
GCSE CITIZENSHIP STUDIES

8100/1

Report on the Examination

8100

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General

This specification continues to have a strong uptake from centres across the country. The active citizenship section of the paper has really allowed students to showcase some of the exciting activities they have taken part in within their community. Such activities included improving local amenities (e.g. resources for the visually impaired), helping a specific group in society and one particular school raised £1000 for a local charity to help make improvements!

It was felt that more tightly focused investigations allowed students to write more confidently about their actions, rationale and level of impact. Typically, the responses that were more reflective in nature and appreciated any limitations to the activity, achieved the higher marks. In a minority of cases, it was felt that more guidance was needed when students were picking their initial area of interest. More successful answers were seen where it was clear teachers had discussed with students how they are planning to make an impact on their chosen area. Where students were writing about investigation of a global scale, it was far harder for them to assess levels of success/impact, for example reducing carbon emissions linked to tyres.

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 e.g. investigating and reducing knife crime in a community would require investigation of secondary source of information rather than primary. Overall, the Lead examiner 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 on how citizens can help make a change in society, such as persuading a local football club to become a Living Wage Employer. The most successful students could discuss a range of options with suitable examples. Particularly pleasing were the responses around how parliament can hold the government to account. Traditionally, these type of questions around power of institutions were not as strong. This year saw a real depth of understanding by a broad range of students on how parliament can exercise its powers/role. Learners need a more in-depth understanding and knowledge of different voting systems that exist within the United Kingdom and how devolution has had an impact.

01.1 (Multiple choice)

The majority of responses could identify who a trade union represents. The correct response was “B” only.

01.2

Many responses provided a clear and concise definition of what an ‘e-petition’ is. The online nature of these was critical to the mark being awarded.

01.3

Many responses demonstrated an accurate understanding of the roles/powers of a regular police officer. Less secure was the knowledge of special constables, thus making the ability to identify differences more difficult. Some responses stated the powers/role of a regular police officer without overtly making the comparison to special constable.

01.4

Knowledge and Understanding of tribunals and their purposes needs to be more effectively grasped. Candidates may need more support with this aspect of the specification.

01.5

There was a strong set of responses to this question with many students articulating the motives and rationale behind standing in an election. Usually the development of the reason, for the second mark, centred around what could potentially happen if elected.

01.6

Stronger responses used the source as a starting point on the different ways the football club could be persuaded to become a Living Wage Employer. After this wider knowledge was used to discuss other tactics/actions that could be taken, often with examples being cited, such as celebrity endorsement. Responses that simply focused on the extract didn’t demonstrate enough own knowledge to progress to the higher levels.

02.1

The majority of responses could clearly identify a reason for wanting to change the topic of their investigation. Responses which gained higher marks fully explained the rationale behind this, such as having difficulty accessing relevant information.

02.2

Responses which identified the most difficult part of the process and had a clear explanation behind it were more credit worthy for this question. Simply stating a problem without justification

could not reach the higher levels. Some of the more common higher level responses engaged in discussion about the reliability of information that they were accessing. A number of responses also cited Covid restrictions as a hindrance to what they were trying to achieve, this was acceptable and credit worthy.

02.3

Clear evaluation of the secondary research was required for this question. Responses that evaluated the strengths and drawbacks of their research were typical of the higher levels. Responses that simply stated what the research was did not gain as many marks. Some responses also got primary research confused with secondary.

02.4

There was a wide range of responses to this question which was looking for a reflective approach to their investigations. The strongest responses clearly evaluated how their action helped develop their citizenship skills. Reflection on the ways their action had an impact and careful consideration of what limitations affected them were characteristics of the strongest responses. Some responses were more narrative in style and simply stated what was done without any analysis of impact. Some examples of really strong projects which were seen included – improving a local library, engaging with Age UK to help provide a service and strengthen links, raising awareness and improving mental health resources within a school community.

03.1 (Multiple choice)

Whilst some responses identified referendums, others suggested elections. The correct response was “D” only.

03.2

Many responses could accurately identify two features of a democracy and focused on the ‘rights’ that could be found in one, such as freedom of speech.

03.3

Responses that simply lifted examples from the source did not progress to higher levels. The strongest responses used an example from the source and then made a comparable difference using their own knowledge of the UK monarchy.

04.1 (Multiple choice)

There was a wide spread of responses across all of the options. The correct response was “D” only.

04.2

There was a large range of responses to this question where some candidates understood the representative nature of the system as well as the time consuming issue with it. Responses which gained lower marks were drifting into other systems like First Past The Post.

04.3

This question required a discussion on how to improve voter turnout amongst young people based off source. Responses which gained higher marks used issues found in the source as a starting point and then students explained how they might be solved. Typically the more developed responses would cover issues around manifestos and voting age. Less developed responses had a narrow focus and provided a narrative about a single issue.

05.1 (Multiple choice)

Most responses correctly identified Council tax as one correct answer. The second response (Central Government Grants) was less well-identified. The correct answers were “A” and “B” only.

05.2 (Multiple choice)

Most responses correctly identified Single Transferable Vote as one correct answer. The second response (Party List) was less well-identified. The correct answers were “D” and “F” only.

05.3

There was a strong range of responses to this question which was tightly focused on the UK government’s actions to keep the NHS free. Responses which gained higher marks discussed a range of measures that could be taken such as various forms of taxation increase to educating society about modern day health problems.

06.1

Most responses could correctly explain that the legislature is the law making body. Only in a minority of cases did responses name the Judiciary or Monarchy as an incorrect answer.

06.2

The strongest responses for this question had a clear range of ways parliament holds the government to account. Some responses demonstrated an excellent knowledge of the work of committees and PMQs. The highest marks were awarded to those responses that had precise knowledge and offered analysis of how effective they might be. A more simple description of a limited number of actions parliament could take could not progress to the higher levels.

07.1 (Multiple choice)

The majority of responses correctly identified the Scottish Parliament as an example of a developed body. The correct answer was “B” only.

07.2

There was a wide range of responses to this question about the changing relationship between nations in the UK. Responses which gained higher marks could confidently discuss how citizens have seen changes within their areas, such as the impact of devolution. These could also balance their arguments with what areas of similarity still exist. Some responses also provided precise examples of topical issues facing the UK, such as English votes for English laws.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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