



GCSE

CITIZENSHIP STUDIES

8100/1: Paper 1
Report on the Examination

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General

This specification continues to grow and had a strong uptake from centres. There was an increased level of focus and range seen in students' research investigations. This was seen through more in-depth actions being undertaken, such as meeting a local MP or police commissioner. There was a feeling that teachers had supported the students to engage in some really meaningful active citizenship investigations. Responses which showed a more reflective approach to the projects and moved beyond describing actions achieved the higher marks. In a minority of cases it was felt that teachers need to provide more guidance of the suitability of some investigations, with a specific focus on how students can have an impact on their community. More theoretical investigations which are sometimes global in nature were found not to be suitable, such as trying to stop global arms trading.

Please could all teachers be aware that the safety and security of all students is paramount and guidance may well be required by centres on some issues for research. For example, investigating and reducing knife crime in a community would require investigation of secondary source of information rather than primary. Overall, this report congratulates teachers and students in undertaking such a range and wealth of projects which, in many cases, had an impact on the community.

Some centres had effectively prepared students with a sound grasp of the range of motives and ways citizens can be active within the United Kingdom. The most successful students were fully aware of the more traditional forms of participation, but also the more recent and topical ways of being involved. These responses were characterised with examples both historic and from current affairs. Knowledge of the various voting systems and motives for referendums was an area that needs embedding. Learners need a more in-depth understanding of voting systems that exist in the United Kingdom and how they tie to the workings of democracy.

Section A

Question 1.1

Responses that focused on actions (which might include examples) undertaken by a pressure group understood the demands of the question, eg education or making the public aware of an issue. Some responses had not accurately understood what a pressure group is.

Question 1.2

Many responses provided a clear example of what a political party is, with many outlining the potential aims or actions. Generic responses which linked political parties to power did not gain marks.

Question 1.3

Many responses understood the mechanics of how people of power can be held to account, which included conventional ways, such as voting, to more diverse methods such as the role of media. Some responses stated a method but did not develop this with an explanation, which limited the marks awarded.

Question 1.4

This question required a clear description of what ‘lobbying’ could be followed by an example, such as meeting a politician to persuade them to support a given cause. Responses which did not describe ‘lobbying’ in relation to citizenship did not gain marks.

Question 1.5

There was a range of responses to this question which explained the role of charities, such as their role to fundraise and make a change for a cause. Responses which gained higher marks were characterised with a specific example or evidence.

Question 1.6

The most effective responses typically drew out motives from the extract for starting an online petition and combined them with their own examples.. Responses that simply focused on the extract example didn’t demonstrate enough own knowledge to progress to the higher levels. For example, just stating that a petition will be debated in parliament if it gains over 100,000 signatures did not show a student’s own knowledge.

Question 2.1

The majority of responses could clearly outline a feature of the investigation which was a descriptive element. The more effective responses to this question then moved further by explaining this feature, eg by stating the rationale behind undertaking a task.

Question 2.2

Responses that identified the thought process behind the investigation were more credit worthy for this question. Simply stating what was decided could not reach the higher levels. The highest levels were obtained by a discussion of the process of arriving at an investigation title.

Question 2.3

A clear evaluation of the outcomes of the investigation was required for this question. Responses that evaluated the relative successes and failure with a judgement were typical of the higher levels. Responses that simply outlined a description of what happened did not gain as many marks.

Question 2.4

There were a number of really effective responses to this question where students had clearly articulated their investigation and the outcomes achieved compared to their original aims. The most effective responses clearly evaluated how far the outcomes of their investigation met their original aim, with many providing statistical evidence. The most successful responses also considered the level of impact they achieved and considered things like local Vs national impact. Responses which were more narrative in style and had a more theoretical approach could not gain as many marks.

Some examples of really successful projects which were seen included- improving the local environment (cemetery improvement), increasing health and safety issues in the community (cycle routes), helping raise awareness and resources for the homeless and embedding community cohesion by strengthening links with the elderly.

Section B

Question 3.1

Most responses demonstrated a clear understanding of the role of a ‘councillor’. The correct response was ‘A’.

Question 3.2

Many responses could clearly outline two other reasons for holding a referendum. Many students focused on the motive of making a decision on an important question, such as Brexit.

Question 3.3

Responses that simply lifted a section from the source did not gain marks. The strongest responses clearly deployed knowledge of the UK Parliament and used the source material as a starting point for the explanation.

Question 4.1

This answer was less well identified by students with a range of responses seen. The correct response was D (whip).

Question 4.2

This question was answered well, with many responses giving an example of a Proportional System. Teachers may wish to support students to ensure that they know examples of other electoral systems as required by the specification content.

Question 4.3

This response required two clear reasons/motives for Zoe to vote, such as if certain groups in society don't vote their voice will be ignored, or that politicians desire to be re-elected and will listen more to them. More effective responses stated the argument to convince her why she should vote and then developed the rationale behind this reason.

Question 5.1

Most responses correctly identified UK General Elections as one correct answer. The second correct response (English local council Elections) was less well-identified.

Question 5.2

Most responses correctly identified the Prime Minister as one correct answer. The second correct response (speaker) was less well-identified.

Question 5.3

There was an improvement seen on students' knowledge of how the UK system of government operates. Many students could state two ways in which the Prime Minister differs from the US President. Higher scoring responses then made a clear development of each difference with suitable examples deployed.

Question 6.1

The responses to this question were varied and students' knowledge was less secure on this area. The correct response was 'A'.

Question 6.2

The most effective responses for this question clearly balanced the debate and provided good examples. Some students also demonstrated very good knowledge of examples from cases in the United Kingdom, but also contrasted this to rights in other countries. A simple narrative of 'right' in general terms could not progress to the higher levels.

Question 7.1

This answer was less well identified by students with a range of responses seen. The correct response was 'B'.

Question 7.2

This question was approached with sound knowledge on the main different voting systems and potential impact on democracy. More effective responses balanced the debate and formed a clear overall judgement. Evidence of the impact a potential change could have was effectively deployed in more successful responses. More generic responses that didn't consider a range of arguments could not progress to the higher levels.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.