

Mark Scheme (Results)

Summer 2008

GCE

GCE Government & Politics (6491) Paper 1

General Marking Guidance

- All candidates must receive the same treatment. Examiners must mark the first candidate in exactly the same way as they mark the last.
- Mark schemes should be applied positively. Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.
- Examiners should mark according to the mark scheme not according to their perception of where the grade boundaries may lie.
- There is no ceiling on achievement. All marks on the mark scheme should be used appropriately.
- All the marks on the mark scheme are designed to be awarded. Examiners should always award full marks if deserved, i.e. if the answer matches the mark scheme. Examiners should also be prepared to award zero marks if the candidate's response is not worthy of credit according to the mark scheme.
- Where some judgement is required, mark schemes will provide the principles by which marks will be awarded and exemplification may be limited.
- When examiners are in doubt regarding the application of the mark scheme to a candidate's response, the team leader must be consulted.
- Crossed out work should be marked UNLESS the candidate has replaced it with an alternative response.

Question Number	Indicative content
1(a)	A pressure group is an organised group of people that aims to influence policies and actions of government. The 'insider/outsider' distinction is based on a group's relationship to government. 'Insider' groups enjoy regular, privileged and usually institutionalised access to government. Examples include the CBI, the BMA and the NFU. 'Outsider' groups are groups that are either not consulted by government or consulted only irregularly and not usually at a senior level; they therefore try to exert influence indirectly via public opinion campaigns. Examples include CND, ALF and Stop The War Coalition.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-1	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. A superficial, weak distinction between an insider and an outsider pressure group.
Level 2	2-3	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. The distinction will be understood, but not fully developed and complete. There may be errors in the definition of one type.
Level 3	4-5	Good or better knowledge and understanding. The distinction will be manifest and clear. Examples may advance and enhance the response.

Question Number	Indicative content
1(b)	<p>Outsider groups and high-profile insider groups attempt to influence public opinion in a variety of ways. These include the following. Many outsider groups use forms of popular mobilisation and protest, such as demonstrations, marches and petitions to demonstrate both the strength of their commitment and the extent of their public support. More innovative and theatrical forms of protest politics have been employed in recent years. These include the People's Fuel Lobby, which in 2000 blockaded fuel depots and blocked roads to pressure the government into cutting fuel taxes, the Countryside Alliance, Stop the War Coalition and Make Poverty History. In many cases, such methods are aimed at attracting newspaper and television coverage. Other ways of influencing public opinion include the use of academics, other specialists (particularly by environmental groups) and the use of celebrities to contribute to news and current affairs television programmes, and advertising campaigns as have been mounted by a wide variety of pressure groups including trade unions and businesses. In cases such as strikes, blockades, boycotts and sit-ins, public-opinion campaigns involve forms of direct action, examples including the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp in the 1980s and, more recently, SHAC (Stop Huntingdon and Animal Cruelty).</p> <p>Other salient points describing methods of how pressure groups influence public opinion may be advanced.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-5	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Fails to develop with clarity how pressure groups influence public opinion. No clear understanding of the processes.
Level 2	6-10	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. May advance one point clearly, but a narrow understanding of the processes influencing public opinion.
Level 3	11-15	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Advances clearly knowledge and understanding of how pressure groups influence public opinion. May reference examples precisely to develop this.

Question Number	Indicative content
1(c)	<p>Pluralists and elitists have differed markedly on the distribution of political power via group politics. While pluralists believe that power is widely and evenly dispersed in society, elitists hold that it is concentrated in the hands of the few. Those who argue that groups are effective in distributing power more widely use some of the following arguments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups represent interests that are ignored by the electoral process, which is more orientated around majority views and the interests of large groups. In this sense, pressure groups are effective in representing minority groups and people with minority or unfashionable views. Examples include religious, racial and ethnic minorities. • All pressure groups have access to some power or influence based on a variety of strategies available to them. Those with little money can still exert influence on government through the use of outsider strategies such as popular protests and grassroots activism. • Group power has become more widely dispersed as the number of access points within the UK has expanded, with the establishment of devolution, the introduction of the Human Rights Act and the growth of European integration. • Competition between and amongst groups disperses power very effectively. For example, trade unions developed to counter the interests of business, and environmental groups and even the anti-globalisation movement have done in recent years. <p>However, elitists and others have argued that pressure groups concentrate power in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups have greatly unequal access to resources. Those that possess political power, insider status and high levels of organisation tend to dominate the political process and exert disproportional influence on government. This particularly applies in the case of business groups and especially multinational corporations. • Many groups are effectively excluded from the pressure group universe because they lack resources and/or may be very difficult to organise; examples include children, asylum seekers, the mentally ill, NHS patients and so on.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some groups are ignored by government and treated as ideological outsiders, having therefore very little policy influence. These groups include the peace movement and the animal rights lobby <p>Candidates will be rewarded for demonstrating an awareness of both sides of the argument, but also for evaluating their arguments in the light of evidence in order to reach a reasoned conclusion.</p>
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-10	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Limited analysis and evaluation of political information. A failure to engage and fully comprehend the remit of the question. May produce material which is tangential rather than central to the debate.
Level 2	11-20	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Adequate analysis and evaluation of political information. Provides salient detail and information. May lack a balanced perspective to fully advance the response. Expansive detail and scope may be absent, thus unable to provide sustained analysis and evaluation.
Level 3	21-30	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Effective analysis and evaluation of political information. Developed focussed and reflective knowledge and understanding. Adheres closely to the remit of the question. Shows balance and considered reflection.

Question Number	Indicative content
2(a)	<p>Political parties have a number of functions. These include representation, policy formulation, educating the public, participation and the mobilisation of the electorate, the recruitment of leaders and the organisation of government. Responses should show an understanding of how each function is carried out. For example, parties provide representation largely by developing policies designed to appeal to significant sections within the electorate, thus enabling the winning party in an election to claim a popular mandate to carry out its policies.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-1	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Fails to develop clarity in describing two functions. May perhaps describe features with a loose connection to political parties' functionality
Level 2	2-3	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Perhaps one function clearly highlighted with a second less clear, or poorly constructed.
Level 3	4-5	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Two functions described with accuracy and precision.

Question Number	Indicative content
2(b)	Parties promote political participation in two main ways. First, they provide opportunities for citizens to join political parties and therefore help to shape party policy and, if they are lucky, government policy. Party members can engage in a wide variety of constituency activities, ranging from campaigning and electioneering to sitting on committees and helping to run a constituency party. This can enable a proportion of party members to stand for and possibly hold public office as local councillors or even MPs. Second, in their efforts to win government power and political support, parties aim to mobilise the electorate and encourage voters to vote. They do this through a process of campaigning at local and national levels. This is the sense in which parties are, at heart, electoral machines, operating through the building up of loyalty and identification amongst the electorate.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-5	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Lacks any developed understanding of how political parties promote participation
Level 2	6-10	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Clear ability to show how political parties promote participation, may have examples which demonstrate this knowledge and understanding.
Level 3	11-15	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Able to show clear perception of how political parties show participation. Examples may advance and enhance the response.

Question Number	Indicative content
2(c)	<p>A variety of concerns have been raised about the decline of political parties, even leading some to talk of a crisis in party politics in the UK. First, many argue that parties have become less effective in promoting political participation and mobilising the electorate. The evidence for this is the fall in voter turnout in the 2001 and 2005 general elections (59 per cent and 61 per cent respectively). Parties may have contributed to declining voter turnout in a number of ways. These include the growth of technocratic politics, meaning that parties are less likely to develop moral or ideological visions that show voters what they 'stand for'. Moreover, the growth of consensus politics has meant that parties have failed to offer voters meaningful choices at election time.</p> <p>Second, parties have declined markedly in terms of their membership size. By 2007, fewer than 1 per cent of people across the UK belonged to political parties, down from 7 per cent some 50 years before. About 800,000 people now belong to political parties, much lower than the membership size of a range of pressure groups, including the RSPB and the National Trust. Declining membership size means that parties have a shrinking activist base and are recruiting politicians from a smaller and smaller pool of talent.</p> <p>Third, there has been a decline in party identification, reflected in a decline in the extent to which sections of the electorate are aligned to particular parties. The number of 'strong' party identifiers has halved since the early 1970s. This has made voting patterns increasingly volatile.</p> <p>On the other hand, political parties remain significant in the UK in that they continue to be vital to the organisation and functioning of the governmental system. The UK has a system of party government in which parties form governments and provide opposition to the government of the day, and party unity continues to determine the relationship between government and Parliament.</p> <p>There has been a rise in Nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales buoyed by electoral success. The Liberal Democrats are a significant force in both local and national politics. UKIP and the Green Party have experienced for the first time electoral representation where different electoral systems have been introduced. Party membership has risen for the Conservatives under the leadership of David Cameron. Political parties remain</p>

	the main vehicle for access to the Westminster system, for only one independent MP has been elected.
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-10	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Limited analysis and evaluation of political information. Lacks any developed understanding of the alleged decline in importance of political parties in the UK. Weak knowledge and understanding restricts the analytical platform.
Level 2	11-20	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Adequate analysis and evaluation of political information. Able to make and advance credible arguments on the basis of sound knowledge and understanding. However, the response will lack an encapsulating and full consideration of the question. Only one side of the question may be addressed.
Level 3	21-30	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Effective analysis and evaluation of political information. A full and complete comprehension of the remit of the question. Will be supported by coherent and contemporary detail which serves to support the critical evaluation of the topic.

Question Number	Indicative content
3(a)	Power is the <i>ability</i> to influence the behaviour of others, usually through rewards or punishment. The most obvious examples of power are the use of force or coercion (the police or the military) and the use of resources or money (the influence of major corporations over government). Authority, by contrast, is the <i>right</i> to influence the behaviour of others, based on an acknowledged duty to obey. Authority can therefore be defined as 'legitimate power'. Examples include the right by virtue of his or her office of the prime minister to dissolve Parliament (legal-rational authority) and the personal influence that a party leader can exert over party members and followers (charismatic authority).

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-1	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Superficial and narrow comprehension of both concepts. Examples may be erroneous or absent.
Level 2	2-3	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Aware of the difference between the concepts and able to advance realistic examples but the definition and distinction is not fully complete.
Level 3	4-5	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Supported by pertinent examples the definition and distinction is complete and developed.

Question Number	Indicative content
3(b)	<p>Legitimacy means rightfulness, the quality that confers on an action or institution a willingness to accept or obey it. Legitimacy is therefore crucial to the maintenance of political stability, the alternative being the use of intimidation or violence to force citizens to obey. Legitimacy is maintained in the UK in two main ways. First, it is upheld by electoral and democratic processes, through which citizens effectively consent to being governed. This applies through a system of regular, free and fair elections that are based on the principles of universal adult suffrage and political equality. Referendums can further strengthen legitimacy. Second, legitimacy is maintained by the fact that government conforms to a framework of established rules, operating through a constitution. These rules (even though they are 'unwritten' in some cases) allocate duties, powers and functions to the various institutions of government and broadly define the relationship between government and the people. As government is rule-bound, its actions are more likely to be seen to be rightful or acceptable, and not as arbitrary.</p> <p>Finally, legitimacy may be maintained in the UK through traditionally accepted routes, these may be applied to the role of the Crown, the House of Lords and the judiciary.</p>

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-5	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Fails to appreciate the remit of the question. Much of the response may be tangential or irrelevant.
Level 2	6-10	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Able to comprehend how legitimacy in the UK is advanced. However, the base of knowledge may be restricted and thus be unable to develop a full or expansive portrait.
Level 3	11-15	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Able to appreciate the nature of legitimacy and how this is advanced in the UK.

Question Number	Indicative content
3(c)	As a representative democracy, the extent of democracy in the

UK can be judged on the basis of the control that the public exerts over its politicians. This control is exercised in a number of key ways:

- Elections in the UK are democratic to the extent that they are free and fair, are based on universal suffrage, and provide the basis for electoral choice through party and candidate competition. The UK has had a system of universal adult suffrage since 1928, and 'one person, one vote' has operated in the UK since 1948.
- Democracy in the UK largely operates through Parliament, which establishes a system of representative and responsible government, linking government to the people. Parliament therefore acts as the 'debating chamber of the nation'.
- Pressure groups supplement the system of electoral democracy by giving a political voice to minorities, allowing citizens to exert influence between elections and providing an increasingly important vehicle for political participation beyond the act of voting.
- The quality of democracy in the UK has increased since 1997 in a number of ways. These include the wider use of referendums, the establishment of devolution, and the use of PR electoral systems for a range of newly-created government bodies.
- In the UK there are extensive civil freedoms and rights associated with the political system which advance democracy.

However, the extent of democracy in the UK has also been criticised for a number of reasons:

- Key political bodies, such as the monarchy and the House of Lords, are not elected and therefore not subject to democratic accountability.
- The Westminster voting system is not proportional and so distorts popular political preferences, leading to a system of plurality rule in which no government has had an electoral majority since 1935.
- There is a lack of descriptive or characteristic representation in the UK, reflected in the under-representation of women, ethnic minorities, the working class and so on in local councils and Parliament.
- There has been a decline in important forms of political

	<p>participation, notably in voter turnout and party membership, that indicates increased civic disengagement. Declining popular participation raises concerns about the effectiveness of the democratic process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European integration allegedly weakens democratic processes within the UK because of the EU's 'democratic deficit'. • Arguments have been advanced that civil freedoms and rights have been restricted in recent years in the UK. <p>Responses should consider these or other arguments, enabling a balanced and reasoned conclusion to be reached on the basis of the evidence examined.</p>
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-10	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Limited analysis and evaluation of political information. Fails to provide developed understanding in order to be able to criticise and evaluate the debate. Little or no contemporary evidence provided.
Level 2	11-20	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Adequate analysis and evaluation of political information. May lack a developed or complete balance. There will be some detail and contemporary evidence of the contested view of democracy in the UK.
Level 3	21-30	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Effective analysis and evaluation of political information. A balanced and rounded consideration of democracy in the UK.

Question Number	Indicative content
4(a)	An election is a method of filling an office or post through choices made by a designated body of people, the electorate. Examples of an election include general elections, which are full parliamentary elections in which all the seats in the House of Commons come up for re-election (Westminster elections). The results of an election are binding, whereas the results of a referendum may be consultative, and not obligatory. Elections have specific time constraints and are compulsory whereas referendums are an optional choice chosen by the government of the day. A referendum is a vote in which the electorate can express a view on a particular issue of public policy. It is therefore a device of direct democracy. Examples of referendums in the UK include the 1997 devolution referendums in Scotland and Wales.

Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-1	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. A superficial and weak awareness of the distinction between a referendum and an election.
Level 2	2-3	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. The distinction will be understood, but not fully developed or complete.
Level 3	4-5	Good or better knowledge and understanding. The distinction will be manifest and clear. Examples may advance and enhance the response.

Question Number	Indicative content
4(b)	The main reason why more referendums have been used in the UK since 1997 is because of the prominence of the issue of constitutional reform. The Blair government accepted that major constitutional reforms, particularly when they involved the creation of new elected bodies, should be put to a popular vote through a referendum. Such an approach accepts that constitutional changes are more significant than the enactment of ordinary laws and that newly-created bodies are likely to enjoy greater success if they start life with a measure of democratic legitimacy. Examples of such referendums include those in Scotland and Wales in 1997, the Good Friday Agreement referendum in Northern Ireland in 1998, the GLA referendum in London in 1998 and the 2004 referendum on the establishment of an elected assembly for Northeast England. Specific reasons may

	<p>be advanced for each individual referendum. Reference may be made to specific local referendums which may have been held for local mayors or specific regional issues.</p> <p>Other generic factors explaining the increased use of referendums are the advantages that they give the government of the day in overcoming opposition to controversial measures. For instance, the devolution referendums in 1997 smoothed the passage of the Scotland Act and the Wales Act, discouraging the Conservatives and others from blocking the measures. It has been alleged that referendums add a layer of 'entrenchment' which makes future changes to policy by incoming governments difficult. The referendums since 1997 have all been regional, this allows easier passage for enabling legislation through a national chamber for regional issues. Referendums since 1997 have had a populist appeal for the incumbent government. Prior to 1997, the previous Conservative government ignored calls for referendums</p>
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-5	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. No developed understanding of the situation in the UK in a post-1997 context. May state referendums but show no comprehension of the reasons for their use.
Level 2	6-10	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Aware of referendums since 1997 indicating the reasons for their use. The detail may be incomplete or not fully developed.
Level 3	11-15	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Developed and well documented, able to place in context the reasons for the use of referendums since 1997.

Question Number	Indicative content
4(c)	<p data-bbox="391 259 1264 338">Referendums can be said to be effective in promoting democracy for a number of reasons:</p> <ul data-bbox="391 389 1275 1189" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 389 1275 678">• Unlike elections, they provide voters with an opportunity to exercise direct influence on government, ensuring, literally, government 'by' the people. They are thus a form of genuine democracy, whereas representative democracy, operating through elections, may allow professional politicians to misrepresent or simply ignore public opinion (as over the Iraq War). <li data-bbox="391 689 1275 936">• Referendums enable public opinion to be tested on specific issues, which is not possible in elections. Elections are at best very blunt weapons, in that it is assumed that by voting for a party electors are endorsing all its manifesto commitments. Referendums, in contrast, focus on specific issues and allow the electorate to give a clear verdict. <li data-bbox="391 947 1275 1189">• Referendums have been said to be particularly effective in promoting political education. They stimulate argument, debate and discussion precisely because they focus on specific policy proposals. Elections, by contrast, may appear to be just beauty contests, in which personality and image play a dominant role. <p data-bbox="391 1240 1219 1357">However, others argue that elections are more important to democracy than referendums. This may apply for a number of reasons:</p> <ul data-bbox="391 1408 1275 2033" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="391 1408 1275 1827">• Elections are the central feature of democratic government, the core link between government and the people. Elections give the public an opportunity to make or unmake governments. They therefore invest government with democratic legitimacy or transfer government power from one party to another. Referendums, by contrast, are limited democratic tools that may help to determine public policy but do not otherwise affect the democratic legitimacy of government. Referendums do not give the public the ability to remove the government of the day. <li data-bbox="391 1839 1275 2033">• Elections may be more effective than referendums in upholding the principle of government 'for' the people. This is because representative democracy, operating through elections, places the control of decision-making in the hands of professional politicians, who generally have higher levels of

	<p>education, expertise and experience than the general public. This should ensure wise political decisions that are made for the benefit of the people. Referendums, by contrast, place decisions in the hands of the average citizen, who may have little genuine interest in or understanding of political issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General elections in particular are usually more effective in stimulating popular participation than referendums. Even allowing for the reduced turnout in 2001 and 2005, electoral turnouts have generally exceeded referendum turnouts, notably in Wales (50 per cent), London (34 per cent) and Northeast England (48 per cent). <p>Responses should consider these or other arguments as part of a balanced, evidence-based answer that leads to a reasoned conclusion.</p>
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Level	Mark	Descriptor
Level 1	0-10	Poor to weak knowledge and understanding. Limited analysis and evaluation of political information. Failed to fully appreciate the remit of the question. Shows an inability to link referendums or elections to the promotion of democracy.
Level 2	11-20	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding. Adequate analysis and evaluation of political information. Able to relate referendums and/or elections to the promotion of democracy.
Level 3	21-30	Good or better knowledge and understanding. Effective analysis and evaluation of political information. Clear ability to relate both referendums and elections to the promotion of democracy.