



A-level POLITICS 7152/2

Paper 2 Comparative Politics: Government and Politics of the USA

Mark scheme

June 2019

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the average performance for the level. There are marks in each level.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start at the lowest level of the mark scheme and use it as a ladder to see whether the answer meets the descriptor for that level. The descriptor for the level indicates the different qualities that might be seen in the student's answer for that level. If it meets the lowest level then go to the next one and decide if it meets this level, and so on, until you have a match between the level descriptor and the answer. With practice and familiarity you will find that for better answers you will be able to quickly skip through the lower levels of the mark scheme.

When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest. If the answer covers different aspects of different levels of the mark scheme you should use a best fit approach for defining the level and then use the variability of the response to help decide the mark within the level, ie if the response is predominantly level 3 with a small amount of level 4 material it would be placed in level 3 but be awarded a mark near the top of the level because of the level 4 content.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. The descriptors on how to allocate marks can help with this. The exemplar materials used during standardisation will help. There will be an answer in the standardising materials which will correspond with each level of the mark scheme. This answer will have been awarded a mark by the Lead Examiner. You can compare the student's answer with the example to determine if it is the same standard, better or worse than the example. You can then use this to allocate a mark for the answer based on the Lead Examiner's mark on the example.

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other valid points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded no marks.

Levels of response mark scheme for 9-mark questions

0 1 Explain and analyse three reasons why the USA might be described as having a two-party system. **[9 marks]**

0 2 Explain and analyse three ways in which the Bill of Rights protects civil rights and liberties in the USA. **[9 marks]**

0 3 Explain and analyse three ways that structural theory could be used to study the selection of members of the US and UK Supreme Courts. **[9 marks]**

Target AO1: 6 marks, AO2: 3 marks

Level	Marks	Descriptors
3	7–9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed knowledge of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes is demonstrated and appropriate political vocabulary is used (AO1). Thorough explanations and appropriate selection of accurate supporting examples demonstrates detailed understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes (AO1). Analysis of three clear points will be structured, clearly focused on the question and confidently developed in to a coherent answer (AO2).
2	4–6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally sound knowledge of political concepts, institutions and processes is demonstrated and generally appropriate political vocabulary is used (AO1). Some development of explanations and generally appropriate selection of supporting examples demonstrates generally accurate understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes, though further detail may be required in places and some inaccuracies may be present (AO1). Analysis will be developed in most places, though some points may be descriptive or in need of further development. Answers will, for the most part, be clearly expressed and show some organisation in the presentation of material (AO2). <p>Students who only make two relevant points will be limited to this level.</p>
1	1–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited knowledge of political concepts, institutions and processes is demonstrated and little or no appropriate political vocabulary is used (AO1). Limited development of explanations and selection of supporting examples demonstrates limited understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes, with further detail required and inaccuracies present throughout (AO1). Analysis will take the form of description for the most part. Coherence and structure will be limited (AO2). <p>Students who only make one relevant point will be limited to this level.</p>
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing worthy of credit.

0	1
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Explain and analyse three reasons why the USA might be described as having a two-party system.

[9 marks]

Indicative content

In their explanations and analysis, students should be expected to cover areas such as the following:

- explanation and analysis of what a two-party system is (where 80% or more of votes and seats are won by two-parties) and the fact that a duopoly between the Democrat and Republican parties has existed in the US since the nineteenth century
- explanation and analysis of how the first-past-the-post electoral system used for congressional elections and the operation of the Electoral College for the election of the president impacts and favours the two main parties
- explanation and analysis of the strength of partisan alignment with the two main parties both historically and today
- explanation and analysis of the financial and campaigning advantages enjoyed by the two parties in terms of contributions from PACs and Super PACs
- explanation and analysis of the impact of the two parties being 'internal coalitions' or big tent parties covering all parts of the political spectrum from liberal left to conservative right thus leaving little 'ideological space' for other parties to gain votes
- explanation and analysis of the electoral disadvantages faced by third parties and independent candidates, for example, difficult ballot access or the 'appropriation' of their policies by the two main parties.

Students are required to consider only three reasons why the USA might be described as having a two-party system. If a student exceeds this number reward only the best three. However, some may include relevant points not listed above and these should be credited. If a student gives only one or two examples they will receive a maximum of three and six marks respectively.

0	2
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Explain and analyse three ways in which the Bill of Rights protects civil rights and liberties in the USA.

[9 marks]

Indicative content

In their explanations and analysis, students should be expected to cover areas such as the following:

- explanation and analysis of the Bill of Rights as being part of the US Constitution and that it constitutes the first ten constitutional amendments to be ratified
- explanation and analysis of the composition of the Bill of Rights and the concept of limited government. For example, amendment 1 is directed at Congress, amendments 2 to 4 are focused on executive power, amendments 5 to 8 focus on judicial processes and the final two, reserved powers to the people and the state
- explanation and analysis of the role of the Supreme Court in interpreting the Bill of Rights via landmark rulings, with appropriate examples. Some students may argue that it is not the Bill of Rights (some amendments lack clarity) that is important but the Supreme Court which has the job of interpreting these rights. For example, there has been controversy about Amendment 2 and whether it does unequivocally guarantee the right of gun ownership to all citizens.

Students are required to consider only three ways in which the Bill of Rights protects rights and civil liberties in the USA. If a student exceeds this number reward only the best three. However, some may include relevant points not listed above and these should be credited. If a student gives only one or two examples they will receive a maximum of three and six marks respectively.

0	3
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Explain and analyse three ways that structural theory could be used to study the selection of members of the US and UK Supreme Courts.

[9 marks]

Indicative content

In their explanations and analysis of three ways that structural theory can be used to study the selection of members of the US and UK Supreme Courts students may choose areas such as the following:

- explanation and analysis of structural theory and how it can be applied to understanding the selection of senior judges in the US and UK. This approach focuses on the institutions in a political system and the processes within them. It views institutions as structures and places significance on the functions of institutions and the environment in which the structures exist (such as legal frameworks, political culture, prevailing ideologies). A structural approach suggests that political outcomes are largely determined by the formal processes laid out within a political system. It also provides a means of recognising differences in constitutional and governmental frameworks of power. Students may also offer a critical analysis of the theory highlighting limitations of this approach.
- explanation and analysis of the constitutional structures providing the context for the selection of members of the US and UK Supreme Courts such as the separation of powers, formal checks and balances, the veto, independence and impartiality.
- explanation and analysis of the ways in which the structure of the appointments processes have evolved in the US and UK such as the presence or absence of independent structures concerned with appointments (the UK Judicial Appointments Commission).
- explanation and analysis of the roles of the legislative structures in the US and UK in the nomination/confirmation of members of the Supreme Courts.
- explanation and analysis of the roles of the executive structures in the US and UK in the nomination/confirmation of members of the Supreme Courts.
- explanation and analysis of the extent to which the selection structures for members of the US and UK Supreme Courts can be said to have become politicised.
- explanation and analysis of the length of service and tenure of Supreme Court judges in the US and UK and or the structures of the career paths and qualifications required by members of the UK and US Supreme Courts.

Students are required to consider only three aspects of how structural theory could be used to study the selection of senior judges in the US and UK. If a student exceeds this number, reward only the best three. However, some may include relevant points not listed above and these should be credited. If a student gives only one or two examples, they will receive a maximum of three and six marks respectively.

Levels of response mark scheme for 25-mark extract-based essay

0 4 Analyse, evaluate and compare the different arguments in the above extract regarding the use of the Electoral College as the method of electing the US President.

[25 marks]

Target AO1: 5 marks, AO2: 10 marks, AO3: 10 marks

Level	Marks	Descriptors
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support analysis of the issue under discussion (AO1). Analysis of the extract is balanced and confidently developed. Evaluation of the above leads to well substantiated conclusions that are consistent with the preceding discussion. (AO3). Relevant perspectives and/or the status of the extract are successfully evaluated in the process of constructing arguments (AO3). The answer is well organised, coherent and has a sustained analytical focus on the question (AO2).
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support analysis of the issue under discussion, though further detail may be required in places (AO1). Analysis of the extract is balanced and developed, though some elements of the analysis could be expanded and/or developed further. Evaluation of the above leads to conclusions that show some substantiation and are consistent with the preceding discussion (AO3). Relevant perspectives and/or the status of the extract are evaluated in constructing arguments, although in some places there could be further development of the evaluation (AO3). The answer is well organised, analytical in style and is focused on the question as set.
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally sound knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support points made, though inaccuracies will be present (AO1) Analytical points relating to the extract are made and developed in places, showing some balance, though some points are descriptive rather than analytical. (AO2). Evaluation of the above leads to conclusions that are consistent with the preceding discussion, but that lack substantiation (AO3) Relevant perspectives and/or the status of the extract are commented on in constructing arguments, though evaluation is lacking depth. (AO3) The answer is organised, occasionally analytical and focused on the question as set.
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support points made, though these contain inaccuracies and irrelevant material (AO1). Analysis of the extract takes the form of description in most places, with some attempt at balance, though many points are unsupported assertions (AO2). Some attempt to draw conclusions is made, but these lack depth and clear development from the preceding discussion (AO3).

1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes, with inaccuracies and irrelevant material present throughout (AO1). • Analysis of the extract takes the form of description and assertion, with little or no attempt made at balance (AO2). • Conclusions, when offered, are asserted and have an implicit relationship to the preceding discussion (AO3). • Little or no evaluation of relevant perspectives and the status of the extract is present (AO3). • The answer shows little organisation and does not address the question (AO2).
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit.

0 4 Analyse, evaluate and compare the different arguments in the above extracts regarding the use of the Electoral College as the method of electing the US President.

[25 marks]

Indicative content

In the analysis and evaluation of the Electoral College as the method of electing the US President, as made in the extract, students should be expected to cover areas such as the following:

- analysis and evaluation of the Electoral College (EC) system as the method of electing the US President as presented in the extract
- analysis and evaluation of why the EC system was set up and how the EC works
- analysis and evaluation of the criticisms of the EC presented in the extract; that the antiquated characteristics of the EC make it possible for the winner of the popular vote to lose the election to the winner of the EC vote as in 2000 or 2016
- analysis of the problem of the ‘faithless’ or ‘rogue’ elector that periodically occurs as evidence of the EC being out-dated and in need of reform. Students may also present the counter argument that ‘faithless electors’ are rare and have **never** made a difference to the outcome of an election
- evaluation and comparison of why Charles Fried defends the EC as an appropriate method for electing the President; the importance of the EC as part of a federal system of government, with well-established and jealously guarded states’ rights (to elect the President)
- analysis and evaluation of the argument that despite vote distortions, the EC has produced winners with democratic legitimacy in the majority of elections. This should be backed up by evidence and examples, eg knowing that problems with the EC have been rare (1888, 2000 and 2016)
- analysis and evaluation that there are no agreed alternatives to the EC system and the fact that there has been no serious challenge to the EC (despite the claims made by the *New York Times* in the extract) from either the US electorate or the states themselves (via constitutional amendment) despite ‘blips’ such as the much criticised 2016 outcome, suggesting satisfaction with the EC
- the analysis and evaluation of any political information is affected by:
 - who the author is – their position or role
 - the type of publication – newspaper, academic journal, electronic media
 - the overt or implicit purpose of the author - to inform, persuade or influence
 - the relevance of the extract to a political issue or concern, and how representative the extract is of a particular viewpoint. Students will be expected to address some of these factors in their analysis and evaluation of the extract
- in relation to the extract reference should be made to the fact that it is adapted from articles published in the first two months after the 2016 US Presidential election (when the winner of the

popular vote Clinton didn't win the election as she lost the Electoral College vote to Trump). Students may note that the *New York Times* is a liberal newspaper which is likely to support modernising the US Constitution, they may also note it had been a strong critic of Donald Trump during the election campaign. The purpose of the editorial is to inform, persuade and contribute to the debate regarding the EC, while Charles Fried gives a defence of the EC.

Students are required to analyse and evaluate the arguments presented in the article. Students who identify which arguments support which of the different views may be awarded marks for analysis (AO2). To gain marks for evaluation (AO3) students must assess the relative strengths of the differing arguments.

The analysis and evaluation must clearly focus on the arguments presented in the article. Students would not need to cover each and every one of the above points to gain high marks; equally, some may introduce further relevant points and these should be credited. The conclusion should clearly focus on the issue in question. In their evaluation, it does not matter what view students reach. However, their position must be supported by their arguments and examples.

Students who fail to focus their discussion on the arguments in the article, however complete their answer may otherwise be, cannot achieve above level 2.

Levels of response mark scheme for 25-mark extract-based essay

0 5 'The use of direct democracy in both the USA and UK is attractive in theory, but undesirable in practice.' Analyse and evaluate this statement. **[25 marks]**

0 6 'Pressure groups are both essential and beneficial to the operation of democracy in the UK and the USA.' Analyse and evaluate this statement. **[25 marks]**

Target AO1: 5 marks, AO2: 10 marks, AO3: 10 marks

Level	Marks	Descriptors
5	21–25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed and accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support analysis of the issue under discussion (AO1). Analysis is balanced and confidently developed. (AO2). Synoptic links are well explained, are focussed on the question and fully supported with relevant and developed examples (AO2). Evaluation of the above leads to well substantiated conclusions that are consistent with the preceding discussion. (AO3). Relevant perspectives are successfully evaluated in the process of constructing arguments (AO3). The answer is well organised, coherent and has a sustained analytical focus on the question (AO2).
4	16–20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accurate knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support analysis of the issue under discussion, though further detail may be required in places (AO1). Analysis is balanced developed, though some elements of the analysis could be expanded and/or developed further. Synoptic links are relevant to the questions as set, and supported with examples. (AO2). Evaluation of the above leads to conclusions that show some substantiation and consistent with the preceding discussion (AO3). Relevant perspectives are evaluated in the process of constructing arguments, although in some places there could be further development of the evaluation (AO3). The answer is well organised, analytical in style and is focused on the question as set.
3	11–15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally sound knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support points made, though inaccuracies will be present (AO1). Analytical points are made and developed in places, showing some balance, though some points are descriptive rather than analytical. Synoptic links will be made, may be supported by examples, though explanation will lack depth (AO2). Evaluation of the above leads to conclusions that are consistent with the preceding discussion, but that lack substantiation (AO3). Relevant perspectives are commented on in the process of constructing arguments, though evaluation is lacking depth. (AO3). The answer is organised, occasionally analytical and focused on the question

		as set.
2	6–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes are used to support points made, though these contain inaccuracies and irrelevant material (AO1). • Analysis takes the form of description in most places, with some attempt at balance, though many points are unsupported assertions (AO2). • Synoptic links tend to be limited and undeveloped. (AO2). • Some attempt to draw conclusions is made, but these lack depth and clear development from the preceding discussion (AO3). • Relevant perspectives are identified, though evaluation will be superficial (AO3). • The answer shows some organisation and makes some attempt to address the question (AO2).
1	1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts, institutions and processes, with inaccuracies and irrelevant material present throughout (AO1). • Analysis takes the form of description and assertion, with little or no attempt made at balance (AO2). • Few if any synoptic links are offered (AO2). • Conclusions, when offered, are asserted and have an implicit relationship to the preceding discussion (AO3). • Little or no evaluation of relevant perspectives is present (AO3). • The answer shows little organisation and does not address the question (AO2).
0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing worthy of credit.

0	5
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'The use of direct democracy in both the USA and UK is attractive in theory, but undesirable in practice.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

[25 marks]

Indicative content

In the analysis and evaluation of the statement students may be expected to cover areas such as the following:

- analysis and evaluation of the use of direct democracy in the US and UK. Students should identify that in the US there are three forms used in many (but not all) US states (but not nationally because of the lack of constitutional provision for their use), initiatives (propositions), referendums and recall elections while in the UK referendums are used at national, regional and local level
- analysis and evaluation of how direct democracy operates in the US and UK. Answers should explain that referendums in the UK are held rarely and are used mainly but not exclusively to 'settle constitutional issues'. This contrasts to the US 'bottom up' system initiated by the voters across a range of public policy areas such as minimum wage levels and fracking, all via the ballot initiative process). Students may argue that direct democracy can be seen as highly democratic, therefore 'attractive in theory', giving 'power to the people' and supporting ideas of popular sovereignty
- analysis and evaluation of the undesirable features of direct democracy in both the US and the UK. Students should recognise that the forms used in both countries are not without their critics and may not be as democratic as they at first appear
- analysis and evaluation of the US, students may focus on some of the following; the methods used to collect the signatures, the sometime dominance of special interests, that initiatives can promote short-term gain against long-term interest and that some propositions have discriminated against minorities
- analysis and evaluation of the UK, students may focus on the fact that low turnouts undermine the legitimacy of results and the fact that governments tend to call referendums only where they want to avoid making a decision or where they feel confident that they will get the result that they are looking for. Students may also refer to Clement Attlee's remarks on referendums (that they are devices 'alien to our traditions' or 'the devices of demagogues and dictators') and the argument that public policy decision-making should remain in the hands of elected and accountable MPs.

Synoptic links may be made in areas such as popular sovereignty, representative democracy and federalism. Any response that does not include synoptic points cannot achieve above level 4.

Students would not need to cover each and every one of the above points to gain high marks; equally, some may introduce further relevant points and these should be credited. The conclusion should clearly focus on the issue in question. In their evaluation, it does not matter what view students reach. However, their position must be supported by their arguments and examples.

0 6

'Pressure groups are both essential and beneficial to the operation of democracy in the UK and the USA.' Analyse and evaluate this statement.

[25 marks]**Indicative content**

In the analysis and evaluation of the statement students may be expected to cover areas such as the following:

- analysis and evaluation that the fundamental aims of pressure groups in both countries are the same; to influence public policy making at all levels of government in the interests of their cause, and to protect/promote the interests of their members
- analysis and evaluation of the key theme that while groups have much in common they operate in very different political and governmental systems. The US has a codified constitution based on a formalised system of a separation of powers, checks and balances including the Bill of Rights, and federalism. The UK has an uncodified constitution, an executive fused with the legislature and less access points
- analysis and evaluation of pluralist theories and the positive advantages of pressure-group activity in dispersing power, representing causes/interests and how they can educate and inform law-makers and citizens in the US and UK
- analysis and evaluation of the elite theory argument and the critical view of pressure group activity that there is no level pressure group playing field in either country. Such arguments may be backed up by reference to inequalities in group resources or to the privileged status given to core insider groups
- analysis and evaluation of US pressure groups students may evaluate Iron triangles, the revolving door syndrome, K-street and professional lobbyists, electioneering, PACs and Super-PACs
- analysis and evaluation of UK pressure groups students may evaluate lobbying and access points (central government, supranational government, sub-national government and local government), differences between insider and outsider groups and the methods/tactics groups use in an attempt to achieve their aims

Synoptic links may be made in areas such as codified and uncodified constitutions, federalism and access points and a fused executive.

Students would not need to cover each and every one of the above points to gain high marks; equally, some may introduce further relevant points and these should be credited. The conclusion should clearly focus on the issue in question. In their evaluation, it does not matter what view students reach. However, their position must be supported by their arguments and examples.