

Citizenship Studies

General Certificate of Secondary Education **J269**

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

Examiners' Reports

June 2011

J269/J029/R/11

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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.

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Chief Examiner's Report

Summer 2011 was the first opportunity for candidates to submit all four Citizenship Units for the full GCSE award. It was clear that most candidates had benefitted from the full course. For Unit A341 (controlled assessment), candidates had completed some worthwhile campaigns directed at key decision-makers 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 or the Parent Teacher Association. Worthwhile campaigns ranged from attempts to extend the voice of student councils in schools to calls for the Government to legislate against smoking in cars when young people are passengers. 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. 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 6 of paper A343 by using examples related to newspaper ownership.

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 need to 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 second 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. The administration of the moderation process for both methods uses a more automated system known as Moderation Manager. All paperwork is now automatically generated by this system and emailed to a designated email address within each Centre. It is vital that OCR has the most relevant email address as some teachers were telling their moderator that they had not received sample requests etc. The Centre Authentication Form 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.

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.

Comments on Individual Questions

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. 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. 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.

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

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 was the fourth sitting of the new A342 Citizenship paper. This paper constitutes 40% of the marks for the short course and 20% of the marks for the full course. It is available for both January and June sessions with one option of a re-sit for candidates.

Mark awarded to candidates ranged from 40 to 0 with some very good work seen at the top level. There was evidence that candidates in many centres had been prepared well for the exam but there were other centres in which teaching and learning was much less strong and where significant parts of the specification content seemed not to have been covered. This was the case particularly with question 17 which asked candidates to evaluate the benefits of European Union membership for the United Kingdom. Lack of specific subject knowledge was also shown by the relatively weak performance of candidates from some centres on the multiple choice and short answer questions (1 - 10).

A computer based testing option (CBT) was available to candidates on this paper. (A342/01) 53 candidates were entered for the examination using this option. Candidates were able to read the questions on screen and key in their responses. Questions were identical to the ones used for the traditional, paper-based examination (A342/02). 25% of candidates who took the computer-based option achieved a mark of 30 or better. On the other hand, 25% of candidates scored 12 marks or less. While it would be unhelpful to draw too many conclusions from the performance of 53 candidates, scrutiny of the papers suggests that those candidates who had a reasonable level of knowledge and understanding, found the CBT to be advantageous. In particular, they were able to write more coherently by being more easily able to amend their answers. Candidates with a limited knowledge and understanding of the specification content were unlikely to do better on the CBT compared with the paper-based exam.

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.

Q1

81% of candidates knew that "seeking asylum" meant "asking for the protection of another country because of threats against you in your own country". This showed a good understanding of the concept of asylum.

Q2

This question differentiated well between those candidates who had studied the specification content thoroughly and those who had not. 60% of candidates correctly identified "the magistrates' court" as the court where all criminal cases start. Many candidates wrongly chose "Crown court" as their response.

Q3

This question presented few problems for candidates who had studied and revised the specification content. 80% of candidates correctly matched "free press" to the description "media organisations not controlled by the government".

Q4

"Interdependence" is a key concept in the specification content but only 44% of candidates were able to correctly identify its meaning as, "people, groups and communities supporting each other". Many candidates chose the incorrect alternative, "an international agreement between countries".

Q5

73% of candidates were able to show their understanding of the law by choosing to link it to the description "common code of behaviour". A significant minority of candidates thought incorrectly that the term "treaty" a better match for the description.

Questions 6 to 10

These questions enable candidates to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the specification content. As for 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 word "migration" would be an adequate response to question 6.

Q6

This question differentiated particularly well between candidates 55% of whom were able to give a valid reason why there is cultural diversity in the United Kingdom. Some candidates misread the question to give examples of the consequences of cultural diversity. Others gave an answer that repeated the terms of the question. Tautologies such as "because there is a mix of cultures" were not given credit. Good answers included references to immigration or regional and religious differences in the UK.

Q7

This question was relatively well answered with 65% of candidates offering a correct response. Many of the correct responses focused on the need to restrict the freedom of law breakers or those people who may be a danger to themselves. A significant minority of candidates misread the question and gave examples of how the Government might restrict freedom by , for example, imprisoning people.

Q8

90% of candidates gave a valid response to this question with most stating that witnesses have a responsibility to tell the truth.

Q9

This question differentiated well between candidates with 65% giving a correct response. Popular answers included references to campaigning or using the media. More sophisticated statements referred to the use of the parliamentary process. There were some inappropriate responses based on a misreading of the question or on a misunderstanding of the term "political party".

Q10

This question asked candidates to state one right held by a citizen within the United Kingdom justice system. 63% gave a correct response. These included such statements as “the right to a fair trial” or “to have their say in court”. Where candidates failed to gain credit for their answer it was usually because they had mentioned a right unconnected with the UK justice system such as the right to an education.

Q11

Candidates were more likely to perform well on this question if they used the bullet points to help them structure their answer. This helped them to focus on the need to describe two things that pressure groups do to. A simple but accurate description was likely to lead to two marks being awarded from the four available. Only 8% of candidates failed to answer the question at all but a further 20% clearly had little idea about the role of pressure groups in a democracy and failed to gain any marks. Some candidates mixed pressure groups up with political parties. Just under 40% of candidates gained more than two marks. Those that scored well noticed the command word "explain" and were able to give valid reasons why pressure groups are important in a democracy. A significant minority of candidates used their understanding of democracy well to argue that pressure groups help to hold the Government to account and enable citizens to have their voice heard between elections. These candidates tended to score full marks as long as they also gave examples of the specific actions pressure groups take.

Questions 12 and 13

Many candidates had difficulty with these questions this year with only just over half answering question 12 correctly. This may have been because many candidates expected alternative (i) to be correct and, without studying the data, selected it incorrectly as their response. Question 13 proved difficult with only 29% of candidates identifying iii as the correct response. Candidates across the ability range had problems with question 13.

Q14

As with questions 11 and 17, the use of PEE - point, evidence, explanation helps candidates to reach higher levels in this type of question. Evidence or an example to back up a point made is extremely important to score higher marks. Relatively few candidates gave specific valid examples in answer to this question. Those that did so were among the few who gained full marks.

97% of candidates attempted this question. A significant minority were unsure about the term “economic conditions” but most realised that it might have something to do with jobs. Some candidates made the mistake of using their answer to express opinions on the effects of immigration on the UK rather than considering the reasons for migration. Good answers showed a clear understanding of the different reasons for migration and were able also to explain the significance of economic conditions in affecting people’s decision to move to the UK. 12% of candidates scored full marks on this question.

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 the purpose of the Citizens Advice Bureau (question 15) and many realised that Selina’s right to change her name was, in some way, related to her age. Candidates were less sure about question 16 with a significant minority expressing the incorrect view that the police would not be able to use stop and search powers in the situation described in the question. More candidates than in previous exams understood the significance of the command word "explain" in addressing the rights or responsibilities of either Selina (question 15) or James (question 16). Good answers to question 16 pointed out that James had the right to have his parents with him at an interview with the police because of his age. The majority of candidates scored at least two marks on these questions but many could have done better if they had given reasons why Selina or James had the rights or responsibilities that had been described in the scenario.

Q17

92% of candidates attempted this question and most were prepared to write detailed answers. A minority of candidates seemed to have very little understanding of the European Union (EU) and assumed that it was some kind of member organisation for individuals, trade union or a type of insurance company.

This question differentiated well between candidates as long as they had studied the EU as part of the course in their centre.

Candidates who used the bullet points to help them structure their answer were able to produce more worthwhile responses than those who did not. Very many candidates were able to use reasonable evidence to support their views with significant numbers discussing the current economic problems within the EU. More common examples such as free movement of labour were used extensively as advantages of EU membership. Many candidates balanced this advantage against the problems they believed were caused by the movement of EU citizens to the UK. A minority were able to discuss EU membership at length and with real confidence. They almost invariably scored high marks.

A343 Rights and Responsibilities – Extending our Knowledge and Understanding

General Comments

This was the first sitting of the new 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. There were few candidates who did not attempt most questions. There was evidence that candidates in many centres had been prepared well for the exam but there were other centres in which candidates' knowledge and understanding, as demonstrated from their answers, was much weaker and where significant parts of the specification content seemed not to have been covered. This was shown by the relatively weak performance of candidates from some centres on the shorter Section A Questions 1-5. Candidates appear to have used their time wisely with 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. Some candidates only wrote a single word where more explanation was required. Other students wrote 3 lines, spending more time that was necessary.

Question 1(a)

Most candidates gained a mark for identifying "health and safety" as a responsibility held by a head teacher. Some students failed to differentiate the role of a head from the role of any other member of staff. A range of other answers demonstrated a good understanding of the types of responsibilities a head teacher would hold.

Question 1(b)

Candidates found this question straightforward with most candidates clearly understanding the difference between rights and responsibilities. The most frequent response identified a parent's responsibility to send their child to school.

Question 2(a)

This question differentiated particularly well between those candidates who had studied the specification content thoroughly and those who had not. Over half of students correctly identified an example of an indirect tax many suggesting VAT but also using a range of examples.

Question 2(b)

This question tested candidates who did not understand the term "social security benefit" and understood the question by asking about some aspect of personal security. The most common non-scoring answers included references to the police or to financial security.

Question 3(a)

This was a challenging question differentiating the students who had covered the course in depth. It allowed candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of regulation of public services – many identified “Ofsted” as an example of a public regulator. Some candidates were unable to demonstrate an understanding of the term “public services” or “regulation”.

Question 3(b)

Many candidates identified the minimum wage as one way the Government safeguards the interests of employees and there appeared to be a wide understanding of some aspects of employment law in the answers. Many focused on aspects of anti-discrimination law.

Question 4(a)

Most candidates found this question straightforward and were able to identify wage and employment issues as reason for joining a trade union.

Question 4(b)

This was a challenging question differentiating the students who had covered the course in depth. Many non-scoring candidates failed to understand that the question was about employers rather than employees and attempt to repeat an answer from the previous question confusing employers' organisations with trade unions. Successful candidates often identified employer organisations provision of legal help.

Question 5(a)

Many candidates found this question straightforward and were able to identify at least one example of an unsustainable energy source, however, many candidates failed to achieve the second mark because they failed to sufficiently differentiate between the two answers. For example “fuel” and “petrol” only achieved a single mark. A significant number of students appear to have misread the question and given examples of sustainable energy sources or did not understand the term “sustainable”.

Question 5(b)

Most students correctly identified the unreliability of the weather as one potential disadvantage of solar or wind power. Some students were able to make a second valid point, generally relating to the cost of securing solar or wind power or the space needed for these sources of energy to be sufficient.

Question 6

The 6 mark questions were a new format for the candidates and teachers will not have seen this on the old specification or the short course. Candidates, who did well, followed the rubric accurately and used this to effectively answer the question. Able candidates discussed issues relating to bias, a limited coverage of events and the possibility of a reduced range of political coverage. Many used current examples from the media such as News Corp.

Students who failed to achieve marks often answered the question on the understanding that it was asking about small companies owing most of the media and how that might impact on jobs. Many also discussed advertising issues.

Question 7(a)

The vast majority of candidates were able to identify Liverpool Football Club's “extensive work in the local community” as the reason for the Community Mark Award. Some students failed to achieve a mark by referring too vaguely to “work in the community”.

Questions 7(b)

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

Question 7(c)

The most common reason for candidates failing to achieve both marks on this section was repetition of the same reason in different words, for example “so more people will like them” and “better reputation”.

Question 8(a)

Most candidates were able to use the stimulus to record two valid reasons for Cadbury producing Fairtrade certified chocolate. Most focused on the benefits to farmers in LEDCs, however many students identified the benefits to Cadbury of improved reputation.

Question 8(b)

Candidates found this question very straightforward and demonstrated a good understanding of Agenda 21. This may have been from careful reading of the stimulus material. Candidates failing to achieve a mark were unable to demonstrate an understanding of the term “Agenda 21”.

Question 8(c)

A thorough understanding of Fairtrade and how it benefits farmers was demonstrated by many candidates who answered this question with confidence. Candidates able to discuss specific examples of the impact of Fairtrade on farmers were able to score well in level 2. Less candidates effectively linked the actions of shoppers in the UK to the lives of people in Less Economically Developed Countries which was required for top marks.

Question 9(a)

The majority of candidates accurately identified a human right taken away from the six journalists. Most answers referred to the loss of freedom of speech but the right to a fair trial was also cited by many candidates.

Question 9(b)

Again, candidates used the stimulus material well to enable most students to demonstrate a clear understanding of Amnesty International’s Africa Director’s comments on the journalists. Candidates who answered the question but failed to achieve a mark often focused on how the journalists were punished rather than why.

Question 9(c)

Most candidates identified some form of protest, demonstration or other way of raising the profile of people abroad whose human rights are being denied. Students who answered the question and failed to gain a mark often suggested giving advice to those suffering from the denial of their human rights or changing the legal system in those countries where human rights were being denied.

Question 9(d)

Arguments against limiting the right to freedom of expression were discussed at length. Candidates who could expand on the reasons for limiting the right to freedom of expression were able to achieve high marks. 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 first 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. The administration of the moderation process for both methods uses a more automated system known as Moderation Manager. All paperwork is now automatically generated by this system and emailed to a designated email address within each Centre. It is vital that OCR has the most relevant email address as some teachers were telling their moderator that they had not received sample requests etc. The Centre Authentication Form 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.

Comments on Individual Questions

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 2012 is now available on the OCR website. 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 three hours under controlled conditions to address one of the three viewpoints. In order to score high marks there needs to be evidence of the students' own research in their write-up.

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 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. 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.

Examiners' Reports – June 2011

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.

In conclusion, some excellent work has been seen this session.

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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