

Advanced Subsidiary GCE

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Unit F851: Contemporary Politics of the UK

Specimen Paper

F851QP

Time: 1 hour 30 mins

Additional Materials: Answer Booklet (...pages)



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Answer **both** questions from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
- You must use your own knowledge and the source material in your answer to Question 1.
- Write the numbers of the questions you answer on the front of your answer booklet.
- If you use additional sheets of paper, fasten these securely to your answer booklet.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- The number of marks for each question is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part of question.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **100**.
- You will be awarded marks in questions 1(b) and 2-6 for the quality of written communication including legibility, clarity of expression, structure, and presentation of ideas, spelling, punctuation and grammar.

ADVICE TO CANDIDATES

- Read each question carefully and make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- You are advised to spend 65 minutes on Section A and 25 minutes on Section B.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.

Section A

Answer **all** the questions in this section.

Sources for Question 1

Read **all** the sources below and use them when answering Question 1.

SOURCE 1

Party success at recent elections in the UK

Body	Elected	Proportion of seats won by the most successful party	Proportion of seats won by the two most successful parties
House of Commons	2005	55%	86%
Welsh Assembly	2003	50%	80%
Scottish Parliament	2003	39%	60%
Northern Ireland Assembly	2003	22%	48%

SOURCE 2

Governments since 1979

Party	Elected	Time in office	Consecutive elections won
Conservative Party	1979	16 years	4
Labour Party	1997	13 years*	3

* assuming the government elected in 2005 serves its full five years.

Section A

Answer **all** the questions in this section.

- 1 (a) Using the sources and your own knowledge, distinguish between a one-party system, a two-party system, a multi-party system and a dominant party system. [12]
- (b) Using the sources and your own knowledge, discuss the view that the United Kingdom has a dominant party system. [28]
- 2 Discuss the view that pressure groups play a harmful role in British politics. [30]

Section A Total: [70]

Section B

Answer **one** question in this section.

- 3 Make a case for reforming the electoral system used in British general elections. [30]
- 4 Explain why the Conservative Party lost the general elections of 2001 and 2005. [30]
- 5 Discuss the view that class is still the most important factor influencing the way people vote. [30]

Section B Total: [30]

Paper Total: [100]

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GENERAL MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

When marking, examiners must use both this mark scheme and the Assessment Matrix (over page).

The Assessment Matrix

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 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 differences.

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, they cannot be regarded as definitive and the professional judgement and training of individual examiners will inevitably 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.

Examiners must refer to the OCR booklet Instructions to Examiners issued in each examination session for details about administrative procedures.

The maximum mark for this paper is **100**.

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 correctly distinguish relevant and important factors 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.

Section A		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
1(a)	<p>Using the sources and your own knowledge, distinguish between a one-party system, a two-party system, a multi-party system and a dominant party system.</p> <p><i>Specification: political parties: party systems: one, two, multi-party and dominant party systems.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the differences between a one-party system, a two-party system and a multi-party system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ in one-party systems only one party is allowed to contest elections and form governments; ○ in two-party systems a number of parties may exist, but normally only two have a real chance of forming a government on their own; ○ in multi-party systems a number of parties exist, but none is normally able to form a government without the support of another; ○ in a dominant party system, although many parties may contest elections, one party monopolises power for significant periods of time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Award up to three marks for each definition. ● Full marks should be awarded for candidates who define one, two, multi-party and dominant systems in such a way that the differences are clear, even if this is not made explicit. ● 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 from the UK and elsewhere. 	[12]
1(b)	<p>Using the sources and your own knowledge, discuss the view that the UK has a dominant party system.</p> <p><i>Specification: political parties: party systems: one-, two-, multi-party and dominant party systems.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [4]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display, implicitly or explicitly, knowledge and understanding of what is meant by 'a dominant party system'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They also display knowledge and understanding of the evidence that the UK is, or is not, a dominant party system, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the pattern of recent governments and general election results; ○ seats and votes (actual and proportions) won at recent elections and changes in this ; ○ support for third and other parties and changes in this; ○ patterns of voting support and changes in these; ○ party competition beyond Westminster. ● 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. 	

Section A		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
1(b) cont'd	<p>AO2: Candidates discuss the view that the UK has a dominant party system, they argue that Britain could reasonably be described as a dominant party system, based on the knowledge required for AO1, but they also consider the opposite point of view.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward focus and balance, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a discussion that is clearly focused on whether or not the UK has a dominant party system and there is some attempt at a balanced analysis. • Level 3 for candidates who adopt a clear for/against approach with at least an implicit answer. • Maximum bottom Level 3 for a totally one-sided (however good) approach. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused, lacking range and/or depth. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO3: With reference to the assessment matrix credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p>	[28]

Section A		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
2	<p>Discuss the view that pressure groups play a harmful role in British Politics.</p> <p><i>Specification: pressure groups: role and functions, methods, impact and success, pressure groups and the democratic process.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the role played by pressure groups in British politics, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ offering the chance of participation in the political system 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; ○ providing a check on both the executive and the legislature ○ improving the scrutiny and surveillance of government ○ as a source of specialist information for the government ○ providing alternatives to existing policy. ○ increasing political stability by providing a 'safety-valve' for individual and collective grievances and demands. <p>• Candidates display knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pluralism; ○ corporatism; ○ elitism. ○ Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO2: Candidates discuss the view that pressure groups play a harmful role in British politics, they examine both sides of the argument, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward focus and balance, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a discussion that is clearly focused on whether or not pressure groups play a harmful role in British politics and there is some attempt at a balanced analysis. • Level 3 for candidates who adopt a clear for/against approach with at least an implicit answer. • Maximum bottom Level 3 for a totally one-sided (however good) approach. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused, lacking range and/or depth. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO3: With reference to the assessment matrix credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p>	[30]
Section A Total		[70]

Section B		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
3	<p>Make a case for reforming the electoral system used in British general elections.</p> <p><i>Specification: electoral systems, electoral reform in the UK.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the electoral system used in British general elections and its weaknesses, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – single-member constituencies; – first-past-the-post; – election date decided by the prime minister. ○ its weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lack of 'proportionality' and therefore representativeness; – effective disenfranchisement of voters in some regions; – the power it give the prime minister (choice of election date); – spurious legitimacy it accords the winning party (elective dictatorship?); – its role in perpetuating the two-party system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO2: Candidates make a case for reforming the electoral system used in British general elections using the knowledge required for AO1: candidates need not discuss the strengths or advantages of the current system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a convincing case for reforming the electoral system used in British general elections. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking range and/or depth. • Candidates who provide both a case for and against should only be marked on the 'case for' reform. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO3: With reference to the assessment matrix credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p>	[30]

Section B		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
4	<p>Explain why the Conservative Party lost the general elections of 2001 and 2005.</p> <p><i>Specification: recent general elections (knowledge of last three required).</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the 2001 and 2005 general elections, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the political context; ○ the main features of the campaigns; ○ the performance of parties; ○ turnout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If candidates focus on a single election they should be awarded up to a maximum of 8 marks. • Credit candidates who are able to use precise examples. <p>AO2: Candidates explain why the Conservative Party lost the general elections of 2001 and 2005, using the knowledge required for AO1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may choose to do so either by generalising about both elections or by focusing on each campaign separately. • Reasons given may include some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ performance of the governing party – retrospective voting; ○ past and present divisions within the Conservative Party (real or perceived); ○ memories of 1990s allegations of sleaze; ○ quality of leadership (both individual and collective); ○ 'New Labour'; ○ party policies; ○ campaigns; ○ impact of the media; ○ voter perceptions of competence; ○ the issue of trust; ○ the electoral system; ○ the size of swing needed; ○ changes in voting behaviour; ○ tactical voting/the impact of third parties; ○ turnout. • Reward focus and range, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers provide a convincing discussion of some of the reasons why the Conservative party might have lost the general elections of 2001 and 2005. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused or lacking range and/or depth. • If candidates focus on a single election they should be awarded up to a maximum of 8 marks. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO3: With reference to the assessment matrix, credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p>	[30]

Section B		
Question Number	Answer	Max Mark
5	<p>Discuss the view that class is still the most important factor influencing the way people vote.</p> <p><i>Specification: factors associated with voting behaviour; models of voting behaviour; trends in voting behaviour.</i></p> <p>AO1 [12]; AO2 [12]; AO3 [6]</p> <p>AO1: Candidates display knowledge and understanding of the factors associated with the way people vote, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ long-term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – age, – ethnicity, – region, – party identification – (particularly) class; ○ short-term: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – issues, – recent and future performance, – party policies, – party leadership, – party image, – mass media, – campaign. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They should have a particular knowledge and understanding of the impact of class on voting behaviour and of long-term trends in voting including class and party (partisan) dealignment. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO2: Candidates discuss the view that class is still the most important factor influencing the way people vote, they examine both sides of the argument, using the knowledge required for AO1, but references to class predominate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward focus and balance, but distinguish between description (AO1) and analysis (AO2). • Level 4 answers offer a discussion that is clearly focused on whether class is, or is not, still the most important factor influencing the way people vote and there is some attempt at a balanced analysis. • Maximum Level 2 for candidates who provide answers which are short, poorly focused, lacking range and/or depth or which present only one side of the argument. • Credit candidates who are able to use contemporary examples. <p>AO3: With reference to the assessment matrix credit the ability to communicate legibly, fluently, coherently, using specialist vocabulary, taking into consideration spelling, punctuation and grammar.</p>	[30]
Section B Total		[30]
Paper Total		[100]

Assessment Objectives Grid (includes QWC)

Question	AO1	AO2	AO3	Total
Section A				
1(a)	12	0	0	12
1(b)	12	12	4	28
2	12	12	6	30
Section B				
3/4/5	12	12	6	30
Totals	48	36	16	100

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