accuracy. • Makes weak attempt to identify and explain similarities, differences and connections where relevant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and evaluation skills are used with limited competence. • Unsupported evaluation that offers simple or no conclusions.

Section A Mark bands for Question 1 and Question 2

Band	Marks	AO1
		The learner:
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows thorough knowledge and understanding of the concept raised in the set question• uses a range of relevant evidence/examples.
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows reasonable knowledge and understanding of the concept raised in the set question• uses some evidence/examples.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shows limited knowledge and understanding of the concept raised in the question• uses limited evidence/examples.
	0	Response not creditworthy or not attempted.

Question 1

Using examples, briefly describe the importance of parliamentary privilege. [6]

Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of parliamentary privilege. In demonstrating this knowledge and understanding candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on parliamentary privilege

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- Parliamentary privilege is important as it ensures that MPs' and peers are granted full freedom of speech when involved in parliamentary business; matters can be discussed fully and frankly with no fear of reprisal.
- Parliamentary privilege ensures that MPs' and peers cannot be prosecuted or sued for libel or slander due to any action taken within the Palace of Westminster. This is important because it enables members to feel secure in criticising governments or other agencies of the state.
- Parliamentary privilege is important as it highlights the wider struggle between Parliament and the Judiciary; it questions the principle of everyone being equal under the rule of law whilst also empowering Parliament to criticise certain legal proceedings without consequence.
- Recent famous examples of parliamentary privilege being used involve Lord Hain and John Hemming MP.

Question 2

Using examples, briefly describe the role of the Cabinet system within Welsh Government.

[6]

Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role of the Cabinet system within Welsh Government. In demonstrating this knowledge and understanding candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on the role of the Cabinet system within Welsh Government.

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- Cabinet in Wales is comprised of the individuals chosen by the First Minister to key ministerial positions within the Welsh Government; Finance, Health, Education.
- There are currently nine ministers in the Cabinet and five Deputy Ministers.
- Welsh Cabinet is responsible for governing Wales and making policy decisions in their areas of responsibility, for example Eluned Morgan for health and social care, and Lynne Neagle for education.
- The Welsh Cabinet is chosen by the First Minister from the Members of the Senedd, and the current Cabinet are all from the governing Labour Party. This isn't always the case as before the election in May 2021 the Cabinet included members from outside the Labour Party; Kirsty Williams, Dafydd Elis Thomas, Labour/Plaid coalition government of 2007–2011
- The Welsh Cabinet is chosen from a relatively small pool of potential members; there are currently 30 Labour MSs and almost half are in the Cabinet.
- Welsh Cabinet is bound by conventions of collective responsibility and individual ministerial responsibility.

Section B Mark bands for Question 3 and Question 4

Band	Marks	AO1	Marks	AO2
		The learner:		The learner:
4	7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows thorough knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the set question uses well-chosen evidence/examples uses material of depth and range makes effective use of terminology. 	13–16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a thorough application of political knowledge to the source offers a thorough interpretation of relevant political information provides a thorough comparison or explanation of connections, as relevant.
3	5–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows reasonable knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses appropriate evidence/examples. uses material of depth and range, but not in equal measure makes good use of terminology. 	9–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a reasonable application of political knowledge to the source offers a reasonable interpretation of relevant political information provides a reasonable comparison or explanation of connections, as relevant.
2	3–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows adequate knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses evidence/examples that are not always relevant uses material of depth or range uses some appropriate terminology. 	5–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides an adequate application of political knowledge to the source offers an adequate interpretation of relevant political information provides an adequate comparison or explanation of connections, as relevant.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows limited knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses evidence/examples that are not made relevant uses little terminology. 	1–4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a limited application of political knowledge to the source offers a limited interpretation of relevant political information provides a limited comparison or explanation of connections, as relevant.
	0	Response not creditworthy or not attempted.		

Question 3

Read the extract below and answer the question that follows.

Extract A

Official Opposition

As the second largest party in the House of Commons, the Labour Party is the current official opposition and has held this role since its 2010 election defeat. Sir Keir Starmer MP is the current leader of the opposition. The opposition is sometimes referred to as a 'government in waiting'.

In October 2020, Labour used one of its opposition days to put forward a motion to extend free school meals through half-term, following a high-profile campaign urging the government to do so. The motion was rejected in parliament but allowed Labour to keep the issue in the public eye.

*(Extract adapted from 'Official Opposition' – February 2022
<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/official-opposition>, accessed September 2022)*

Using Extract A as well as your own knowledge, compare and contrast the role of the opposition in the UK Parliament and the Welsh Parliament.

[24]

Marking notes

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply accurate and relevant information. In demonstrating this, candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on comparing and contrasting the role of the opposition in the UK Parliament and the Welsh Parliament.

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- A comparison of the role of the opposition in both parliaments in scrutinising the government, for example, Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs)/Plenary where the leaders of opposition parties are tasked with leading public scrutiny of the government.
- A comparison of the role of both oppositions in supporting respective governments on certain issues, for example, national security. In the Welsh Parliament there is often a need for a consensual approach where the governing party requires the support of an opposition party to govern, for example the current agreement between Plaid and Labour in the Senedd.
- A comparison and contrast of the amount of parliamentary time given to the opposition in both the Welsh and UK Parliaments; for example, the UK Parliament gives 20 days of its calendar to the opposition whilst the Welsh Parliament sets a percentage of Plenary time for opposition parties (Extract A).
- A comparison and contrast of the use of other parliamentary mechanisms such as legislative amendments, urgent questions, opposition debates and committee roles that are available to the opposition in both the Welsh and UK Parliament.
- A contrast of the role of the opposition in the UK Parliament, where currently the Labour Party singularly fulfils the function, with the situation in the Welsh Parliament, where both the Conservatives and Plaid Cymru compete to be the prominent opposition.
- A contrast of the ability of the oppositions in both parliaments to portray themselves as alternative governments and 'governments in waiting' (Extract A).

Question 4

Read the extract below and answer the question that follows.

Extract B

How is collective responsibility enforced?

Ministers who have breached collective responsibility are expected to resign. However, while the ministerial code sets out the rules around collective responsibility, it is 'guidance' and only the prime minister can make the final decision based on their power to hire and fire.

If the prime minister does decide that an MP can no longer remain as a government minister, they will invite them to offer their resignation. In the rare cases where they decline this invitation, the prime minister has the ability to sack them. For example, in May 2019, Gavin Williamson was 'sacked' as defence secretary by Theresa May after he refused to resign from government.

[Extract adapted from '<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainer/collective-responsibility>', accessed February 2023].

Using Extract B, as well as your own knowledge, explain the connection between collective responsibility and Prime Ministerial Government in the UK. **[24]**

Marking notes

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to interpret and apply political information to the question. In demonstrating this, candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on relating the principles of the British Constitution to the governance of the UK today.

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

- Collective responsibility ensures the government is publicly unified and all members of the Cabinet are supportive of government policy which is largely determined and set by the Prime Minister. This means the PM can enact their vision for the country with a united and prime ministerial government, 'the glue that holds government together'. Note, for example, Johnson's choice of a Cabinet that supported Brexit upon his becoming PM (Extract B).
- In the absence of collective responsibility, the powers of the Prime Minister are diminished, for example, Penny Mordaunt arguing that benefits should rise with inflation whilst a member of Liz Truss's cabinet, Suella Braverman, stated that she was 'disappointed' by the PM's U-turn on the 45p tax cut. The latter would challenge collective responsibility again under Rishi Sunak, being sacked by him for defying the government line in an article accusing the Metropolitan Police of Bias.
- In situations where the Prime Minister sets collective responsibility aside, the chances of leading a prime ministerial government are reduced, for example the Brexit referendum when Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, in criticising David Cameron, left the PM an isolated and undermined figure.
- The convention of collective responsibility requires any member of the Cabinet who disagrees with the policy set by the Prime Minister to resign. Consequently, the PM is

often able to choose a more loyal replacement following the resignation of a minister due to collective responsibility (Extract B).

- Potentially troublesome and critical figures from the Prime Minister's backbenches can be brought into government and silenced by the principle of collective responsibility. An example of this was Theresa May's attempt to silence Johnson by making him Foreign Secretary.
- Effective collective responsibility enables the PM to increase his/her authority over the parliamentary party and increases the likelihood of leading a prime ministerial government.

Section C Mark bands for Question 5, Question 6 and Question 7

Band	Marks	AO1	Marks	AO3
		The learner:		The learner:
4	9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows thorough knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the set question uses well-chosen evidence/examples uses material of depth and range makes effective use of terminology. 	10–12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a thorough analysis and evaluation of the relevant issues offers a thorough discussion with well-developed and balanced arguments provides a logical structure reaches an appropriate conclusion based on the evidence presented demonstrates accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
3	6–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows reasonable knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses appropriate evidence/examples. uses material of depth and range, but not in equal measure makes good use of terminology. 	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a reasonable analysis and evaluation of the relevant issues offers a reasonable discussion with well-developed and balanced arguments provides a mostly logical structure reaches a reasonable conclusion based on the evidence presented demonstrates reasonably accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
2	3–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows adequate knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses evidence/examples that are not always relevant uses material of depth or range uses some appropriate terminology. 	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides an adequate analysis and evaluation of the relevant issues offers an adequate discussion with well-developed and balanced arguments <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offers a reasonable discussion with only one side of the argument. provides adequate structure reaches a superficial conclusion. demonstrates errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
1	1–2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows limited knowledge and understanding of the concepts raised in the question uses evidence/examples that are not made relevant uses little terminology. 	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides a limited analysis and evaluation of the relevant issues offers a limited discussion. provides an answer that lacks structure. offers no conclusion demonstrates many errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
	0	Response not creditworthy or not attempted.		

Question 5

Evaluate the extent to which executive dominance exists in the UK Parliament. [22]

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate relevant evidence to construct arguments, make substantiated judgements and to draw conclusions. In demonstrating this, candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on the evidence for and against the view that executive dominance exists in the UK Parliament.

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

Arguments **supporting** the view that the executive dominance exists in the UK Parliament.

- The executive has significant control of Parliament's legislative agenda, leading to executive dominance.
- The lack of separation of powers means that the executive often enjoys large parliamentary majorities and is able to dominate and enact its legislative will on Parliament with relative ease, for example Tony Blair's government between 1997 and 2005.
- The lack of a codified constitution and the use of royal prerogative enables the executive to hijack the idea of parliamentary sovereignty and use it to establish executive dominance.
- The proliferation of careerist MPs, who, under the guidance of the chief whip, enable the government to enact its agenda within Parliament, enables executive dominance.
- The ineffectiveness of some of Parliament's methods of scrutiny, enables executive dominance.
- Strict party control in Parliament and the use of whips, facilitates executive dominance.

Arguments **against** the view that executive dominance exists in the UK Parliament.

- Power is ultimately located within the UK Parliament and the constitutional principle of parliamentary sovereignty challenges executive dominance and allows Parliament to be the sovereign law-making body within the UK system.
- Parliament's ability to scrutinise the government through select committees has proved increasingly effective in recent years and has challenged executive dominance.
- The breakdown of party discipline challenges executive dominance, for example Brexit often led to the government losing control of the legislative agenda.
- Parliament's ability to have oversight over standards and codes of conduct enables it to limit executive dominance.

Question 6

Assess the extent to which the British Constitution needs reform.

[22]

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate relevant evidence to construct arguments, make substantiated judgements and to draw conclusions. In demonstrating this, candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on assessing the extent to which the UK constitution needs reform.

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

Arguments **supporting** the view that the UK constitution needs reform.:

- Recent developments around Britain's departure from the European Union have exposed the lack of clarity within the UK Constitution regarding the precise powers of various branches of the UK government.
- There is a drift towards growing executive power, which threatens effective governance.
- There is a concern regarding the protection of citizens' rights under the current constitutional arrangements.
- The increasing role and powers of the Supreme Court would be more transparent and precise under alternative constitutional arrangements.
- The UK Constitution needs to be clearer as regards devolution and the exact powers of devolved parliaments and administrations.

Arguments **against** the view that the UK constitution needs reform.

- Flexibility is a key component of the UK Constitution allowing it to adapt effectively to a range of challenges.
- The ability of the Constitution to facilitate strong and effective government means that it is very well placed to navigate contemporary challenges as it enables the prime minister and/or government to act in a strong and decisive manner.
- The current UK Constitution allows a role for the Supreme Court that is limited in scope. Any codification would most likely increase the involvement of unelected, unaccountable judges in political matters.

Question 7

‘The legislative process in The Welsh Parliament (Senedd Cymru) has more strengths than weaknesses.’ Evaluate this statement. [22]

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate relevant evidence to construct arguments, make substantiated judgements and to draw conclusions. In demonstrating this, candidates are required to give an answer which is focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the legislative process in the Senedd (Welsh Parliament/Senedd Cymru).

The response may consider, but is not limited to, the following:

Arguments **supporting** the view that the legislative process in the Senedd has more strengths than weaknesses.

- The Senedd has a clear legislative process that enables the democratic passage of bills and allows the Welsh Government to enact manifesto pledges made during elections, for example, the Welsh Tax Act (2022), Renting Homes Act (2021).
- The Senedd has a ballot system that allows individual members to offer Private Members’ Bills, for example, Kirsty Williams’ Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act (2016), and Dr Dai Lloyd’s unsuccessful private member bill to protect Welsh historical names.
- Bills in the Senedd can be introduced by government ministers, individual members of the Senedd, Senedd Committees or the Senedd Commission. This relatively broad range of ways in which a Bill can be initiated suggests an open process: note, the Senedd and Elections Act (2020) introduced by the Senedd Commission.
- A range of committees are able to scrutinise a bill in the Senedd, ensuring that a range of voices are heard during the committee stage.
- Since devolution the Senedd has been able to pass a range of legislation that has shaped modern Wales and served as a policy laboratory, for example, the Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), and the Single Use Carrier Bags Charge (Wales) Regulations (2010).

Arguments **against** the view that the legislative process in the Senedd has more strengths than weaknesses.

- There is a lack of clarity in the Senedd regarding whether it has the powers to pass legislation in specific areas. It has recently moved to a reserved powers model of devolution, yet the tension remains over legislative competence in certain areas.
- The committee system in the Senedd is weak in terms of its scrutiny of bills due to the need for more members. Most members sit on more than one committee and proposals to increase Senedd membership to 96 highlight the shortcomings of the current system.
- The lack of private members bills and committee bills in recent years highlights the way in which the Welsh Government dominates the legislative agenda.