

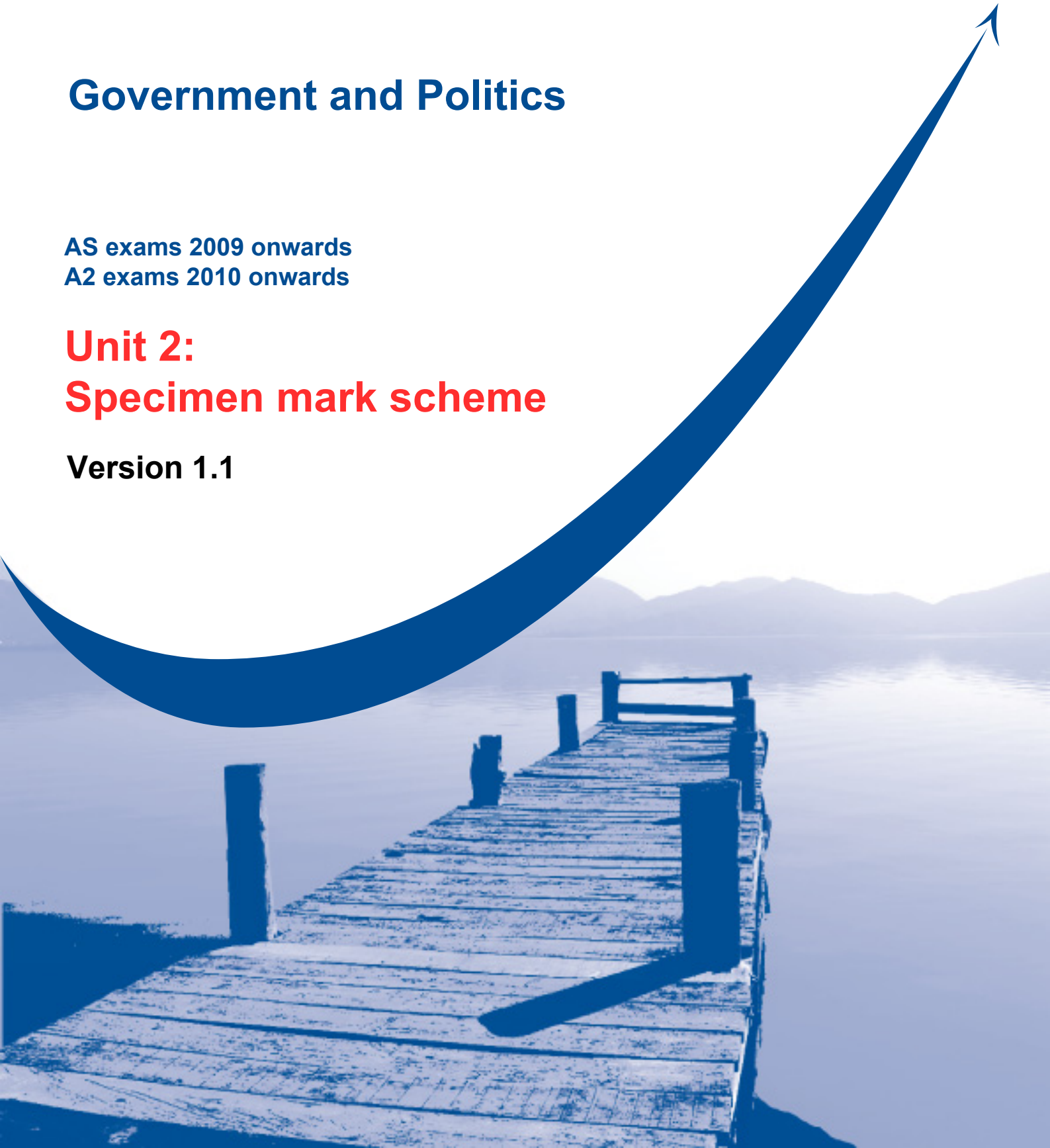
GCE
AS and A Level

Government and Politics

AS exams 2009 onwards
A2 exams 2010 onwards

Unit 2: **Specimen mark scheme**

Version 1.1





General Certificate of Education

Government and Politics GOVP2

Unit 2 Governing Modern Britain

Specimen Mark Scheme

The specimen assessment materials are provided to give centres a reasonable idea of the general shape and character of the planned question papers and mark schemes in advance of the first operational exams.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available to download from the AQA Website:
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Dr Michael Cresswell, Director General.

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (a) questions (Total: 5 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy
AO1
Level 4 (5 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates excellent knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). Where appropriate, the candidate is able to illustrate his/her answer with relevant evidence/example(s).
Level 3 (4 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). Where appropriate, the candidate is able to illustrate his/her answer with relevant evidence/example(s).
Levels 2 (2–3 marks) The candidate demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). The candidate may illustrate his/her answer with evidence/example(s) of limited relevance.
Level 1 (1 mark) The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of political data, concept(s) or term(s). The candidate may illustrate his/her answer with evidence/example(s) of little relevance.
0 marks No relevant response.

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (Total: 10 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate demonstrates an excellent knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes.</p> <p>The candidate deploys relevant knowledge and understanding to fully address the requirements of the question and produces accurate and/or relevant examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (4 marks) The candidate applies an excellent range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 3–4 (2 marks) The candidate communicates clearly and effectively, in a structured and sustained manner, making excellent or good use of appropriate political vocabulary.</p> <p>There are few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and the response should be legible.</p> <p>The answer has a clear sense of direction, is focused on the question and, where appropriate, has a conclusion which flows from the discussion.</p>
<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes.</p> <p>The candidate addresses the requirements of the question and produces examples and/or evidence to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3 marks) The candidate applies a good range of developed concepts and uses appropriate political theory to construct a clear and cogent explanation or argument.</p>	
<p>Level 2 (2 mark) The candidate demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes.</p> <p>The candidate makes a limited attempt to address the requirements of the question and produces few or inaccurate examples and/or limited evidence to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 mark) The candidate applies a limited range of concepts and makes limited use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	<p>Levels 1–2 (1 mark) The candidate communicates explanations or arguments with limited clarity and effectiveness using limited political vocabulary. The answer may lack either a clear focus on the question or a sense of direction. There are frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and legibility may be a problem. A conclusion, where appropriate, may be offered but its relationship to the preceding discussion is modest or implicit.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (b) questions (continued)

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The candidate demonstrates little knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes. The candidate makes little attempt to address the requirements of the question and produces few examples and/or little evidence to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The candidate applies few concepts and makes little use of political theory or ideas in developing an explanation or argument.</p>	
<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>

AS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (c) questions (Total: 25 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 4 (10–11 marks) The candidate successfully demonstrates accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that deploys relevant knowledge and understanding to address the requirements of the question and that demonstrates significant contextual awareness.</p> <p>The candidate's answer includes relevant evidence and/or examples to substantiate and illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 4 (7–8 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides analysis which displays sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with valid and precise comparisons. The answer includes relevant and convincing interpretations or explanations.</p>	<p>Level 4 (5–6 marks) The candidate communicates clear, structured and sustained arguments and explanations making excellent use of appropriate political vocabulary. The response should be legible with few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The candidate produces answers with a clear sense of direction leading towards a coherent conclusion.</p>
<p>Level 3 (7 – 9 marks) The candidate demonstrates generally accurate knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and the relationship between them, producing an answer that addresses the requirements of the question and demonstrates adequate contextual awareness.</p> <p>The answer provides evidence backed up by clear examples to illustrate points made.</p>	<p>Level 3 (5 – 6 marks) The candidate evaluates political institutions, processes and behaviour, applying some concepts or theories.</p> <p>The candidate provides clear arguments and explanations and demonstrates awareness of differing viewpoints and recognition of issues. Parallels and connections are identified, together with some sound comparison.</p>	<p>Level 3 (3–4 marks) The candidate communicates arguments and explanations making good use of appropriate political vocabulary. The response should be legible but there may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. A conclusion is linked to the preceding discussion.</p>

GENERIC MARK SCHEME for part (c) questions (continued)

Knowledge and Understanding: Recall, Select & Deploy	Skills: Analysis & Evaluation	Communication
AO1	AO2	AO3
<p>Level 2 (4–6 marks) The candidate demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and some awareness of the relationship between them. He/she makes a limited attempt to address the requirements of the question.</p> <p>The candidate may demonstrate contextual awareness covering part of the question, and may produce limited evidence and/or few examples.</p>	<p>Level 2 (3–4 marks) The candidate offers a simplistic evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour and begins to construct arguments which contain basic explanation.</p> <p>The candidate shows some awareness of differing viewpoints. There is recognition of basic parallels or simplistic comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 2 (2 marks) The candidate attempts to develop an argument using basic political vocabulary. There are frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and legibility may be a problem. Where a conclusion is offered, its relationship to the preceding discussion may be modest or implicit.</p>
<p>Level 1 (1–3 marks) The candidate demonstrates slight and/or incomplete knowledge and understanding of political concepts/theories/institutions and processes and limited awareness of the relationship between them.</p> <p>The candidate makes a very limited attempt to address the requirements of the question. Only superficial awareness of the context of the question is evident and the few examples cited are often inaccurately reported or inappropriately used.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1–2 marks) The candidate makes a partial attempt to evaluate political institutions, processes and behaviour. Arguments offered are superficial. There is very limited awareness of parallels or comparisons.</p>	<p>Level 1 (1 mark) The answer relies upon narrative which is not fully coherent and which is expressed without using political vocabulary. Errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be intrusive and the response may not be legible. A conclusion is either not offered or it is not related to the preceding material.</p>
<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>	<p>0 marks No relevant response.</p>

1

Total for this question: (40 marks)

(a) Explain the term *the Cabinet* used in the extract.

(5 marks)

The extract provides useful contextual material and triggers regarding AO indicating that the term 'Cabinet' is a key component of government and has a role in key decision making. Better responses should be able to provide information about the functions, size, composition of the 'Cabinet' and perhaps relevant information about associated bodies such as Cabinet Committees and the Cabinet Office. Weaker responses may produce some evidence from the extract or limited information from the candidate's own knowledge. Material on the role of Cabinet *Ministers* should be accepted on its merits, but there should be a clear focus on the Cabinet itself for higher levels.

(b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, examine two arguments supporting the view that the UK has Cabinet government.

(10 marks)

For AO1 strong answers will typically identify two arguments supporting the Cabinet government viewpoint taken either from the extract or the candidate's own knowledge. Policy examples (eg invasion of Iraq), or style of particular Prime Ministers (eg Major's collegial style) might also be given in better answers. Weaker examples will probably draw from the extract with little elaboration.

For AO2 there should be a clear attempt to investigate closely the arguments identified. This should normally take the form of a clear contextual exposition (eg collective responsibility implies collective decision), elaborate with some analysis (eg Prime Minister weakened by ministerial resignations) although weaker candidates may do little more than repeat the arguments in the stimulus. Debate about Prime Ministerial or Cabinet government is not required as the question only requires examination of two arguments supporting Cabinet government.

Answers gaining maximum credit are clearly communicated and make appropriate use of political vocabulary.

(c) 'The powers of the Prime Minister are considerable.' Discuss.

(25 marks)

The stimulus provides some material for AO1 regarding constitutional powers and media concentration on PM. From their own knowledge, candidates should present salient points demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of other material relevant to the powers of the PM. Strongest responses should elaborate on constitutional powers (eg dissolution power; chooses Cabinet) and go beyond this to look at other bases of Prime Ministerial power including relationship with Parliament, powers within the Cabinet system and party leadership. Reward relevant examples from recent premierships. Weaker candidates probably go no further than this. For higher marks, candidates should, however, also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of constraints upon Prime Minister. These can include those referred to in the stimulus but stronger candidates should bring other material from their own knowledge (eg reliance on parliamentary and party support).

For AO2, analysis should focus on 'considerable' which must be address specifically for highest level. Accept prime ministerial/cabinet government answers but for higher levels analysis should extend beyond this and develop discussion around 'considerable'. Analysis is likely to focus on evaluation of factors underlying prime ministerial power (eg PM appoints Cabinet, determines agenda, use of bilaterals/Cabinet Committees/Kitchen cabinet, developing PM's Office, etc). For higher levels, however, candidates should also evaluate constraints upon Prime Ministerial power (eg influence of key Cabinet ministers, threats of resignation, limited time/expertise of PM backbench rebellions, etc). Strong candidates might also examine wider influences/constraints upon prime ministerial power (eg civil service, group pressures, unfavourable media). It is possible to argue for or against contention in the question or that Prime Ministerial power varies with issues, circumstances, personalities etc. Reward also other relevant analysis (eg developments over time, electoral system usually produces government majority; similarities/contrast with presidential systems, ambiguities in British 'constitution', etc). Weaker answers may do little more than note the stimulus content but offer only a limited explanation and few examples.

For AO3 candidates should address the set question and use appropriate political vocabulary (eg core executive; power, influence, authority; presidential). Strong responses are structured and contain sustained arguments and explanations leading to a reasoned conclusion.

2

Total for this question: (40 marks)

(a) Briefly explain the term *flexible* as used in the extract. (5 marks)

The extract provides useful contextual material and triggers regarding AO1, setting out that the term 'flexible' is recognised in political science vocabulary as a feature of constitutions together with other terms such as unwritten. Better candidates should provide information about 'flexibility' such as its reference to the process and ease of amendment. Reward relevant examples illustrating flexibility (eg Human Rights Act; House of Lords reform). Weaker responses may simply produce some evidence from the extract (eg British constitution is flexible: flexibility as a basis for classifying constitutions). Reward contrast with other constitutions (eg USA) although full marks should be possible without this and there is no expectation at AO1 that comparative material should be detailed or extensive.

(b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain how a separation of powers in Britain might help to check the powers of government. (10 marks)

For AO1 strong answers typically set out clear knowledge and understanding of the term 'separation of powers', explain the 'powers' referred to (executive, legislative, judicial), and exemplify constitutions with a separation of powers (eg USA). They are also typically able to demonstrate the extent to which Britain does/does not have a separation of powers. Weaker examples probably draw only from the extract with little elaboration.

For AO2 there should be a clear attempt to investigate closely how a separation of powers in Britain might help to check the power of government. This should normally take the form of a clear contextual exposition (eg perceived 'executive domination' of Parliament in the UK) and how a separation of executive and legislature might prevent this. Better answers may also comment on the extent to which 'independence' of the judiciary is/is not a feature of the UK. Reward analysis which offers contrasts/comparisons with other political systems, although at this level detailed and extensive coverage of comparative material is not required. Reward also answers which consider other possible effects of introducing a separation of powers (eg gridlock) but highest levels can be accessed without this. Weaker candidates may discuss only executive or prime ministerial dominance with little or no analysis of how this might change with a separation of powers.

Answers gaining maximum credit are clearly communicated and make appropriate use of political vocabulary.

(c) 'There is no convincing case for a written constitution in Britain.' Discuss. (25 marks)

For AO1, the stimulus provides information and triggers relating to the main features of the British constitution (unwritten, flexible, unitary), although stronger candidates should be able to demonstrate other relevant knowledge and understanding (eg explanation of unitary). Also from own knowledge candidates should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of

the main sources both written (eg statute, case law) and unwritten (eg conventions) of the British constitution. Better candidates should be able to illustrate their answer with examples of these sources showing that the constitution is dynamic not static and, in recent decades, has developed, for example, to accommodate EU membership, devolution and the Human Rights Act. Reward appropriate material about other constitutions (eg USA) and the role of other associated bodies (eg Supreme Court) although at AO1 there is no expectation that the comparative material should be detailed or substantial.

At AO2 candidates should be able to advance some arguments against a written constitution (eg conventions allow constitution to adapt to changing situations). Better candidates, however, should also be able to evaluate these arguments against others which support a written constitution (eg need for clarity in areas covered by convention, need for statement of basic rights; need to limit the powers of government, Prime Minister, etc). For higher levels, however, the answer should address 'convincing' which requires a clear evaluation of the arguments on both sides. Possible to argue both in favour of the contention (eg British political culture/norms are sufficient protection against possible abuse by governments; judges would have too much power; Human Rights Act provides guarantee of basic rights) and against (eg lack of written constitution exposes citizens to potential abuse by government, parliamentary sovereignty gives citizens no protection; entrenched rights impossible without written constitution; conventions allow politicians to determine constitution). Stronger candidates should also be able to question the description of the British constitution as 'unwritten' (many sources are written; are 'non-codified' or 'non-documentary' more accurate descriptions) and to offer analysis of practical problems such as who would draft a written constitution, what it should contain; would a supreme court be necessary, etc? As with AO1, reward relevant comparative material but there is no expectation that this should be extensive or detailed.

For AO3 candidates should address the set question and offer at least a general assessment of the arguments for and against a written constitution. Stronger responses focus particularly on 'convincing' with structured and sustained arguments and explanations leading to a reasoned conclusion.

3

Total for this question: (40 marks)

(a) Briefly explain the term *redress of citizens' grievances* used in the extract. (5 marks)

The extract provides useful contextual material and triggers regarding AO1 indicating that the term *redress of citizens' grievances* is one of the main roles of Parliament and outlining how this might be pursued by MPs through debates and questions. Weaker candidates may offer little more than this but stronger candidates should be able to provide more information relevant to the term, for example other ways in which redress might be obtained (eg through local councilors or Ombudsmen) and/or examples from own knowledge.

(b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, examine the importance of **two** of Parliament's major roles. (10 marks)

With AO1, the extract identifies and provides information about role of 'redress of citizens' grievances'. Other roles that are likely to be identified are legislation and scrutinising work of/holding government to account but accept also other relevant roles such as approval of taxation and expenditure, maintaining government in office, recruitment of government ministers, etc. Weaker answers may do little more than identify roles so reward relevant additional information (eg legislative process; role of select committees). The question is about the roles of *Parliament* so accept and reward demonstration of relevant knowledge and understanding of House of Lords.

For AO2 there should be a clear attempt to investigate closely the roles identified. This should normally take the form of a clear contextual exposition (eg Parliament's roles usually conducted within context of executive dominance). The question refers to the *importance* of roles so for higher marks candidates should specifically address this (eg legislative role 'important' for government to carry through its mandate; redress of grievance role 'important' to constituents but arguably less 'important' in terms of party considerations; effective scrutiny 'important' as counterbalance to 'elected dictatorship'; role in recruiting ministers/maintaining government in office arguably more 'important' in 'Commons than in 'Lords). Weaker candidates are likely to go little beyond identification of roles and/or to lack focus on 'importance'.

Answers gaining maximum credit are clearly communicated and make appropriate use of political vocabulary.

(c) Discuss the view that today parliamentary sovereignty 'exists more in theory than in practice'. (25 marks)

The extract provides some limited material for AO1 (eg parliamentary sovereignty is long established principle). From their own knowledge, candidates should show knowledge and understanding of constitutional theory underlying parliamentary sovereignty (eg Parliament can legislate on any subject, no superior legislative body; courts cannot set Parliament's laws aside; Parliament cannot bind its successors). 'In practice' requires knowledge and understanding of factors which arguably undermine/impinge upon theoretical notions of sovereignty (eg political sovereignty of electorate; loss of sovereignty to EU; granting of Independence, devolution etc) or which reassert sovereignty (eg introduction of direct rule in Northern Ireland). Stronger candidates should also focus on 'today', which is a discriminator, so reward knowledge and understanding of relatively recent examples (eg Human Rights Act; increasing loss of sovereignty to EU).

For AO2, analysis should focus on a discussion of the extent to which parliamentary sovereignty is undermined/reasserted 'in practice'. Most candidates are likely to recognise that parliamentary sovereignty 'in practice' is heavily constrained by political factors. While theoretically Parliament could withdraw from the EU, ignore EU legislation, reverse devolution, ignore public opinion/mandate, reverse Human Rights Act, etc in practice many of these things would be politically difficult if not impossible. Similarly Parliament in normal circumstances is subject to 'executive dominance' which is a further practical consideration. While weaker candidates may do little more than refer to practical/political restrictions on parliamentary sovereignty, stronger candidates will focus specifically on 'today' by, for example, contrasting situation in modern times with that pre-EU, pre-devolution, etc. 'More than' is a discriminator so higher level answers should also address this by, for example, recognising that in some instances sovereignty has been asserted (eg direct rule in Northern Ireland) or 'pooled' (eg shared sovereignty within EU) and/or Parliament can legislate in the UK on matters that in many other political systems are protected through constitutional provisions.

For AO3 candidates should address the set question and use appropriate political vocabulary (eg legislature, executive, scrutiny, accountability). Strong responses are structured and contain sustained arguments and explanations leading to a reasoned conclusion.

4

Total for this question: (40 marks)

(a) Briefly explain the term *elected local councils* used in the extract. (5 marks)

The extract provides useful contextual material regarding AO1 and most candidates will recognise that the term 'elected local councils' refers to local government. From their own knowledge candidates should be able to give additional further information (eg examples of particular local authorities). Stronger answers might also give details of powers of local government, structure, councillors' roles, etc.

(b) Using your own knowledge as well as the extract, explain the statement that 'in the UK today multi-level governance is a reality'. (10 marks)

With AO1, the extract identifies different levels of governance (local, devolved, national, European). While weaker candidates may go no further than extracting information from the extract stronger answers should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the powers and influence, etc of the various levels of government. 'Today' is a discriminator and stronger candidates should also demonstrate knowledge and understanding of changes over time.

For AO2 there should be an attempt to provide a clear contextual exposition (eg multi-level governance increased in recent decades as a result of European integration and devolution). Most candidates should be able to offer some evaluation of relative powers of the different tiers (eg Parliament determines powers, etc of devolved institutions; EU law overrides Westminster law). Stronger answers might also develop analysis to include power relations within tiers (eg power within EU) although higher levels can be accessed without this. 'Today' is a discriminator and better answers may focus on changes over time (and forces driving this – eg economic forces with Europe, nationalism in Scotland and Wales – although full marks possible without the latter). 'Reality' is also a discriminator. Possible to argue in support of contention (ie elected tiers of government exist at different levels) and/or to question it (eg Parliament retains ultimate sovereignty; Welsh Assembly a 'talking shop'; long suspension of Northern Ireland Assembly; no elected tiers in English regions). It is also possible that stronger candidates might focus analysis on 'governance' (ie as opposed to 'government') but full marks are available without this. Weaker answers are likely to go little beyond identification of main tiers and to lack focus on 'today' or 'reality'.

Answers gaining maximum credit are clearly communicated and make appropriate use of political vocabulary.

(c) 'The European Council of Ministers is the real decision-making body of the EU.'
Discuss. (25 marks)

With AO1, the extract provides relevant information and triggers (eg European Parliament weak and limited powers to check the European Commission and Council of Ministers). From candidates' own knowledge, information might focus on Council of Ministers' composition; existence of parallel functional councils; powers; voting procedures (eg QMV; unanimity still needed on some major issues); relations with European Council/Commission/European Parliament and UK Parliament and government. Weaker answers might demonstrate knowledge and understanding of only a limited number of these aspects. Reward relevant use of policy examples, etc to illustrate answer.

For AO2, answers should offer a clear analysis of the relationship and powers of the Council of Ministers relevant to other EU institutions (Court of Justice is relevant but full marks possible without this). 'Real' is a discriminator. While all relevant, accurate analysis of COM's relationship with other EU institutions should be rewarded, 'real' should be addressed specifically to access highest level marks. It is possible to argue that the COM is the real decision making body; that other institutions are more influential (eg European Council); that influence varies according to function (eg COM with legislation; EU Parliament with removing Commission; Commission with European, rather than national, considerations, budget, etc) or that influence varies over time (eg growing powers of European Parliament) or according to particular issues and alliances. Stronger answers may also attempt wider analysis of the COM's role (ie executive or legislature, split executive with Commission; real decision because forum for defence of national institutions, lacks democratic legitimacy of European Parliament, parallels with executive dominance in Westminster) and parallels. Weaker answers may attempt analysis of only a small number of these aspects, or discuss powers and relationships between EU institutions in general with no real focus on the Council of Ministers or on 'real decision-making body'.

For AO3 candidates should address the set question and use appropriate political vocabulary (eg supra-national; democratic). Strong responses are structured and contain sustained arguments and explanations leading to a reasoned conclusion.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE GRID

AS Assessment Objective	Marks allocated by Assessment Objective Part (a) question	Marks allocated by Assessment Objective Part (b) Question	Marks allocated by Assessment Objective Part (c) question	Total Marks by Assessment Objective
AO1	5	4	11	20
AO2	0	4	8	12
AO3	0	2	6	8
Total	5	10	25	40