

Mark Scheme (Standardisation)

June 2008

GCE

GCE Government and Politics (Unit 4A/6494)

Key Political Issues

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		Controversies about tax can be viewed on both a general political level and on a specific level. The general conflicts include such issues as the gradual rise in the tax burden towards 42% of GDP, assertions by other parties that much of the tax used to improve public services has been wasted, criticisms by Lib Dems and the Left of the Labour Party that taxes have become more, not less regressive. The Conservatives have asserted that taxes are too high although they make no firm commitment to reducing tax levels. Criticisms of so-called 'stealth' taxes have continued to be heard since 2005, within a growing climate of tax aversion among the public and within the media. The desirability and/or effectiveness of 'green taxes' has been matter of some conflict. There have been specific controversies concerning inheritance tax, Capital Gains tax, non-domicile tax, rising local taxation, and petrol taxes. Above all there has been a major political controversy over the abolition of the 10% tax band.
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-6	Brief and generalised remarks about taxation. Responses concentrate on how rather than why. There are important omissions, with only a limited range of relevant points raised.
Level 2	7-12	A reasonable range of issues with some degree of accurate understanding. Attempts to address the issue of 'why' vary from limited to sound. A range of controversies will be described varying from limited to sound.
Level 3	13-20	Both aspects of the question will be addressed in a range and depth varying from good to excellent. Answers will address aspects of both the general controversies and some of the more specific issues about particular taxes.

Question Number	Indicative content	
2	Two main categories of issue are relevant here. First, there are the issues relating to statistics. Some crimes - burglary, car crime for example - are declining, as are overall crime levels. On the other hand, serious crimes, notably robbery and violence, have been increasing. There are also disputes over the measurement of crime, with discrepancies between government stats, the British Crime Survey and measures of fear of crime. These tell conflicting stories. Second there are issues relating to perceptions. Thus we have seen increasing media concerns with gun and knife crime, the growth in gang activities and drugs issues. There has been considerable controversy over how effective ASBO's have been. Anti-terrorism measures maybe relevant together with some assessment as to how effective they have been. Whatever the statistics say, there is a perception that anti crime policy is still failing and fear of crime is increasing.	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-6	Largely descriptive rather than evaluative responses. Attempts to address the issue of whether policies are working will be absent or weak. Answers are likely to contain a limited range of comments about current crime issues, with little or no analysis. Statistical material is likely to be completely absent.
Level 2	7-12	There will be descriptions and explanations of both crime issues and arguments concerning the success or failure of anti crime policy. . These will range from limited to sound. Although both the descriptive and evaluative elements of the question will be addressed, it is likely that the balance will be towards description. Some generalised statistical evidence is likely to be used
Level 3	13-20	A balanced answer, with evaluations ranging from good to excellent. A good range of issues will be raised and there will a great deal of critical awareness of different perceptions of the success or failure of crime policy. There will be some use made of statistical evidence, though this need not be extensive or detailed. However, it will be accurate.

Question Number	Indicative content	
3	<p>Multiculturalism is a belief and a movement that suggests that Britain now contains a number of significant ethnic, religious and cultural groups. Further, in a multicultural society they should be able to live in the same society with little or no conflict and there will be extensive tolerance of different cultures, lifestyles and beliefs, provided these do not threaten the peace and security of the state and society. Multiculturalism also suggests that diversity enriches a society and is to be celebrated. Minority rights and interests should be respected and protected. Multiculturalism addresses racial issues by encouraging tolerance and understanding between communities. It has also been enshrined in legislation which outlaws discrimination and promoted equal opportunities. Education and the work of the (former CRE) have been important vehicles in translating multiculturalism into better race relations. However, Trevor Phillips has pointed out the dangers of increasing 'ghettoisation'. There have also been continuing charges that various organisations, including the Police, are still institutionally 'racist'. Recent increases in immigration and migration have placed additional stresses on race relations which may reduce the effectiveness of multiculturalism.</p>	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-6	<p>Understanding of the nature of multiculturalism will be absent or tenuous. There may be some valid remarks about the modern state of race relations, but little or no attempt to relate these to multiculturalism.</p>
Level 2	7-12	<p>There will be some accurate understanding of multiculturalism demonstrated. An attempt will be made to connect multiculturalism to the state of race relations and the treatment of racial differences, which will vary from limited to sound.</p>
Level 3	13-20	<p>A strong and very secure understanding of multiculturalism is demonstrated. The way in which the link between the movement and the treatment of racial differences can work is clearly and cogently explained. Level 3 answers will be especially strong in demonstrating the linkages.</p>

Question Number	Indicative content,	
4	<p>The reforms of the NHS have included the creation of relatively independent hospital and health trusts, foundation hospitals and performance targets and tables, with a system of rewards and sanctions. There have also been improved conditions for workers in the NHS and new contracts for doctors designed to improve patient care. The establishment of priorities has been depoliticised by the creation of NICE. Despite reforms there have been a number of problems including financial difficulties, the persistence of postcode lotteries, MRSA and other hospital based diseases. While some areas have improved such as waiting lists, times and cure rates for many conditions, it is often claimed that these figures are either patchy or simply manipulated. There are many claims that mismanagement has meant that much of the increased expenditure has been wasted and not used on frontline services.</p>	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-6	<p>Answers are likely to be descriptions of a range of health service issues with little or no evaluation. The range and depth of issues addressed will vary from very poor to weak. There will be little or no critical awareness of health service performance.</p>
Level 2	7-12	<p>A sound range of issues will be raised. Evaluation of the performance of the health service will vary from limited to sound. It may well be that evaluation will be unbalanced to some extent. There will be some critical awareness of different interpretations of performance, but this will not be extensive.</p>
Level 3	13-20	<p>Level 3 responses will show evaluation varying from good to excellent. There will be a good range of issues raised and much critical awareness of interpretations, demonstrating clearly that evidence can be manipulated or viewed in different ways. Evaluations will be well balanced.</p>

Question Number	Indicative content,	
5	<p>On the face of it most sectarian conflict has disappeared. Power sharing has been restored and even extreme politicians such as Adams, McGuinness and the Paisleys are sitting together in the assembly and in government. There has been little public violence and it appears that all the paramilitaries have either ceased operations or are disbanded. However, there have also been examples of continued sectarianism in the province. Little progress has been made in creating a religious balance in the police service. There was some violence in the marching season and sporadic rioting. Albeit on a minor level. Conflict remains over educational provision, with little sign of agreement over multi-faith schooling. There is still much evidence of discriminatory practices in employment, education and housing.</p>	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-20	<p>Responses will be largely or totally descriptive with little or no evaluation. Mostly generalized comments about how peace has come about and the indications of lack of sectarian conflict. brief reference may be made to political developments, but with no depth.</p>
Level 2	21-38	<p>There will be some sensitivity shown to the extent of the reduction. This will contain some balance, but depth and range will vary from limited to sound. Effective examples of both signs of peace and of continued conflict will be included, though these points may not be fully developed.</p>
Level 3	39-60	<p>An accurate and well developed range of evidence will be deployed. There will be a well balanced approach, with evaluation ranging from good to excellent. Responses will go beyond superficial evidence and look at issues in some depth and with some sensitivity.</p>

Question Number	Indicative content,	
6	<p>The principles of the welfare state must be stated, preferably explicitly, but acceptably implicitly. These include quality, universality, freed delivery of services, compulsory nature etc. These have been eroded in some ways, for example, health charges of various kinds, tuition fees, postcode lotteries, rationing, loss of provision, notably in housing and reduced benefits, as in pensions. On the other hand reference can be made to extensive increases in funding, extensions in health and education provision (such as more treatments, pre school and higher education) Reference may- though this is far from a requirement for a good response - to actions by devolved government such as Scottish abolition of tuition fees and free care for the elderly, abolition of prescription charges in Wales. The issue of private sector involvement through PPPs, PFIs, private health, city academies etc. does not necessarily erode the principles of the welfare state, though some, including unions, argue that it does. Reference can be made to the fact that most principles remain intact, most services remain free, there is universal provision and a great deal of equality, though extended means testing might be referred to.</p>	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-20	Answers are likely to be generalised assessments of the performance of the welfare state, with patchy coverage, lack of depth. Evaluation will be absent or will vary from very poor to weak. Little or no reference will be made to principles of the welfare state.
Level 2	21-38	Responses will be more focused on the demands of the question than in level 1. There will be some evaluation, ranging from limited to sound. A good range of issues will be included, though there may be some important omissions. Some balanced assessment will be successfully deployed, with some accurate evidence deployed.
Level 3	39-60	A good range of issues will be deployed with effective evidence deployed. Evaluation will range from good to excellent. Answers will be clearly focused on the demands of the question and there will be a very direct assessment of whether principles have been eroded.

Question Number	Indicative content,	
7	<p>Good luck refers to a number of issues. These include the legacy which Labour inherited in 1997 of a strengthening economy, low exchange rates after 1992 producing an export surge, a more competitive economy following supply side policies of the 1980s, a strong world economy and falling unemployment and inflation. In the early years of labour the world economy continued to grow and there has been persistent stability. Good judgement refers to apparently successful policies. These include the depoliticisation of interest rates, the golden rule, minimum wage, employment policies etc. How much was due to the prudence of Brown and how much to do with improving economic basics is open to discussion. Exaggerated claims refers to overblown claims of stability when,, in fact, both private and public debt were growing and there was a slow down in growth after 2005. The current 'credit crunch' and vulnerability of the economy to adverse world conditions under-pins this argument. There were disputes over the true extent of unemployment. Note also that interest rates and inflation have crept up. Possibly economic wellbeing has been the result of the buoyant housing market and consumer debt rather than policies. The decline in the housing market in 2008 also demonstrates the fragility of the economy despite Brown's claim that it is in a good position to ride out the storm.</p>	
Level	Mark	Descriptors
Level 1	0-20	Generalised descriptions of economic policy with patchy and modest assessments of success or failure. The full demands of the question will not be met, with possibly only one or two aspects addressed. Assessment will vary from very poor to weak. Some evidence will be deployed but this will be partial and sparse.
Level 2	21-38	At least two, probably all three aspects of the question will be addressed to a greater or lesser extent. Assessments will vary from limited to sound. Evidence will be deployed to underpin assessment, but there may be some important omissions. Sensitivity will be shown to different interpretations of economic performance during the period.
Level 3	39-60	All three aspects are covered with assessments of the three ranging from good to excellent. There will be good sensitivity to different interpretations of economic performance and extensive, effective evidence will be deployed to underpin the analysis. Knowledge and use of current events, such as the 'credit crunch', declining housing market, banking problems, rising inflation etc. will be demonstrated.