

Government and Politics

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

Unit **F851**: Contemporary Politics of the UK

Mark Scheme for January 2011

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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.

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General Marking Instructions**Assessment objectives 1 and 2**

Award marks as follows:

Level	Descriptor	Mark Range
4	'thorough'	10-12
3	'good'	7-9
2	'limited'	4-6
1	'basic'	0-3

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
1(a)	<p>Using the sources and your own knowledge, outline the main ways in which political parties are funded in Britain. <i>Specification: Funding political parties: main sources of party income.</i> AO1 [12]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the main sources of party funding including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ membership fees (sources); ○ affiliation fees – Labour Party in particular - (own knowledge); ○ corporate donations (sources and own knowledge); ○ individual donations (sources and own knowledge); ○ state funding and subsidies – Short/Cranborne money, policy development money and benefits in kind, for example, free broadcasting time (own knowledge); ○ commercial activities (own knowledge); ○ fund raising (own knowledge). • If only one of ‘sources’ or ‘own knowledge’ is used, award up to a maximum of 8 marks. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. 	[12]
1(b)	<p>Using the sources and your own knowledge, discuss the view that there should be more state funding for political parties. <i>Specification: Funding political parties: main sources of party income; issues surrounding the funding of political parties; proposals for reform.</i> AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [4]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of current party funding (see above). • If only one of ‘sources’ or ‘own knowledge’ is used, award up to a maximum of 8 marks. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO2: Candidates discuss the view that there should be more state funding for political parties, using the knowledge required for AO1. • Candidates should consider why more state funding is desirable, for example, because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ parties play a vital role in our democratic system and need proper funding if they are to fulfil their functions (own knowledge); ○ it would make parties independent of their present backers and, therefore, free of their influence (own knowledge and sources); 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ it would reduce polarisation in British politics and parties would be able to govern in the interests of the country as a whole instead of one section of it (own knowledge); ○ it would reduce the possibility of corruption (own knowledge); ○ it would go some of the way towards reducing the unfairness in the current system, reducing the financial handicap that affects smaller parties who lack major sources of income apart from the subscriptions paid by their members (own knowledge and sources); ○ it has been tried elsewhere (the UK is very much in a minority) and initial fears have proved unfounded (own knowledge). ● And why it may be undesirable. For example, because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ parties are private organisations and should not be funded by the state (own knowledge); ○ it is an inappropriate use of state money (own knowledge); ○ opportunity cost – the money would be better spent on other things (own knowledge); ○ it would not necessarily stop parties focussing their campaigns on marginal seats (sources); ○ it breeds dependency and encourages complacency (own knowledge); ○ it would be a disincentive for parties actively seeking out new members (own knowledge); ○ it would encourage parties to spend more between elections (own knowledge); ○ it would not achieve its objective of making elections fairer (own knowledge); ○ If state funding of parties was <u>in addition to</u> current funding it would just make things worse because the rich parties would have even more money and it would perpetuate their grip on power; ○ If state funding was <u>instead of</u> current funding this would make it even harder for smaller parties to establish themselves; ○ If it was based upon <u>seats</u> gained at the last election, it would reinforce the existing disparities; ○ If it was based on <u>votes</u> it would encourage the growth of small parties and increase the risk that no party would be able to form a majority government; ○ Many people would object to their taxes being used to fund parties which they did not themselves support (own knowledge). ● Reward focus and balance, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). ● Level 4 for candidates who provide a balanced and focussed discussion of whether there should be more state funding for political parties. ● Level 3 for candidates who try to discuss whether there should be more state funding for political parties, even if the answer has to be inferred. 	

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum bottom Level 3/top Level 2 for answers that provide some/limited consideration, or where the consideration lacks range, depth or balance. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range, depth or balance. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO3: Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • Where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ two marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary; ○ two marks 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 necessarily be awarded full marks. 	[28]

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
2	<p>Discuss the view that pressure groups are a threat to British democracy.</p> <p><i>Specification: Pressure groups and the democratic process: contribution to the democratic process; criticisms.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of democracy – especially the importance of participation - and the role of pressure groups in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ offering the chance for citizens to participate in the political system and influence government between elections; ○ dispersing power within the political system and preventing the dominance of any one group in society; ○ forcing concerns and issues onto the political agenda which otherwise might be ignored; ○ acting as a check on both the executive and the legislature; ○ providing specialist information for the government and acting as a source of alternative policies. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO2: Candidates discuss the view that pressure groups are a threat to British democracy, using the knowledge required for AO1. • Such a discussion might include reference to the positive value of pressure groups in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dispersing power and providing checks on possibly over-powerful legislatures and executives; ○ acting as a counter-balance to, and reducing the power of, vested interests in British society including the government (standard pluralist argument); ○ increasing access to, and participation in, the political system, by providing an important mechanism by which citizens can influence government between elections; ○ breaking down the domination of parties; ○ forcing concerns and issues onto the political agenda which parties and governments might otherwise prefer to ignore; ○ improving the scrutiny and surveillance of government and therefore the accountability of those in power; ○ providing information for the government and thus improving the quality of government policy, as well as, sometimes, providing administrative co-operation which can ensure the successful implementation of a policy; ○ increasing social cohesion and political stability by providing a 'safety-valve' outlet for individual and collective grievances and demands. • Contrasted with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the disproportionate power of some groups; ○ and lack of representation of others; ○ the threat posed to the parliamentary process; ○ the informality and secrecy of some influence; 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the unrepresentative nature of some groups; ○ the essentially sectional nature of such groups; ○ the ability of some groups to slow down or block desirable changes. ● Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). ● Level 4 answers offer a balanced and focussed discussion of whether pressure groups are a threat to British democracy. ● Level 3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss whether pressure groups are a threat to British democracy, even if the answer has to be inferred. ● Maximum bottom Level 3/top Level 2 for answers that provide only some/limited assessment, or where the assessment lacks range or depth. ● Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range, depth or balance. ● Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. ● AO3: Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. ● Where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary; ○ three marks 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 necessarily be awarded full marks. 	[30]

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
3	<p>To what extent do elections in the United Kingdom fulfil their purpose?</p> <p><i>Specification: Elections Functions: purpose of elections. Electoral systems in the UK.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the purpose of elections in the UK including their role in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ selecting a representative or representatives; ○ allowing the ordinary voters to participate in the political process; ○ choosing a government (in the case of parliamentary and regional elections and to some extent in local elections); ○ providing the government with a general mandate to govern; ○ approving the winning party's specific policies; ○ holding the government to account for what it has done; ○ conveying to government and politicians in general the feelings of the electorate; ○ legitimising the government and the political system. • And of the nature of UK elections – European, parliamentary, regional and local. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO2: Candidates discuss the extent to which elections in the UK fulfil their purpose, using the knowledge required for AO1. • This is a broad question and what is being looked for is an understanding of the main purposes of elections combined with an appreciation of the extent to they are met by the different systems used in the UK. • NB Candidates who refer just to parliamentary elections can, nonetheless, be placed in the higher mark levels. • For example, candidates may choose to argue that the electoral system used to elect MPs fulfils its purpose because it produces strong single-party governments with a clear mandate but a parliament that is unrepresentative of the wishes of the voters. Equally, they may argue that elections for the European Parliament are representative because they produce a proportionate result but discriminate against independent candidates who lack regional support. • Given the range of possible arguments, a candidate who provides a direct and balanced answer to the question with a reasonable range of points should be placed in Level 4. • Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a balanced and focussed assessment of the extent to which elections in the UK fulfil their purpose. 	

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 for candidates who make some attempt to assess the extent to which elections in the UK fulfil their purpose, even if the answer has to be inferred. • Maximum bottom Level 3/top Level 2 for answers that provide only some/limited assessment, or where the assessment lacks range or depth. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range, depth or balance. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO3: Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • Where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary; ○ three marks 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 necessarily be awarded full marks. 	[30]

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
4	<p>How important has the mass media been in deciding the outcome of recent general elections?</p> <p><i>Specification: General election campaigns, including party strategies; manifestos; national and local campaigns; mass media; opinion polls; funding. Recent general elections; results; reasons for victory/loss.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the mass media in the UK and its potential for influencing the outcome of general elections. This should include knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ types of media, for example, printed, broadcast and electronic; ○ popularity and penetration of various forms of media; ○ theories of mass media influence. • Candidates also display knowledge and understanding of the last three general elections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ campaigns; ○ factors affecting the outcome; ○ results. • NB the specification requires knowledge of the last three elections, but references to other elections are not necessarily irrelevant. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO2: Candidates discuss the importance of the mass media in deciding the outcome of recent general elections, using the knowledge required for AO1. • Candidates should be aware of, and consider, a range of theories about the influence of the mass media on voting behaviour, for example, direct effect, reinforcement, agenda setting, framing and the extent to which there is evidence for any of these in recent elections. • Candidates should also be aware of, and discuss, alternative explanations for the outcome of recent elections that do not involve the media, for example, the record of the government or party image and leadership as well as longer term factors like class, age and partisanship. • Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a balanced and focussed assessment of the importance of the mass media in deciding the outcome of recent general elections. 	

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 for candidates who make some attempt to assess the importance of the mass media in deciding the outcome of recent general elections, even if the answer has to be inferred. • Maximum bottom Level 3/top Level 2 for answers that provide only some/limited assessment, or where the assessment lacks range or depth. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range, depth or balance. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO3: Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar. • Where a full-length answer is provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary; ○ three marks 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 necessarily be awarded full marks. 	[30]

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
5	<p>Discuss the view that it is the party leader that is the most important factor influencing voting behaviour.</p> <p><i>Specification: Factors associated with voting behaviour.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the main factors influencing the way people vote, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ long-term factors, for example, class, age, partisanship; ○ short-term factors, for example, the party leader, party values, party policy, party image, the campaign, the mass media, opinion polls. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. • AO2: Candidates discuss the importance of the party leader in determining which the way people vote, using the knowledge required for AO1. • Candidates must be able explain why party leaders are important influences on voting behaviour, for example, by discussing the increased media focus on personality and image, the apparent lack of difference between party values and policies and/or the alleged contemporary importance of personality over substance. Expect numerous references to recent party leaders from Thatcher onwards. • Candidates should also be aware of, and discuss, alternative explanations of the way people vote, for example, the importance of party image, values and policies, the record of the government, expectations of future performance, issues and the mass media as well as the importance of longer-term factors like class and partisanship. • Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a balanced and focussed discussion of whether the party leader is the most important factor determining the way people vote. • Level 3 for candidates who make some attempt to discuss whether the party leader is the most important factor determining the way people vote, even if the answer has to be inferred. • Maximum bottom Level 3/top Level 2 for answers that provide only some/limited assessment, or where the assessment lacks range or depth. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focussed or lacking in range, depth or balance. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. 	

Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AO3: Credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.• Where a full-length answer is provided:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ three marks should be used to credit the ability to construct and communicate arguments in a clear, structured manner using appropriate political vocabulary;○ three marks 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 necessarily be awarded full marks.	[30]

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