



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
January 2012**

Citizenship Studies

CIST1

(Specification 2100)

Unit 1: Identity, Rights and Responsibilities

Report on the Examination

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Unit 1 (CIST1): Identity, Rights and Responsibilities

General

This was the sixth series for Citizenship Studies Unit 1, and the examination appears well embedded. Students are aware of the content of the paper, are familiar with the types of questions and the style of response expected. Therefore there were no problems with students being able to complete the paper in the time available. Most of the issues that have been mentioned in previous examiner's reports are still prevalent. A common problem that does still appear to affect a number of students is that they do not leave enough time to finish the question at the end of the paper, question 07 or 08. Some students spend too long on the 5 and 10 mark questions, and not enough for the 15 mark questions. Students are again reminded to allocate time in direct proportion to the marks available. As in previous series, there was a good range of answers. Some students have excellent knowledge of citizenship issues and communicate the debates effectively and are thus well rewarded. There is a tendency of some students to use 'common sense' approaches to their analysis rather than a more evaluative and balanced approach. These answers fail to reach the higher levels. This series once again demonstrated that questions can be drawn from all areas of the specification.

It is good general advice with the higher mark questions for students to spend a short period of time planning their answers and ensuring that their answer focuses firmly on the questions asked by the examiners.

Each section has a compulsory question and a choice of two questions of which one is answered. Questions 03 and 07 were more popular than questions 04 and 08.

SECTION A: IDENTITY

Question 01

This was quite well answered on the whole, with many students able to define adequately what was meant by social diversity. The best answers showed their understanding by giving excellent examples of the social diversity found in the UK, including different ethnic and cultural groups. Some students confused diversity with discrimination. The more full and specific the example, the more likely the answer is to get full marks. Students should be encouraged to write more than a couple of sentences for 5 mark questions.

Question 02

Students were quite well prepared to answer this question and are certainly aware of the importance of this topic to Citizenship. What let some students down was a lack of focus on the specifics of the question. This question was about prejudice and not necessarily about discrimination. Students were expected to examine the common forms of prejudice. If students were able to explain how prejudice can lead to discrimination, then they were rewarded. However, students who primarily examined discrimination ignoring prejudice, did not score so many marks. It is worth reiterating that fuller, developed answers will be better rewarded. Developed answers using full structured paragraphs that focus on one point tend to score more marks.

Question 03

Students seemed to relish answering this question, which was the best answered of the 15 mark questions. Students have obviously discussed the nature of Britishness and British identity in class, and it would appear that most students concluded that British identity is problematic. Most students sought to explain any potential decline in British identity through immigration and multiculturalism, and this was largely argued sensitively and with evidence. A number of students argued successfully that British identity was in decline because of resurgent nationalism in the constituent parts of the UK. Another successful approach was to argue that British identity is not in decline, it is changing. Students were able reap good rewards from such an analytical line.

Question 04

This was not as popular a question as might have been expected from its very open ended wording. That may be more due to the popularity of question 03, than question 04 being inherently more demanding. Some students seemed to struggle with the term disadvantage and did concentrate on some less obvious policies that aim to deal with disadvantage. Better answers usually dealt with a range of groups that have been disadvantaged, examined some policies that have sought to eliminate that disadvantage, and provided some evaluation of the extent of the remaining disadvantage. Many students used the Equality Act as mentioned in the source as a good starting point.

SECTION B: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Question 05

As with the previous five-mark questions, students often had a general understanding of the concept being examined, but they often failed to clarify their understanding succinctly or develop (with examples) that understanding. Students should be encouraged to use their own examples rather than relying solely on the examples in the extract.

Question 06

The vast majority of students were able to write accurately about the purposes of the Data Protection Act given the clue in the name and the reference to it in the extract. Therefore, to reach the higher levels of the mark scheme, students needed to furnish more detailed knowledge and explanation of the DPA. The type of points that allowed students to access level 3 included allowing citizens to correct inaccurate data about themselves, allowing them to opt out of having some information held, and encouraging data holders to act in a thoughtful and responsible manner when handling data.

Question 07

This was the more popular of the optional questions in the Rights and Responsibilities section. Many students failed to access the higher levels as they did not quite appreciate the significance, and therefore the depth needed, of the phrase 'legal representation'. Students often talked about the Citizens Advice Bureau as somewhere you could go for free advice, but fewer students were able to talk about the need for free representation in a court of law in order to uphold the principles of the rule of law and of innocent until proven guilty. Even fewer students were able to sustain arguments against the idea of free legal representation.

Question 08

Whilst not in any way poorly answered, it was perhaps surprising that this was not a popular option for students. This section of the paper is 'rights and responsibilities' and so students may well expect a significant focus on such concepts. This was a broad question that allowed students to debate the protection that our courts afford. Students were not limited to which rights they could discuss and could use any examples of situations where the courts do not provide adequate protection. Once again, timing may well have been an issue.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion