

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1)

Wednesday 12 June 2019

Afternoon (Time: 1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper Reference **1CS0/01**

Citizenship Studies

Paper 1

Source Booklet

Do not return this Booklet with the question paper.

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Source D: Should prisons make prisoners work?

Two commentators have expressed differing views:

Sarah Shemkus says YES

UK prisons should copy the example of the US where 88% of inmates participate in productive prison work. Prisoners run laundry rooms and kitchens, transcribe textbooks into Braille and build desks. They can also be found moulding dentures, grinding lenses for glasses, upholstering chairs as well as more skilled and complex work such as computer coding.

We need prisons to protect the public but they can do much more. Supporters say the training they offer is essential for preparing prisoners to succeed in life after release. Such training includes improving literacy skills. These programmes produce goods and services that are often sold to outside customers, such as government agencies and schools.

Advocates of these programs believe working while in prison can teach inmates technical and also transferable skills. Work keeps prisoners busy and less likely to cause problems inside. Many offenders have never had a legal job. So they need to learn the basics such as showing up on time, listening to a supervisor and working as part of a team. The advantage of this is that prisoners pay back to society and to the individuals they harmed when they committed their crimes. In addition many US states note that prisoners who participate fully in work are less likely to reoffend following release. That is a core aim of prison, to reintegrate them into society.

Helen Brown Coverdale says NO

Making all prisoners work will not make prison work. US work programmes often verge on enslavement, with inmates paid little or no wages. Often the tasks they are given are unmatched to their skills, interests and ambitions. Prisoners at work are often denied the health and safety benefits and protections a civilian job would provide. It is not work in a real context. Work is not the answer to the crisis in the prison system in England and Wales. Work will not solve increases in unrest, riots and escapes. It will not put a stop to prisoner assaults on staff and prisoners, as well as prisoner self-harm and suicide.

Almost 100 years ago, Prison Commissioner Alexander Paterson argued that people are sent to prison as punishment, not for punishment. The purpose of prison is to protect the public, reform and rehabilitate offenders. It also prepares prisoners for life outside prison and to maintain an environment that is safe and secure. We do need prisoners to play a full part in society but forcing them into hard work will not achieve this. We need a wider solution for them not to reoffend.

We must not lose sight of prisoners as people, with pasts and presents. They also have families and futures. For them - just as much as victims and society - we must remember how to care.

(Sources: Beyond cheap labor: can prison work programs benefit inmates?

By Sarah Shemkus © Guardian News and Media Ltd December 2015

Helen Brown Coverdale

<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/politicsandpolicy/prison-doesnt-work-why-dont-we-care/>)