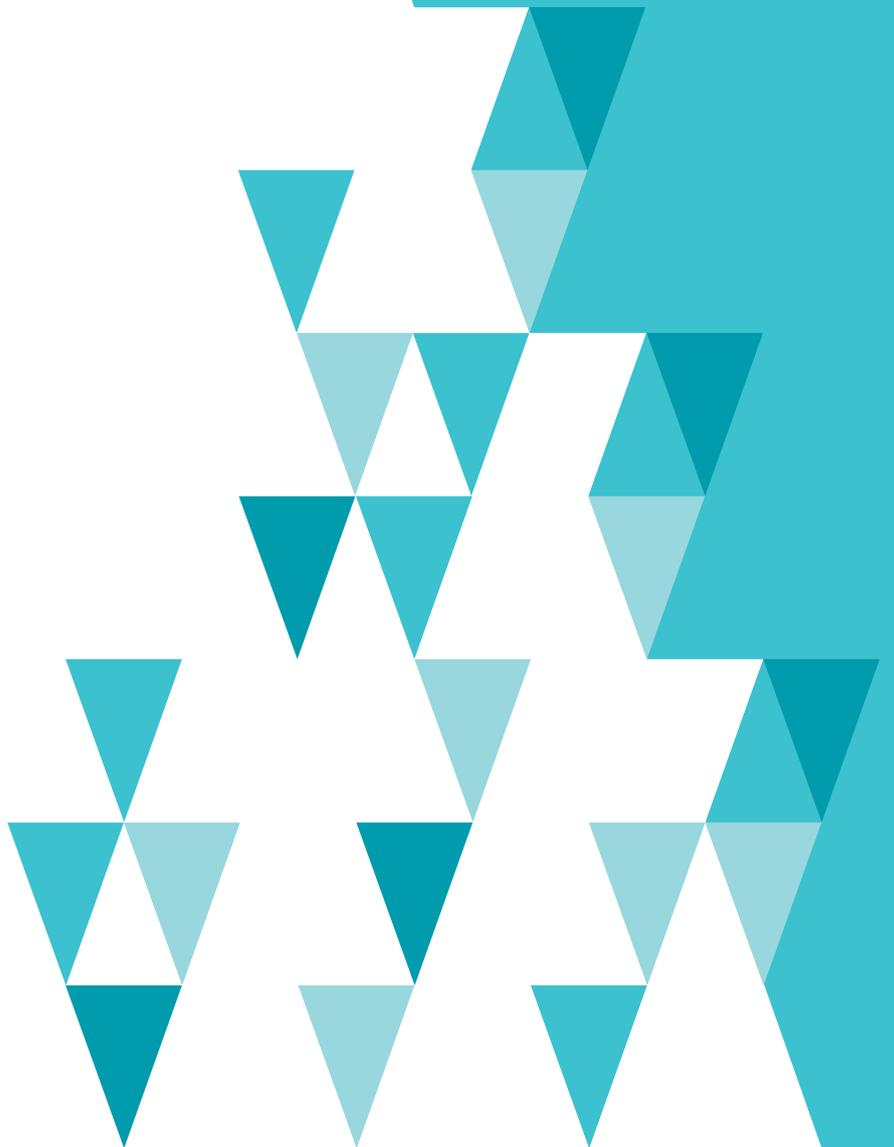


GCSE



**Chief Examiner's Report**  
**Government**  
**and Politics**

Summer Series 2019





## Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2019 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's section on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk).



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# GCSE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## Chief Examiner's Report

### Overview

This was the first full award of the GCSE and in line with the experience of the partial award last year the standard has remained high with a very pleasing set of outcomes in both assessment units.

### Assessment Unit 1 Democracy in Action

The paper prompted a wide standard and range of responses. The level of language used in the examination was appropriate for all candidates. Strong candidates were given the opportunity to respond positively and fully to the questions posed, while the paper was accessible to weaker candidates also. Section A was generally very well answered, with the grid questions in particular being very accessible to all candidates. Section B was also quite well answered with most candidates able to produce examples to illustrate their arguments. The sources were very clearly understood. Section C was slightly more challenging, but Question 20 was generally very well answered with candidates obviously having prepared for this question.

- Q1** The vast majority of candidates correctly answered this question. A small number either did not respond or gave an example from Northern Ireland such as stating the Assembly instead of the House of Commons. Candidates could access full marks if they simply said 'Commons'.
- Q2** This question was exceptionally well answered with a wide range of appropriate methods of legitimate coercion given.
- Q3** The majority of candidates responded clearly and positively to this question. A small number failed to fully grasp the concept of separation of powers and therefore answered incorrectly.
- Q4** The vast majority of candidates correctly identified this was a question about the 'Official' opposition. Simply stating 'the opposition' was sufficient to get full marks. A small number of candidates did not answer correctly with a range of inaccurate responses of which 'unelected' was the most frequent.
- Q5** The vast majority of candidates correctly identified the term. Both words needed to be correct for full marks to be awarded.
- Q6** The vast majority of candidates had no difficulty in explaining this term.
- Q7** The vast majority of candidates correctly answered this question. A small number gave a specific example of an actual constituency which was anticipated in the mark scheme and therefore deemed admissible, provided the area given was correct.
- Q8** The vast majority of candidates had no difficulty in selecting an appropriate response. This was an exceptionally well answered response.
- Q9** Nearly all candidates made the correct selection and there was evidence to suggest that having a list to choose from was helpful to candidates in terms of accessibility.
- Q10** In the main candidates answered this question correctly. However, a number gave an example of a referendum rather than an argument for holding one. In some cases partial marks were awarded if there was some material more relevant to the question set.

- Q11** This was an exceptionally well answered question with candidates having little difficulty in identifying appropriate responses.
- Q12** The vast majority of candidates correctly identified 'Question Time' as a key scrutiny mechanism. A small number confused this with the popular television programme of the same name and therefore failed to fully answer the question. Partial marks were awarded for responses which offered some relevant material.
- Q13** More able candidates correctly completed the grid gaining full marks. A small number of candidates failed to get all of the definitions correctly matched and therefore lost one or two marks in this task.
- Q14** The majority of candidates correctly identified statements in the question. A small number failed to correctly assign one or two of the statements with some confusion and demonstrated with regard to the statement 'taxes should be kept as low as possible so people can choose how they spend their earnings'.
- Q15** This question required candidates to make reference to the source provided in order to answer the question fully. A failure to refer to the source or to utilise the information provided in it resulted in some candidates' responses being capped at a Level 2 (3 marks). If only one argument was provided the marks were capped at Level 2 as the question requires more than one argument to be provided. There was no requirement for additional evidence in this response and therefore marks were not deducted for failing to provide additional evidence. The majority of candidates made good use of the source and provided at least one other argument in favour of using demonstrations and protests as a way of achieving political aims. A small number gave arguments against using demonstrations and protests as a way of achieving political aims, which therefore meant that their responses did not address the question and limited the marks awarded.
- Q16** This question required candidates to explain why protests and demonstrations are banned in some societies. Marks were awarded for a wide range of reasons and most candidates made reference to a good range with adequate or better than adequate explanation. The difference between democracies and dictatorships in this regard was noted and some excellent points and examples given. The top marks were given to those who were able to give more than one explanation with relevant supporting examples. There is no need for more than one example for each point being made, however, answers which made no reference to any evidence at all were capped at top Level 2 (4 marks). Those who only provided one explanation were also capped at the top of Level 2 (4 marks). The vast majority of candidates had no difficulty identifying a range of reasons with some supporting evidence.
- Q17** This question required candidates to explain the arguments in favour of compulsory voting with reference to the source provided. The source gave two reasons; an increase in voting participation in general and an increase in two demographic groups, in particular, the young and the unemployed. A range of other arguments could have been suggested such as; it would increase political legitimacy, it would mean all groups would be better represented, political parties would need to increase their appeal to a wider range of people/groups. Those who either failed to refer to the source or who only provided one argument were capped at Level 2 (4 marks). This question presented the most challenge for candidates with many relying heavily on the source.

- Q18** This question required candidates to utilise the source provided in order to explain factors which influence voter turnout. The source identified voter apathy as one factor. Those who failed to identify another factor, failed to refer to the source or did not provide examples, were capped at the top of Level 2 (6 marks). This was an exceptionally well answered question with the vast majority of candidates achieving a Level 2 or higher as a result of providing a good range of relevant factors, making appropriate use of the source and giving useful examples to illustrate the points being made.
- Q19** This question required candidates to make a case in support of the view that the media has too much influence over the outcomes of elections and referendums. Those who failed to give any supporting evidence or who failed to give more than one supporting argument were capped at the top of Level 2. This question proved challenging for less able candidates who resorted to simply listing examples with little reference to explanation or relevant arguments. Better candidates were able to identify a number of relevant arguments with some explanation of each and with relevant examples, where appropriate. A very small number of candidates spent a considerable amount of time giving examples and arguments against the statement, in other words doing the opposite to what was asked. Whilst this did not carry any specific penalty it was of no relevance to the question and was therefore no help to the candidate, but took away from the time they had to construct their answer to this question. It should be stressed that this is a one-sided response which does not require candidates to provide a balanced answer.
- Q20** This was the most challenging question on the paper as it required a balanced response with a wide range of points on both sides of the argument and supporting evidence. The vast majority of candidates coped exceptionally well with this question by successfully giving a balanced response covering the full range of issues identified in the question guidelines and supported by ample explanation and evidence. A very small number confused the policies of the political parties and two referred to Northern Ireland parties and policies rather than those of the UK parties. The best responses identified the strong overlap in some of the policy areas but also the degree to which UK politics has become more polarised around issues such as austerity and immigration. Those who provided a one-sided response or a response devoid of examples attained a maximum Level 3.

## Assessment Unit 2      International Politics in Action

### Overview

The paper was slightly more challenging than Unit 1, however, it still allowed for a wide standard and range of responses. Strong candidates, of which there were many, were given the opportunity to respond positively and fully to the questions posed while the paper remained accessible to weaker candidates also. Overall the standard of responses was high with a number of candidates scoring close to full marks. Section A was very well answered with the grid style question being particularly well answered. Section B was quite well answered with most candidates making good use of the sources. Section C proved more challenging with most candidates performing better in Question 19 than in Question 20. A small number confused NATO for the UN in their responses to Question 20, which undermined the quality of their responses.

- Q1** The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly.
- Q2** The vast majority of candidates had no difficulty correctly identifying a member of NATO, one or two left this response blank and a very small number made an incorrect identification.
- Q3** The majority of candidates correctly answered this question, a small number answered incorrectly. The benefit of the doubt was given to the candidates who identified a group who might need the services of the Equality Commission rather than an area of responsibility.
- Q4** The vast majority of candidates identified a relevant law with ease and often in considerable detail.
- Q5** The majority of candidates had little difficulty identifying the term 'decommissioning' some used another term to indicate the same process and this was awarded. A very few either left this question blank or gave an incorrect response.
- Q6** An overwhelming majority of candidates correctly identified the meaning of the term NATO.
- Q7** The majority of candidates correctly identified an area of dispute between the political parties in Northern Ireland. Some of these responses were nuanced and indicated a sophisticated knowledge of local politics. A very small number incorrectly identified areas on which the parties have reached agreement.
- Q8** The vast majority of candidates correctly identified two problems caused by migration with some giving examples to support their suggestions, which they did not need to do. A very small number gave the same issue twice, a common issue with this type of question, which unfortunately resulted in those candidates accessing half of the marks for the question.
- Q9** The vast majority of candidates correctly identified two permanent members of the United Nations. A very small number either made incorrect identifications or left this question blank. These responses were characteristic of candidates who in the rest of the paper showed evidence of a lack of rigorous preparation and a high number of unanswered responses.
- Q10** The vast majority of candidates achieved full marks in this question with a small minority getting partial marks for one correct identification.
- Q11** The vast majority of candidates clearly identified two relevant push factors with many giving extensive explanation and examples.

- Q12** This question proved more challenging for weaker candidates. A number of candidates received partial marks for a reasonable attempt to define the meaning of the term with a small minority getting no marks as a result of either leaving the response blank or providing a confused and incorrect response.
- Q13** The vast majority of candidates provided two clear provisions of the Good Friday Agreement. A small number received partial marks as a result of providing one accurate provision and one incorrect response.
- Q14** The vast majority of candidates completed the grid task with no difficulty and many obtained full marks. A small number confused two of the definitions with the most challenging being the last two, asylum seeker and economic migrant.
- Q15** This question required candidates to make reference to the source provided in order to describe how the Good Friday Agreement required Unionists and Nationalists to share power. A failure to refer to the source or to utilise the information provided in it resulted in some candidates' responses being capped at a Level 2 (3 marks). If only one way was provided the marks were capped at Level 2 as the question requires one reason from the source and one from the candidates' own knowledge. There was no need for additional evidence in this response and therefore marks were not deducted for failing to provide additional evidence.
- Q16** The responses to this question were exceptional. The question required candidates to explain how policing was reformed in Northern Ireland as part of the peace process. Marks were awarded for a wide range of reforms, which most candidates provided. Top marks went to those who were able to give more than one explanation with relevant supporting examples. There is no need for more than one example for each point being made, however, answers which made no reference to any evidence at all were capped at a top Level 2 (4 marks). Those who only provided one explanation or one way the Police Service was reformed were also capped at a top Level 2 (4 marks).
- Q17** This question required candidates to utilise a source provided to describe the types of sanctions used by the UN Security Council to maintain peace. The source notes that the sanctions were the strictest imposed this century and were a result of North Korea ignoring previous UN sanctions. Those who either failed to refer to the source or who only provided one type of sanction were capped at Level 2 (4 marks). The majority of candidates coped well with this question and provided solid responses. A small number explained why sanctions were used instead of focusing on different types of sanctions.
- Q18** This question required candidates to explain how UN Security Council peacekeepers maintain peace. The best responses identified a range of ways the UN Security Council has maintained peace, explained these and provided supporting examples. Top marks went to those who offered a range of points with detailed explanation and some supporting evidence. Those who failed to offer some supporting evidence were capped at a top Level 2 (6 marks).
- Q19** This question required candidates to make a case in support of the view that migrants bring benefits to society. For the most part the responses to this question were exceptional with several candidates attaining top marks. Those who failed to give any supporting evidence or who failed to give more than one supporting argument were capped at the top of Level 2. The best answers were able to clearly identify and explain the case referring to a range of supporting arguments with a good range of evidence.

**Q20** This was the most challenging question on the paper. It required a balanced response with a range of points on both sides of the argument and supporting evidence. Some candidates struggled with the first bullet point addressing military and non-military action but coped well with the second and third. Case studies were well utilised and drawn from the support material provided. The majority of candidates provided outstanding responses which gave detailed and well-structured arguments. Those who provided a one-sided response or a response devoid of examples attained a maximum Level 3.

## Contact details

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