

Moderator's Report

Summer 2012

GCSE Citizenship Studies (5CS02)
Participating in Society

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Introduction

There has now been three series of this assessment and the entry has remained very high, with some new centres making submissions for the first time. The vast majority of centres were able to deliver the course successfully and candidates had been able to choose appropriate issues for investigation and subsequent action. There was evidence of much hard work, and the candidates are to be commended for their efforts.

Especially noticeable were:

- The number of candidates who persevered against the odds –unplanned events, that would inevitably mean an impact their work
- Instances of no response from the people of power, yet undeterred, they either used their back-up plan, or contacted a suitable alternatives
- Instances where group efforts were extremely co-operative
- The success rates of raising awareness, fund raising or changing the situation for the better (such as young carers, Peckham youngsters against stereotyping and religious understanding in the community)
- Those who were mentioned in school newsletters or the local press.

Examples of good practice from candidates included:

- Clear indication of the issue to be researched and appropriate evidence submitted.
- Very good evidence of the participation in action, well referenced or labelled for identification,
- Many who could identify and use citizenship skills of planning, communication discussion and negotiation.
- Clear links with Citizenship.

Centre Administration

The examples of good practice by centres included:

- Controlled Assessment Candidate Record sheets signed by both the teacher and the candidate, providing the authentication required to meet the requirements set out by Edexcel in the Specification. This also ensured easy identification of the candidate's work.
- The candidate record sheet used to record the marks for the four sections of the task form (issue; advocacy and representation; participation in action; evaluation).
- Evidence of internal standardisation which is so essential where there were a number of teachers delivering the course. This was best indicated by teacher's initials or a different coloured ink.

However, there were a few areas which are identified below for Centres to consider for future moderation:

- Ensure the Controlled Assessment Sample arrives by the deadline and preferably in advance of the deadline.
- full and accurate completion of the Candidate Record Sheet is required showing the candidate full name and candidate number, the centre name and number, title of the issue to be investigated and the total mark (which should be checked to ensure it has been correctly added up).

- The sample must include the highest and lowest scoring candidate work, and any absent or withdrawn candidates whose work was requested for external moderation should be substituted.
- Make sure you have clearly indicated where internal standardisation has taken place, at the least get the internal marking checked by another teacher if it is a small cohort.
- Witness Statements/Testimony Form should be fully completed to show exactly what was being witnessed and these should also be signed.
- Any CDs or DVDs sent as evidence need to be checked to ensure that the recording can be played.

Centre Assessment

It was clear that centres had used the level descriptors more accurately this year and marks awarded for each section matched the marking criteria. It is hoped that the exemplars and the booklet available for Teacher Support on the website have been useful to teachers.

As the Controlled Assessment is worth 60% of the marks of the short course it is imperative that centres apply the marking criteria both accurately and consistently. For this reason it is also important that candidates are given opportunity to complete the task form if for some reason they were unable to do so on a specified date.

Internal standardisation often highlights where teachers have not applied marking criteria to the same standard and it is best for this to be correct before it is sent for moderation. When the teacher signs the OPTEMS, it is to verify that this has been carried out.

Some candidates opt to work in a group. Where this is the case, the teacher should assess the level of the individual candidate's work, and not the group as a whole. Each candidate should submit evidence of their own contribution for each section. A list of appropriate types of evidence is available in the Teacher Support Book which is available on the GCSE Citizenship page of the Edexcel website. Where there is little evidence, and the individual involvement is not explicit, the candidate is unlikely to gain marks beyond level 2.

Issues arising from ethical or moral situations, for example healthy eating, gay adoption, teen pregnancy or body image, must be firmly linked with one of the three Themes from Unit 1 of the Specification in order to fulfil the requirements of the Specification.

The sections should be taken as a whole and not marked separately i.e. the assessor should not mark (a) and (b) and then add them together for a total for a section.

The following observations on the Centre's marking have been made during the scrutiny of candidate's work.

Section 1

Where candidates have not considered an issue within the local community, they have chosen one that is a topic that concerns them in some way, and sought to raise awareness of it through their action. Hence candidates have taken the local link to mean raising awareness locally. For full marks candidates must describe the link from a local perspective, give their own personal view and explain how the issue is linked to a Citizenship Theme from Unit 1.

A number of centres were awarding marks where candidates had just included the words 'national' and 'local' without explanation, however, credit cannot be given without an explanation.

Section 2

Candidates were frequently awarded marks in level 4 where there was either no interview, or a reported interview but no evidence of such, or any analysis. There were also a few instances where credit was given for the action which was also the interview so in effect crediting twice in Sections 2 and 3.

Often where candidates had described fully how and when they interviewed rather than the actual views obtained through questioning, this was over marked by centres as there was no analysis that could be credited.

Some candidates had contacted and interviewed more than two people and submitted views from a wide variety of people. Generally these were well recognised by the centre.

Section 3

Some candidates were awarded marks for a description of the activity. Credit should be given for the description of negotiation and how the evidence demonstrated the citizenship skills, and the impact that is anticipated from the participation in the action. It should also be noted that responses should be written in paragraphs, rather than bullet points.

Section 4

Many teachers did not accurately credit Quality of Written Communication which should be assessed in this section.

It was also noted that credit was rightly given to candidates who had extended their action to social networking which would give a national perspective or even international perspective to their investigation, and proved to be well documented in this section.

Candidate Performance

There were a variety of work sheets from support publications, or devised by the centres themselves, used to give direction to candidates to the specific requirements of the task.

Candidates are to be commended for their number of interviewees, and number of differing views discussed in section 2 that went beyond the remit of the requirements.

Those candidates who were not awarded higher marks are those who did not sufficiently analyse the views from various people or who did not to explain their personal input and compare the views with their own.

Where there were brief responses or incomplete sections this could have been as a result of candidates being unsure of what is expected, timing issues or that the candidate was absent for part of the controlled assessment. It is perfectly acceptable to reschedule to allow them the full time for their write up so as not to penalise the candidate if they miss part of the time allowed.

It was encouraging to see so many well-organised pieces of work, with appendices referenced, and the acknowledgement that this citizenship activity had afforded new opportunities and development of skills, as well as character-building. Not only had these young people clearly enjoyed their involvement but a number expressed a wish to continue after the examination.

Choice of Issue

There were a good variety of local issues, these included:

- Linked to theme 1
 - How to reduce knife/gun crime/litter/recycle
 - seek improvement in local facilities
 - Diversity/community cohesion
- Linked to theme 2
 - Discrimination or disability
 - the media and its portrayal of young/old people
 - Lowering the voting age.
- Linked to theme 3
 - From a global perspective actions for awareness/fundraising for fair-trade/cancer charities
 - Global warming/wind farms/sustainability.

A number of issues, often of interest to candidates, were not quite suitable for Citizenship, but could be well done if linked with rights and responsibility or legislation. These topics included health issues of obesity, eating disorders, teenage pregnancy or fundraising for cancer charities. Topics around animal issues are rather hard to link to citizenship as animal rights are not included in the Specification. Cruelty to animals, animal testing and animal welfare were among those less suited to this unit.

Where the choice of issue is clearly linked with the local community it was much easier for candidates to respond to the task form effectively. Candidates should make sure they explain the reason for their choice rather than describe the roles and responsibilities of the group, and explore the links with citizenship and stating their personal view of this issue. There should also be references to the research carried out.

Ultimately the issues to be viewed should be either local or national and where possible global. Candidates who extended their enquiry to these different perspectives tended to gain the higher marks. However, candidates performed

rather less well when the links with citizenship themes were not explicitly explained.

Advocacy and Representation

The specification requires candidates to communicate with two 'People of Power'. Those chosen should have specific knowledge of the issue and be able to take action as a direct response to the candidate's power of persuasion. Clearly someone in the peer group cannot be chosen to be interviewed as they will not have the power to put any proposed changes or improvements into practice. However, a member of the Youth Parliament might be suitable if the issue is one of lowering the voting age to sixteen, or if the adult person has not responded, a peer may be suitable so that the candidate can demonstrate another view.

Many candidates successfully carried out two interviews, submitted evidence (in the form of DVDs, Witness Statement scripts, or questions) and analysed these views with a discussion of differing views. These candidates were able to achieve the higher level of marks.

Centres should ensure that candidates have sufficient time allocated for effective communication with these people and to stress the importance of discussion of their own personal view too. It must be evident as to what the individual candidate actually did if this was part of group work.

The number of candidates who reported no response from their invitation for interview has not decreased. The letter or email should be very precise and not just say 'we want to know your view on the subject of...'. Successful communication is where the candidate has expressed the reason for their concern and suggested a way in which this could change. A contingency plan is advised for use in instances where there is no reply. The Teacher Support Material available on the GCSE Citizenship page of the Edexcel website includes examples of consultation.

Participation in Action

Within this section there were good examples of the candidate's skills in organising, debating, planning and discussion showing good citizenship skills. However, there were many who did not submit relevant evidence. Those not totally engaged with the issue tended to just write lists of what they could, or had done, with no explanation as to the reason for their choice or of the impact that they hoped to achieve. On the other hand, there were many great ideas to present action, witnessed by parents, the local community and professionals representing a number of occupations.

Evidence included DVDs, photographs of display boards, fund raising activities and surveys. It was good to note that the school Governors were also called to witness events. Actions were sometimes innovative and many made use of social media such as facebook and Youtube.

The second part of the question did not always show the links with citizenship that would be necessary for the higher marks, especially the skills that the action and evidence should or did portray. Although questionnaires were quite popular there needed to be evidence of analysis of the results rather than just including a copy, or a few of the completed ones as examples.

The evidence should be clearly referenced to the section it related to. Many candidates did cross reference the evidence which demonstrated a skill.

Assessment of the Impact of their own action

Candidates had been very honest when explaining the impact and outcomes of their actions. The responses were varied with some rather short which may suggest that there was a timing issue; others clearly showed how or why their view of the issue had changed or strengthened.

Apart from a brief discussion of the local impact of the action, there was not sufficient discussion on the impact on their peers or the local community. Many candidates just included the word 'national' without explaining the wider implications, but it was good to see the global perspective from those who had used the social networking media.

Centre Assessors had not always taken the Quality of Written Communication into consideration when assessing this section. It was also noted that some candidates used bullet points to highlight specific positive points, but this is inappropriate as it does not address the quality of their writing needed for the higher marks.

Some candidates tended to re-write the sequence of events without any evaluation. Many candidates found it difficult to explain how their view had changed, but there were numerous positive indications of how the whole experience had been worthwhile and some expressed wishes to continue the action by joining local groups. Centres should be aware that these are harder skills to address than straight-forward evaluation of action, and a number of candidates found this difficult.

Conclusion

The view from candidates that people stereotype young people as loud and lazy was definitely brought to the fore by those who looked at the media presentation of teenagers, but seeing the breadth of and sincere participation in the actions, there is definitely a different view witnessed by educational staff, local residents and others. The candidates expressed pride in reaching successful outcomes and this was mentioned by students of all abilities, many surpassing their original goals and expectations. No doubt many citizens have benefited from the candidates' participation of the investigations, advocacy and actions, both locally and nationally.

Finally, many of these activities undertaken are immensely valuable learning experiences to the Key Stage 4 cohorts across the country and provide a unique

opportunity for active citizenship in school or the local community. Candidates, their teachers and their many supporters are to be thanked for their dedication and congratulated on the successful outcomes during this year.

Looking to the Future

The short course consists of Unit 1, the written examination (5CS01) and Unit 2 (5CS02), the controlled assessment. When delivering this the controlled assessment, which carries 60% of the total mark for the short course qualification, teachers have the responsibility to guide and support the candidates through their investigations and actions, and there are a number of support documents available on the GCSE Citizenship pages of the Edexcel website designed for teachers such as:

- The Teacher Support Book for Controlled Assessment
- Sample materials for Controlled Assessments
- Exemplars of Controlled Assessments

Centres wishing to continue to complete the full course can do so by entering candidates for the Unit 3 written examination (5CS03) which looks at one of the three themes from Unit 1 in more detail, and Unit 4 (5CS04) which is a campaign written up as controlled assessment.

Training for GCSE Citizenship is available and can be booked online. Centres can also make use of the 'Ask the Expert' service for advice – see the 'Contact Us' page on the Edexcel website for further details.

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