

Citizenship Studies

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J269**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **J029**

OCR Report to Centres

June 2012

OCR (Oxford Cambridge and RSA) is a leading UK awarding body, providing a wide range of qualifications to meet the needs of candidates of all ages and abilities. OCR qualifications include AS/A Levels, Diplomas, GCSEs, OCR Nationals, Functional Skills, Key Skills, Entry Level qualifications, NVQs and vocational qualifications in areas such as IT, business, languages, teaching/training, administration and secretarial skills.

It is also responsible for developing new specifications to meet national requirements and the needs of students and teachers. OCR is a not-for-profit organisation; any surplus made is invested back into the establishment to help towards the development of qualifications and support, which keep pace with the changing needs of today's society.

This report on the examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the examination.

OCR will not enter into any discussion or correspondence in connection with this report.

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OCR REPORT TO CENTRES

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Overview

Most candidates had benefitted from taking the citizenship GCSE in either the short or full course format. For Unit A341 (controlled assessment), candidates had again completed some very worthwhile and interesting campaigns directed at key decision-makers. The majority of candidates ran valid campaigns to change something that affected people's rights in school, in the local community or on a national level. School-based campaigns were often directed at Governors, the school/college Leadership Team, the Parent Teacher Association or the School Council. Worthwhile campaigns ranged from attempts to extend opportunities in the curriculum for particular groups of students to campaigns for lighting on footways. As part of Unit A344 (controlled assessment), candidates had taken some very impressive action to improve community cohesion, promote equal opportunity or to combat unfair discrimination. Many candidates also did well on the two examined units (A342 and A343) as long as they had covered the specification content and understood the key concepts and terms on which they were being examined.

While many candidates did well, there were some candidates from particular centres who had not been prepared sufficiently well for assessment. This included campaigns that were not directed at decision-makers or that had little to do with extending people's rights. Such candidates were unable to achieve at a level commensurate with their ability.

There are some simple steps centre staff can take to reduce the risk on underachievement as follows.

Unit A342 and Unit A343 – the examined units

- Ensure that candidates have covered the specification content.
- Support candidates in learning key concepts and terminology from the specification content such as: trade union, Government regulation, public services, fair trade and sustainable development.
- Encourage candidates to use relevant examples to support their answers. For example, many candidates were able to do this well in question 17 of paper A342 by using examples of controversial laws that had recently been introduced by Parliament.

Units A341 and A344 – the controlled assessments

- Ensure that there is effective liaison between teachers responsible for citizenship and centre examination officers to ensure that the OCR guidance on assessing and submitting the controlled assessments is followed carefully. There were several cases where centre staff had an insufficiently secure understanding of the assessment process. These misunderstandings did not help candidates from these centres to demonstrate achievement.
- Offer clear guidance to candidates, especially in relation to Unit A341, so that campaigns are directed at decision-makers and are not simply awareness-raising exercises directed at other students.
- Ensure that candidates submit sufficient evidence of their activities to allow reliable assessment. Log books, diaries, video, testimonials, media extracts, blogs, powerpoint presentations, social media pages, agendas and minutes from meetings all constitute valid evidence. Centre staff must ensure that each candidate can produce sufficient evidence to verify their campaign (A341) or citizenship action (A344).

A341 Rights and Responsibilities – Getting Started as an Active Citizen

General Comments

This was the third time that candidates have been able to submit work for this unit – A341 The Citizenship Campaign. It was pleasing to see the commitment that most candidates had to their work and there was real evidence that they are becoming active citizens.

Centres are allowed to submit work for postal moderation (A341/02) or via the OCR repository (A341/01) where work is uploaded to OCR and then downloaded by the moderator. Care should be taken to ensure that the correct code is used.

It is vital that OCR has the most relevant email address for sample request emails to be sent to by OCR, as some teachers were telling their moderator that they had not received sample requests etc. The Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) is still required and needs to be sent with the sample of controlled assessment to the moderator. Failure to do this could mean that results are delayed.

Each piece of work needs to have the Citizenship coversheet (CCS/A341) on it where the breakdown of marks is recorded. The candidate proposal form also needs to be completed and sent with the work to the moderator. An updated version of this and the task booklet is available via Interchange.

This unit is a campaign to try to get something changed. It is not an awareness raising or a money raising exercise. The campaign needs to address one of the themes of this unit on human rights. The campaign needs to be targeted at key decision makers for example, the senior leadership team in the school, board of governors, local community leaders, business people, councillors or the local MP. Year 7 pupils are not key decision makers. Their names could be added to a petition that is presented to a member of the board of governors but they should not be the main focus of the campaign. Students sitting on the school council, however, are key decision makers and a campaign can be targeted towards them.

The work for this unit is broken down into three parts. The first part is an evaluation of issues and evidence. Candidates have 10 hours (in groups) to research the issue they are going to be campaigning about. This work is to be completed before the campaign takes place. Research is to be shared amongst all group members. The work has to be completed in a group. Candidates then have three hours under controlled conditions to write-up their evaluation individually. This is a requirement of the specification. Some centres were awarding marks for these assessment objectives when there was no evidence of the work – just evidence of some research. It is not necessary to send copies of all the research completed by candidates but some evidence of preparatory work is useful. If a questionnaire has been sent out, one copy of it with a tally chart of results or graphs showing the results is sufficient evidence.

This piece of work was generally completed well by most candidates and assessed with reasonable accuracy. Candidates are allowed up to three hours to complete their written work. Not allowing them this amount of time will limit the amount of marks they are able to achieve.

Throughout the work the candidate needs to complete a log/diary of what they have done or are doing. Some evidence of planning is also required. The second part of this unit assesses their skills at taking action rather than their ability to write about it after the event. Supporting evidence for taking action would be the working documents used in the campaign. Photographs, posters, PowerPoint slides, DVDs are all good examples of evidence. A witness statement/ observation sheet completed by the decision maker is a very good way of evidencing part of the

taking action section. A teacher summary sheet – the Assessment Record Form has been produced and is available on the OCR website this must be used and submitted along with the evidence for taking action. There needs to be sufficient evidence to justify the marks awarded. In some cases only the teacher mark and a simple comment were included and 16 marks were awarded. This is clearly not enough evidence.

The final part of this unit is a written evaluation of the success of the campaign. This is completed individually under controlled conditions lasting for one hour. This was completed correctly by most Centres and on the whole assessed accurately.

The main issues which arose with the work submitted this session were:

- 1 The work was not a campaign to try to bring about a change; it was to raise awareness or to raise money.
- 2 The campaign was not targeted at key decision makers, fellow pupils were the audience.
- 3 The evaluation of issues and evidence was not completed. Marks were awarded for evidence of some research.
- 4 There was insufficient evidence to justify the marks awarded for taking action.

The specification has a detailed section on this unit and OCR has also produced a guide to controlled assessment which can be found on the website. Both of these documents need to be read when planning the work for this unit. An exemplar piece of work for this unit is also available on the OCR website.

In conclusion, some excellent work has been seen this session. There have been a wide range of themes used, these include:

Bring back the EMA.

Reduced bus fare for students.

Fair trade.

Can we have a school council?

How can we get pupils to take school council seriously?

Campaign to local shopkeepers to stop using plastic bags.

We want speed bumps outside our school.

Campaign to change various aspects of school rules.

Can Year 11 have better study facilities in school?

How can the school reduce its energy bill?

Stop smoking in cars with child passengers.

Reduce cost of gym membership for under 18s.

Improving safety on local walkway.

How can we get the school to apply for wind turbine funding?

The proposed work does not have to be submitted to OCR for approval but if Centres wish to do this and receive feedback they are welcome to email their task sheet to OCR.

A342 Identity, Democracy and Justice – Understanding our Role as Citizens

General Comments

This paper constitutes 40% of the marks for the short course and 20% of the marks for the full course. It was available for both January and June sessions in 2012 with one option of a re-sit for candidates.

Marks awarded to candidates ranged from 40 to 0 with some outstanding work seen at the top level. Candidates in many centres had been prepared well for the exam. Most of these candidates were able to apply their good knowledge and understanding of the specification content to the whole paper. Candidates from a minority of centres had difficulty drawing upon appropriate citizenship concepts and background knowledge. Lack of this specific knowledge led to these candidates performing markedly less strongly across almost all questions on the paper.

Some candidates enjoyed using a range of interesting and suitable examples to support their points, especially in relation to question 17. They scored high marks as a reward for their intelligent use of relevant subject knowledge on these questions and also on the multiple choice and short answer questions in Section A. Other candidates found it more difficult to support their points with evidence and examples from their studies, relying on rather vague generalisations to gain some marks. This was a pity because such candidates sometimes obviously had the potential to succeed and would have done so if they had achieved a better knowledge of the specification content.

Comments on Individual Questions

Questions 1–5

The multiple choice questions are differentiated and therefore some are harder than others. Some candidates used a process of elimination in which they crossed off alternatives that were definitely wrong so as to narrow down their choice. This was clearly a helpful process to those who used it.

Question 1

Less than half of candidates knew that one of the main responsibilities of people who join political parties is to choose candidates to represent their party in elections. The majority chose other options with many opting for choosing the prime minister.

Question 2

This question was answered correctly by over 60% of candidates who showed their understanding of the term “representative democracy” by linking it with “voters choosing representatives to make decisions on their behalf.” A popular but incorrect option choice was “elected representatives having to consult the public before making decisions”.

Question 3

Just over half of the candidates knew that the Crown Prosecution Service “decides whether or not to take a criminal case to court”. Many others thought incorrectly that it was the victim who made such a decision.

Question 4

“Equal opportunity” is a key concept in the specification content and around 60% of candidates were able to correctly identify its meaning as, “making sure that everyone has the same chance to achieve their ambitions”. A minority of candidates incorrectly linked equal opportunity too narrowly with having a fair trial or having the right to free speech.

Question 5

This was the most accessible of the five questions with 70% of candidates being able to connect the term “asylum” with the description “asking for refuge in the United Kingdom (UK)”.

Questions 6 to 10

These questions enable candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the specification content. Like questions 1 – 5, these questions are differentiated. All questions were worth one mark and had the command word “state”. Candidates are required only to give short answers rather than to write full sentences. For example, the short phrase “to give a fair trial” would be an adequate response to question 9.

Question 6

This question differentiated particularly well between candidates, just over 50% of whom were able to state correctly why some people in the UK have a complex sense of identity by mentioning such factors as conflicts between home and school values or having parents from different faith traditions. A significant minority of candidates reasoned that individuals created complex identities to evade justice or avoid identity theft. This type of response gained no credit.

Question 7

This question was not well answered with slightly less than half of candidates making an acceptable response. Many of the correct responses showed a good understanding of the prime minister’s role in Parliament and his responsibility to represent the UK. Most responses were vague and cited examples that could have applied to all politicians such as “making speeches”. No credit was given for such responses.

Question 8

Over 80% of candidates could identify a valid human right and many did so very specifically. The majority of incorrect responses gave examples of rights that are not included in either the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the European Convention on Human Rights such as “food” or “a job”.

Question 9

Candidates who answered this question correctly (60%) usually had a clear understanding of the crucial role of witnesses in the criminal justice system to give evidence and help to ensure that justice is done. Again there were many vague responses such as “it is the right thing to do” that did not show a sufficient understanding of the role of the witness.

Question 10

This question asked candidates to state one responsibility of the United Nations (UN). Over 80% were able to offer a valid example such as “to keep the peace”, “to help poorer nations” or “to give aid”. Some candidates confused the UN with the European Union to mention free trade or travel while others thought incorrectly that the UN was part of the UK Government.

Question 11

Candidates were more likely to perform well on this question if they used the bullet points to help them structure their answer. This helped candidates to focus on advantages and importance of UN, Commonwealth or EU membership. Very many candidates were able to mention mutual assistance in the context of the advantages of membership. Where this was supported by specific examples linked to trade, aid, defence or education, candidates reached Level 2. There were some particularly good examples in which candidates gave specific examples related to more than one organisation and gave convincing reasons for active membership. Favourite explanations mentioned the importance of the UK maintaining a global influence or discussed the specific advantages of mutual aid in terms of the European debt crisis.

Questions 12 and 13

As in the January series of 2012, many candidates had difficulty interpreting the data in these questions with less than 40% answering question 12 correctly. Again this year, many candidates expected alternative i to be correct and, without studying the data, selected it incorrectly as their response. This difficulty applied to candidates across the ability range. Question 13 proved equally challenging with less than 40% of candidates identifying i as the correct response. A significant minority of candidates thought incorrectly that it was unreasonable only to interview people living in Scotland to find out about the views of people living in Scotland. This error was made by most as a result of not reading the question correctly.

Question 14

As with questions 11 and 17, the use of PEE – point, evidence, explanation helps candidates to reach higher levels in this type of question. The use of evidence or an example to back up a point is extremely important to candidates aiming for high marks. For this question, candidates were asked to refer specifically to examples of British values. Those that did so correctly by mentioning the rule of law, equal opportunity, tolerance or democracy were among the very few who gained full marks. Many candidates were unable to identify such values and mentioned traditions instead such as going horse racing on Boxing Day or eating fish and chips.

Where candidates were able to show an understanding of community cohesion without a correct reference to British values, they gained some credit.

Good answers then referred specifically British values and showed how they contributed to community cohesion. Here some candidates explained that by living in a democratic society, citizens are more likely to feel that they have a stake in their country.

Questions 15 and 16

Almost all candidates attempted these questions and most had a fair understanding of aspects of the law as it related to the cases described. Most candidates understood that theft is a criminal matter that should be dealt with by the police in question 15. A small minority of candidates felt that Ibrahim should simply take the stolen computer back but most rejected this option as likely to cause further problems. While most candidates were able to describe Ibrahim's rights, some lost sight of this part of the question and provided no answer. Few explained why it was important for Ibrahim to have these rights even though the command word "explain" had been used as part of the question. Candidates usually gave accurate responses to question 16 by suggesting that Rob should have to appear in court with reference to his previous reprimands, and his latest action being both illegal and a threat to people's safety. They were usually clear about Rob's rights but less sure about explaining why he and other citizens have such rights. Good answers to question 16 gave a thorough explanation of why it is important for people who are arrested to have particular rights. The majority of candidates scored at least two marks on these questions but many could have done better if they had gone beyond a mere description of rights to explain why the rights are important in these contexts.

Question 17

96% of candidates attempted this question and most were prepared to write detailed answers. All knew something about law making and most made some kind of personal response to the viewpoint in the question.

This question differentiated well between candidates. Those who had a good understanding of the specification content were able to draw on their knowledge of how laws are made and the role of citizens in this process to evaluate the validity of the viewpoint that the Government makes laws too quickly and fails to consult.

Candidates who used the bullet points to help them structure their answer were able to produce more worthwhile responses than those who did not. The majority of candidates were able to use reasonable evidence to support their views with significant numbers being at pains to describe the inner workings of the Parliamentary process to challenge the notion that laws are made too quickly. Few candidates used examples of laws that have been rushed, badly drafted or unpopular but those able to mention the anti-terror laws, laws to curb foxhunting or the Dangerous Dogs Act in these contexts usually scored very high marks.

A343 Rights and Responsibilities – Extending our Knowledge and Understanding

General Comments

This was the second sitting of the A343 Citizenship paper. This paper constitutes 20% of the marks for the full course. It is only available for the June sessions with one option of a resit for candidates.

Marks awarded to candidates ranged from 40 to 0 with some very good work seen at the top level; however no candidate scored 40 marks. There were few candidates who did not attempt most questions. Candidates appeared better prepared than last year with plenty of evidence that candidates had been well prepared across the whole breadth of the syllabus. As last year, candidates appeared to have used their time wisely with very few running out of time for the final question.

Most candidates answered the stimulus questions well and were able to interpret the information sufficiently to score better on the second half of the paper. Although some marks were achievable through simple comprehension, only an understanding of the topics examined allowed candidates to achieve the top level.

Comments on Individual Questions

Questions 1–5

The short questions are differentiated and therefore some are harder than others. There was evidence that candidates were better prepared for these questions with most candidates providing sufficient explanation to make their meaning clear. Few candidates wasted time on extended answers.

Question 1a

A significant proportion of candidates were unable to name a trade union. The most frequent error was made by candidates confusing a trade union with fair trade.

Question 1b

Candidates found this question straightforward with most candidates able to describe a benefit to members of being in a trade union. Many more candidates were able to describe a benefit to members than were able to name a union.

Question 2a

Weaker candidates did not differentiate between the moral responsibility of a student in school and activities of every school student.

Question 2b

Again some candidates failed to differentiate between the legal responsibilities of a teacher and the legal responsibilities of every member of society.

Question 3a

This was a challenging question as students had to understand both the term “public service” and the term “privatised”. It was a clear differentiator of the students who had covered the course in depth and those that had not. Frequent mistakes referred to banking, the health service and schools.

Question 3b

Many candidates identified Ofsted as an example of a body that makes sure that a public service reaches acceptable standards.

Question 4a

The most frequent error on this question was vague references to posters. Candidates needed to link any suggestion of campaign to the question asked.

Question 4b

This was a challenging question differentiating the students who understood the term “ethical”. Some candidates failed to read the question carefully and confused “ethnic” with “ethical”.

Question 5a

Many candidates found this question straightforward and were able to identify two examples of public services provided by the government. Some candidates named services delivered by local authorities.

Question 5b

Many candidates identified gains in efficiency as a benefit of private delivery of services. This question clearly differentiated the more able students.

Question 6

Most candidates were able to gain credit on this question; they appeared well prepared to address the 6 mark question and followed the rubric to their advantage. However, most students were unable to differentiate between Fair Trade and fairer trade.

Question 7a

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify evidence to show how Virgin Atlantic aims to achieve sustainability.

Questions 7b

Nearly all students answered this correctly to demonstrate their understanding of the stimulus material.

Question 7c

The most common reason for candidates failing to achieve marks was that they had not answered the question specifically in relation to airline passengers.

Question 8a

Most candidates were able to use the stimulus to record two valid ways in which Oxfam helps people. Candidates who failed to achieve credit gave an answer that did not use the source material.

Question 8b

Candidates found this question very straightforward and demonstrated a good understanding of problems faced by people after flooding in LEDCs.

Question 8c

Most candidates were able to describe forms of emergency aid. Only the more able candidates accurately discriminated between emergency aid and development aid. Significant numbers of candidates failed to address the second bullet point of the rubric asking for a description of support for people in LEDCs other than sending emergency aid.

Question 9a

The majority of candidates accurately identified a human right threatened by the use of the Mosquito device. Most answers referred to the right to a private and family life, home and correspondence although the right not to be discriminated against was also cited by many candidates.

Question 9b

Again, candidates used the stimulus material well to enable most students to demonstrate a clear understanding of why the Mosquito device discriminates against young people.

Question 9c

Most candidates identified some form of benefit to members of the community including shop customers and owners. Some candidates identified that this device would also benefit the police.

Question 9d

Most candidates were able to answer convincingly about arguments against using the device. The documents were used extensively and usefully to support answers. Arguments for using the device were often either omitted completely or failed to address the human rights of groups other than young people outside the shops. Candidates of all levels of ability were able to write at some length on this answer.

A344 Identity, Democracy and Justice – Leading the Way as an Active Citizen

General Comments

This was the second time that candidates have been able to submit work for this unit – A344 The Citizenship Enquiry and Practical Citizenship Action. It was pleasing to see the commitment that most candidates had to their work and there was real evidence that they are becoming active citizens.

Centres are allowed to submit work for postal moderation (A344/02) or via the OCR repository (A344/01) where work is uploaded to OCR and then downloaded by the moderator. Care should be taken to ensure that the correct code is used.

It is vital that OCR has the most relevant email address for sample request emails to be sent to by OCR, as some teachers were telling their moderator that they had not received sample requests etc. The Centre Authentication Form (CCS160) is still required and needs to be sent with the sample of controlled assessment to the moderator. Failure to do this could mean that results are delayed.

Each piece of work needs to have the Citizenship coversheet (CCS/A344) on it where the breakdown of marks is recorded. The candidate proposal form also needs to be completed and sent with the work to the moderator.

The work for this unit is broken down into three parts. The first part is the Citizenship Enquiry. Please note that this is changed every year. The source book for June 2013 is now available via Interchange. Candidates have 10 hours (in groups) to research the issue covered in the enquiry. This involves using the sources in the source book and from elsewhere. Candidates then have two hours under controlled conditions to address one of the three viewpoints. In order to reach Level 3 on AO3 there needs to be some analysis of evidence drawn from the source book and elsewhere. Annotating where candidates have used their own evidence in their work greatly helps the moderator to agree these marks.

This piece of work was generally completed well by most candidates and assessed with reasonable accuracy. Candidates are allowed up to two hours to complete their written work. Not allowing them this amount of time will limit the amount of marks they are able to achieve.

This unit requires candidates to undertake some practical citizenship action. It is not a campaign, this is work for A341. Candidates can use the same theme for both pieces of controlled assessment. For example they could campaign to include work to enable a greater understanding of people with disabilities into the PSHE curriculum. If they were successful in their campaign they could undertake the actual work for their action in A344.

Throughout the practical citizenship action, candidates need to complete a log/diary of what they have done or are doing. Some evidence of planning is also required. The second part of this unit assesses their skills at taking action rather than their ability to write about it after the event. Supporting evidence for taking action would be the working documents used in the practical citizenship action. Photographs, posters, PowerPoint slides, DVDs are all good examples of evidence. A witness statement/observation sheet completed by a participant is a very good way of evidencing part of the taking action section. A teacher summary sheet – the Assessment Record Form has been produced and is available on the OCR website. This must be included along with the evidence for taking action. There needs to be sufficient evidence to justify the marks awarded. In some cases only the teacher mark and a simple comment were included and 16 marks were awarded. This is clearly not enough evidence.

The final part of this unit is a written evaluation of the success of the practical citizenship action. This is completed individually under controlled conditions lasting for one hour. This was completed correctly by most Centres and on the whole assessed accurately.

The main issues which arose with the work submitted this session were:

- 1 Candidates must use their own evidence as well as the source book to reach Level 3 AO3.
- 2 This is practical citizenship action and not a campaign.
- 3 There was insufficient evidence to justify the marks awarded for taking action.

The specification has a detailed section on this unit and OCR has also produced a guide to controlled assessment which can be found on the website. Both of these documents need to be read when planning the work for this unit. An exemplar piece of work is also available via the website.

In conclusion, some excellent work has been seen this session. There have been a wide range of themes used, these include:

International evening
Food sampling day
Event to change perceptions of people with disabilities
Old people's party
Coaching sessions for boys in netball and girls in football
IT sessions for older people run by students
School display to promote intergenerational respect

The proposed work does not have to be submitted to OCR for approval but if Centres wish to do this and receive feedback they are welcome to email their task sheet to OCR.

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