

Mark Scheme (Results)

January 2012

GCE Government & Politics 6GP04 4A
EU POLITICAL ISSUES

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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.

1	How far has the EU been effective in protecting social rights?
Indicative content	
<p>Candidates should demonstrate an understanding that this is a growing area of importance in what was originally designed to be an economic institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Social Chapter of the Maastricht Treaty was the first major policy document dealing with this area, and was seen as a major step forward for the rights of workers. • However, the EU was not fully able to protect citizens' rights as the UK negotiated an opt-out from this section of Maastricht on the grounds of sovereignty. Nonetheless, the Labour government did sign the Social Chapter in 1997, so bringing the UK into line with the rest of the EU. • The UK did agree to the extension of the Schengen Agreement, which <u>planned</u> completely free movement of people and equal citizenship rights throughout the EU. • The UK was also resistant to the European Convention of Human Rights, only adopting this into a Human Rights Act in 1998- however, all other member states adopted either all or most of the Convention. • The Amsterdam Treaty further extended rights in areas such as consumer protection and freedom of information, but this largely confirmed previous agreements. • The proposed Constitution Treaty would have established a Charter of Fundamental Rights, but failed due to fears of a loss of sovereignty and the potential impact of economies in particular. Its replacement, the Lisbon Treaty also contained a Charter, but allowed member states to opt-out of certain clauses for special national reasons. • The institutions of the EU also play a role in protecting citizens' rights e.g. the European Parliament and Council of Ministers cover policy areas such as consumer protection and equal opportunities, and the ECJ gives individuals and organisations a body to appeal to. 	
LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
Level 3 (11-15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.
Level 2 (6-10 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
Level 1 (0-5 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.

2	Explain the main consequences of EU enlargement since 2004.
Indicative content	
<p>Candidates should demonstrate an awareness that the consequences of enlargement have affected both individual member states and the EU as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EU's agricultural land increased by 40% and added seven million farmers to the existing six million. • The Eurozone has grown, and will continue to do so as member states fulfil the economic requirements- however, the economic instability seen in some of the new eastern member countries, such as Latvia and Hungary, has potentially made voters in the West even warier of further enlargement. Such fears led to the blocking of Montenegro's application at the 2011 summit. • It is now the world's biggest integrated economic area, with half a billion people producing 30% of global economic output and 17% of world trade. • Income per capita and economic growth has risen, while unemployment has declined in the new member states. However, the UK has seen a 40% rise in income-related benefit claim, from citizens of the eight eastern European countries which joined the EU in 2004 • Measures have been taken to streamline decision-making, such as the reform of the European Commission 	
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3	How successfully have the coalition partners in the UK resolved their differences over the EU?
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Indicative content

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness that the coalition partners, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, historically have very ideological different positions on Europe, but have had to come to a compromise on the issue in government.

- The Conservative Party are in general opposed to further integration into the EU, particularly any moves to giving up sovereignty. They have stated that they will not join the Euro, and will try to negotiate further opt-outs. Consequently, they encourage the idea of a 'two-speed' Europe.
- **However**, the party has been divided over the issue of Europe, with a minority in favour of European integration, and a further minority desiring UK withdrawal from the EU altogether.
- The Liberal Democrats have always been the most supportive party on Europe. They support further integration, joining the Euro and an extension of subsidiarity- but all of these should be in conjunction with further democratisation of institutions.
- **In coalition**, the two parties have agreed to try to put the UK at the heart of European matters, as both parties wished to do before coming in to power- indeed, David Cameron has led the way in negotiating an EU budget freeze.
- The Liberal Democrats have had to compromise on their desire to further integrate with the EU, giving way to the Conservative opposition to integration by agreeing to prevent any further transfer of powers to the EU during this Parliament.
- The Liberal Democrats have also agreed to the Conservative plan for a "referendum lock" on any future treaties. In fact, a rebellion over the proposed EU bill was launched by Conservative backbenchers rather than the Liberal Democrats, suggesting that the Conservative Party itself is more divided over Europe than the coalition.
- The Conservatives appear to have dominated the coalition's platform on Europe, as the coalition has also declared that they will not join the Euro.

Candidates may argue that there are actually more divisions within the Conservative Party rather than within the coalition, citing historical divisions and also more recent events such as the referendum debate in October 2011 where 80 MPs defied the government whip and voted for an EU referendum.

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4	To what extent has the problem of the EU's 'democratic deficit' been resolved?	
Indicative content		
<p>Candidates should demonstrate a clear understanding of what is meant by the 'democratic deficit', and that this has been an ongoing criticism since its inception.</p> <p>Actions taken to resolve it include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Amsterdam Treaty established a consensus on the need to make the EU more democratic, however the final treaty focused more on how to manage enlargement rather than the 'democratic deficit'• The appointment of Commissioners is still closed, and is still an unelected body, despite being the central executive of the EU. Arguably, it has become less representative as enlargement has led to a reduction in the number of commissioners, with a rota system in place• While the European Parliament can, and has, remove the whole EC, it has no power to remove individual commissioners- only member states can do so• There is now a greater balance of power between various institutions, with the extension of codecision• The Nice Treaty suggested including a Charter of Fundamental Rights, which would have strengthened rights throughout the EU, but this aspect of the talks was not included in the final treaty• The proposed Constitution Treaty would, arguably have dealt with the 'democratic deficit' by reforms to decision-making and a clearer system of checks and balances• The European Parliament produced a revised code of conduct for MEPs and a joint EU Commission-European Parliament register of lobbyists- registration, however, is still voluntary		

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Level 3 (11-15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.
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5	Explain the consequences of the global financial crisis for monetary union.
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Indicative content

Candidates should demonstrate an awareness that the Euro has survived the global financial crisis, but not without its problems.

Candidates may describe how many countries were unable to keep their budget deficit below the agreed 3% of GDP e.g. Greece, Spain and Ireland and how government borrowing costs have subsequently soared. The European Central Bank has also had to buy billions of euros of sovereign debt to ease the pressure on the countries seen as the most vulnerable, and plans to double its reserves to 10.8bn euros. The growth of the Eurozone economy has weakened, growing only 0.3% in the final quarter of 2010, leading to a decline in confidence in the long-term survival of the euro, particularly in light of the Greek financial bailout.

Candidates may refer to the following reasons for the problems they describe:

- The EU lacks a supranational body that can make a quick decision in times of crisis
- Lack of stability mechanisms embedded in the process- the member states are now negotiating introducing such mechanisms, but are facing difficulties as some countries fear this will lead to tax harmonisation or further reinforce the idea of a 'two-speed Europe'
- The proposed EFSF is not big enough to bail out further e.g. Spain
- The crisis has led to persistent fears about the levels of debt in some member states, which has caused their cost of borrowing to reach record levels- leading to subsequent concerns that these countries may become bankrupt which will inevitably impact on the rest of the Eurozone e.g. Greece and Italy
- The goal of monetary stability has also made it difficult for member states and the ECB to react quickly to the international financial crisis- the 2008 crisis saw individual member states introducing measures to combat the crisis rather than turning to the ECB
- The lack of flexibility imposed by a single interest rate has led to uncompetitive economies suffering rapid unemployment in the recent economic downturn

LEVELS	DESCRIPTORS
Level 3 (11-15 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Good to excellent ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Good to excellent ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary.
Level 2 (6-10 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Limited to sound ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary.
Level 1 (0-5 marks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates. • Very poor to weak ability to analyse and explain political information, arguments and explanations. • Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary.

Indicative content

Candidates should demonstrate an understanding of the fact that the role of the European Parliament has changed significantly since the inception of the EU, but it is still subject to criticism for its perceived lack of powers.

The European Parliament is the only directly elected institution of the EU, but is largely a consultative body rather than a legislative one. It is also arguably the institution that lies at the centre of the EU's 'democratic deficit', as despite being the body that should be most representative of member states' views (as an elected body, suggesting it should have a clear mandate), it is also one of the weakest institutions in the EU.

There is no central EU government through the EP, and indeed, unlike national parliaments, there is no sense of government or opposition, only groupings of loosely allied groups of individual MEPs or national political parties. This makes the EP unwieldy, and lacking a clear sense of direction and an ability to act quickly and decisively. Subsequently, decisions can take a long time, backing up the idea that the EP is a 'talking shop'. This is reinforced by the lack of leadership in the EP, particularly when the EP is trying to deal with external bodies. The EP also has no involvement in determining the executive of the EU- this also prevents the EP from acting as any sort of check on the executive bodies of the EU, again limiting its powers.

The authority of the EP is also called into question by the lack of mandate shared by MEPs- they are elected on national rather than European platforms, and so find themselves undermined by institutions like the Council, which is made up of national ministers from member states who arguably have more authority than the EP. These ministers are also only answerable to their own national governments, not the EP.

Nevertheless, the EP has been reformed over the years to strengthen and extend its remit. Most of these reforms have taken place since the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, and include co-decision and co-operation. Co-decision, for example, gives the EP equal legislative status with the Council, over some functions of the EU, co-operation is a lesser role. Other areas where the role of the EP has been strengthened include approval of the budget, a veto over Commission appointments (and the Commission President) and the ability to remove the Commission as a whole, drafting legislation and calling commissioners to account for their actions before committee meetings. Accredited pressure groups and citizens of the EU can also now petition the EP, who may act on such petitions with additional debates or proposing legislation.

Examples of actions by the EP include:

- Rejecting the Commission nominee Rocco Buttiglione for Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security in 2004.
- Delaying ratification of the Directive on a Single Services Market and adding several hundred amendments in 2006- heavily influencing the shape of the final directive
- Reporting more frequently on human rights in member and non-member states, and thus influencing attitudes towards prospective member states e.g. Turkey

However, the role of the EP is still limited in some ways. For example, the EP's role was left virtually unchanged by the Lisbon Treaty- it still has little influence over CFSP or the CAP. It cannot dismiss individual commissioners, and is still largely advisory only when it comes to drafting legislation. There is also still a lack of a democratic mandate or party coherence. While decisions are still largely made by national governments via the Council, it is unlikely that the EP will be seen as significantly influential within the EU- either by the EU institutions themselves, national governments or EU citizens.

A01	Knowledge and understanding
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
A02	Intellectual skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations
A02	Synoptic skills
Level 3 (9-12 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and clear insight into how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and a reliable awareness of how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
Level 1 (0-4 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to identify competing viewpoints or perspectives, and a little awareness of how they affect the interpretation of political events or issues and shape conclusions
A03	Communication and coherence
Level 3 (7-9 marks)	Good to excellent knowledge ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making good use of appropriate vocabulary
Level 2 (4-6 marks)	Limited to sound ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making some use of appropriate vocabulary
Level 1 (0-3 marks)	Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments, making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary

7	To what extent is the UK still the EU's 'awkward partner'?
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Indicative content	
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Candidates should demonstrate an awareness of the idea that the UK has been seen as reluctant to integrate fully in the EU, and has preferred to emphasise its other links with the USA and the Commonwealth instead.

The main focus of this answer, however, should be on the UK today and not the historical background to why the UK has been "awkward".

UK policy towards Europe is very much dependant on the party in power at the time. The New Labour government under Tony Blair was seen as more pro-EU than previous governments, with the stated aim of putting the UK at the heart of Europe. Actions such as signing the Social Chapter of Maastricht and incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights in to the Human Rights Act signalled a more Europe-friendly attitude in the UK. However, New Labour was still perceived as keeping a distance from the EU with its reluctance to join the Eurozone- the 5 economic tests set up by Chancellor Gordon Brown suggested that the UK was keen to join when the conditions were right, but even after the conditions were met, the UK still did not join and has no current plans to do so.

Prime Ministers Blair and Brown, nonetheless, openly supported the Constitutional Treaty and were both keen to further widen and deepen EU integration. Brown did, however, insist that there were certain 'red lines' that the UK would not allow the EU to 'cross', on areas such as law and order, tax harmonisation, social policy and welfare.

The current coalition government has had to compromise to a certain extent on EU policy, as the two parties had quite differing pre-coalition platforms on Europe. Historically, the Conservative Party have long been divided over the issue of Europe, but with the election of David Cameron been at least less vocal in their suspicion and disapproval of the EU. Cameron has rejected withdrawal from the EU as not in the UK's best interest, but also stated his opposition to further political integration. He does, however, argue that the UK should play a leading role in shaping EU policy and fully supports further enlargement.

The Liberal Democrats are ideologically supportive of the EU, and believe the EU needs to be further integrated and reformed to make it more democratic and efficient. They support enlargement and also argue that the UK should join the Eurozone.

In coalition, the parties have agreed a "referendum lock" on any future integration, suggesting that the UK will be resistant to any further reforms after the Lisbon Treaty. However, they have also agreed that the UK should continue to be at the heart of Europe and should fully support future enlargement.

Stronger candidates may make reference to the recent failed referendum bid in October 2011 that was triggered by an e-petition and showed clear divisions remain within the Conservative Party over Europe.

The strongest candidate may also discuss the debate over the role Britain should play in attempts to resolve the Eurozone crisis. These would most likely focus on the debate over whether or not Britain should use such talks to re-negotiate Britain's membership terms.

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Level 2 (5-8 marks)	Limited to sound knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories or debates
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Indicative content

Candidates may argue a case in general terms, or apply the question to the UK experience, citing political party viewpoints.

Arguments in favour of the motion could include:

- There are still areas of policy where unanimous voting is required, thus allowing member states to exercise a veto over certain key areas
- Many areas of policy are still subject to intergovernmental decisions, where member states can exert influence over the decisions made- though this often depends on the size of the member state
- States can use certain institutions e.g. the Committee of the Regions and the European Court of Justice to pursue their own interests
- States can also use their national representation in the European Parliament and Commission to raise issues of particular importance to them
- Many issues of importance are still outwith EU control e.g. much economic policy, most social policy and civil and criminal law
- States still have the ultimate "nuclear option" of withdrawing from the EU to preserve sovereignty
- Some states have been able to negotiate opt-outs on policies and treaties e.g. the UK has not joined the Eurozone, and the Lisbon Treaty contained clauses that allowed member states to opt out of the statements of fundamental human rights for special national reasons
- Arguably, sovereignty has been pooled rather than lost, strengthening member states on the international stage

Arguments against the motion could include:

- State joining the EU have to agree to all previous treaties and agreements, and cannot pick and choose which ones they wish to implement in their own countries. For example, the most recent members in 2004 and 2007 are expected to join the Eurozone once their economies meet the requirements
- There has been a gradual erosion of sovereignty over the years, with the extension of EU influence over additional areas e.g. agriculture and the environment, and with the extension of QMV
- The degree to which member states can protect its interests can depend on how much leverage it has- this has become particularly pertinent for the newest member states, who have seen their influence over the European Commission, for example, reduced by the new rota system for Commissioners. QMV has also helped larger countries over smaller ones, as they were able to form voting blocks to influence decisions made
- States must follow EU regulations or face large fines e.g. the UK faces a £300m fine for breaching air quality regulations in London
- Some policy areas are best dealt with on a global level e.g. organised crime, the environment, drugs trafficking
- Member states are also subject to rulings by the European Court of Justice, which is now the final court of appeal e.g. companies in the UK has had to revise how car insurance is decided after a ruling stated that gender cannot be used as a factor for determining premiums

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Level 1	Very poor to weak ability to construct and communicate coherent arguments,

(0-3 marks)	making little or no use of appropriate vocabulary
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SUMMARY A2 MARKING GRIDS

These grids should be used in conjunction with the fuller Level descriptors.

PART A - SHORT QUESTIONS (15 marks)

Level 3	Excellent	15
	Very good	13-14
	Good	11-12
Level 2	Sound	10
	Basic	8-9
	Limited	6-7
Level 1	Weak	4-5
	Poor	2-3
	Very poor	0-1

PART B – ESSAY QUESTIONS (45 marks)

AO1 / AO2 / Synopticity	
Level 3 (Good to excellent)	9-12
Level 2 (Limited to sound)	5-8
Level 1 (Very poor to weak)	0-4

AO3	
Level 3 (good to excellent)	7-9
Level 2 (Limited to sound)	4-6
Level 1 (Very poor to weak)	0-3

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