



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Rewarding Learning

GCE A level performance descriptions for government and politics

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Introduction

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

AS performance descriptions for government and politics

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3
Assessment objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories and debates.	Analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations, and identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the political systems studied.	Construct and communicate coherent arguments making use of a range of appropriate political vocabulary.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate full and accurate knowledge of political institutions and processes and a sound understanding of political concepts, theories and debates b) produce answers that deploy relevant knowledge to answer the question c) demonstrate clear contextual awareness d) use relevant evidence and, where appropriate, contemporary examples to illustrate points made.	Candidates characteristically: a) provide analyses that display a sound awareness of differing viewpoints and a clear recognition of issues b) evaluate political institutions, process and behaviour, applying appropriate concepts and theories c) make valid comparisons.	Candidates characteristically: a) construct and communicate clear, structured and sustained arguments and explanations b) use accurate political vocabulary.
E/U boundary performance descriptions	Candidates characteristically: a) demonstrate a basic knowledge of political institutions and processes and begin to show some understanding of political concepts, theories and debates b) make a limited attempt at answering the question c) produce at least one piece of relevant evidence, which may be drawn from source material provided.	Candidates characteristically: a) show some basic awareness of differing viewpoints b) attempt simple evaluation of political institutions, processes and behaviour c) make simple comparisons.	Candidates characteristically: a) attempt to communicate and develop an argument or explanation b) use basic political vocabulary.

A2 performance descriptions for government and politics

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3
Assessment objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant institutions, processes, political concepts, theories and debates.	Analyse and evaluate political information, arguments and explanations, and identify parallels, connections, similarities and differences between aspects of the political systems studied.	Construct and communicate coherent arguments making use of a range of appropriate political vocabulary.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) demonstrate accurate, detailed and comprehensive knowledge of political institutions and processes, and a competent understanding of political concepts, theories and debates, incorporating the relevant specification content b) produce answers which fully address the requirements of the question c) demonstrate good contextual awareness d) provide accurate evidence and, where appropriate, contemporary examples deployed to illustrate points made. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) provide analysis that synthesises political concepts, theories or issues b) evaluate political information clearly and fully, using appropriate supporting evidence that may be drawn from the whole specification c) make effective comparisons, explaining parallels, connections, similarities or differences. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) construct and communicate cogent and coherent arguments and explanations b) illustrate a clear sense of direction and, where appropriate, culminate in a coherent conclusion which flows from the discussion c) use a range of relevant evidence and appropriate political vocabulary.
E/U boundary performance descriptions	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) demonstrate an outline knowledge and understanding of political institutions and processes, political concepts, theories and debates, with evidence of some relevant specification content b) make a limited attempt at answering the question c) demonstrate some basic contextual awareness d) provide some relevant evidence or examples. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) offer limited analysis that shows some awareness of differing ideas b) attempt a simple evaluation of political institutions, processes, behaviour, arguments or explanations, and make some comparisons c) outline basic concepts and theories d) demonstrate some recognition of basic parallels and connections or similarities and differences. 	<p>Candidates characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) construct and communicate some arguments and explanations with a structure that is narrative or descriptive b) illustrate a sense of direction and, where appropriate, offer a conclusion, though relationship to the preceding discussion may be tenuous or implicit c) use some relevant evidence and some appropriate political vocabulary.