



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
January 2011**

General Studies A

GENA3

(Specification 2760)

Unit 3: Culture and Society (A2)

Final

Mark Scheme

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all examiners participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Further copies of this Mark Scheme are available from: aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2011 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

Copyright

AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered centres for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to centres to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Unit 3 Section A (A2 Culture and Society)

INTRODUCTION

The nationally agreed assessment objectives in the QCA Subject Criteria for General Studies are:

- AO1** Demonstrate relevant knowledge and understanding applied to a range of issues, using skills from different disciplines.
- AO2** Marshal evidence and draw conclusions: select, interpret, evaluate and integrate information, data, concepts and opinions.
- AO3** Demonstrate understanding of different types of knowledge, appreciating their strengths and limitations.
- AO4** Communicate clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and relevant way.
- The mark scheme will allocate a number or distribution of marks for some, or all, of the above objectives for each question according to the nature of the question and what it is intended to test.
 - In most cases mark schemes for individual questions are based on *levels* which indicate different qualities that might be anticipated in the candidates' responses. The levels take into account a candidate's knowledge, understanding, arguments, evaluation and communication skills as appropriate.
 - Examiners are required to assign each of the candidates' responses to the most appropriate level according to **its overall quality**, then allocate a single mark within the level. When deciding upon a mark in a level examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of AOs (see below). For example, in Sections B and C more weight should be given to AOs 1 and 2 than to AOs 3 and 4.
 - *Indicative content* is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and other valid points must be credited. Candidates do not have to cover all points mentioned to reach the highest level.
 - A response which bears no relevance to the question should be awarded no marks.

Distribution of marks across the questions and assessment objectives for this unit

Question Numbers	Section A		Section B	Section C	Total AO
	1	2	3	4	
Assessment Objectives 1	2	2	8	8	20
2	6	2	7	7	22
3	2	2	5	5	14
4	2	2	5	5	14
Total marks per Question	12	8	25	25	70

01 Compare and contrast the style, content and purpose of Extract A and Extract B about Twitter.

(12 marks)

A good answer to this question does precisely what is asked by referring to the style, content and apparent purpose of both extracts. Such answers will summarise both the content and the point of view which each writer is trying to present. They might well have a reasonable attempt at contextualising both extracts. An element of comparison and contrast is important.

Assign each of the candidates' responses to the most appropriate level described below according to **its overall quality**, then allocate a single mark within the level. Credit should be given to candidates who support their points with appropriate examples and/or evidence.

Levels	Marks	Descriptors
Level 3	9 – 12	Good to comprehensive evaluation of both extracts in terms of their effectiveness, style and content; perceptive and coherent comparison, and written with fluency and accuracy.
Level 2	5 – 8	Modest to quite good attempt to assess the range of comments, touching on elements of effectiveness, style and content, perhaps with some gaps in coverage; written with reasonable clarity and expression.
Level 1	1 – 4	Bare to limited response, with few points to offer and significant gaps in coverage; lacking in clarity and with significant errors in expression.
Level 0	0	No valid response to the question.

Points that might be made include:

Style

- Extract A is relatively journalistic, objective, and descriptive.
- Extract B is personal, subjective, conversational, staccato. Could be said to be condescending in tone.

Content

- Extract A warns against the danger to the individual of political interference in the Twittering process while showing that the medium can be a powerful enough social tool for a government to feel it has to intervene against an individual showing dissent.

- Extract B demonstrates that Tweeting (Twittering) is spreading even to people with some gravitas – politicians particularly here. Prescott says that Twitter not only enables him to make his viewpoint heard but that responses are important too. Older MPs are likely to twitter and such activity gives politicians the capability of controlling what is said (or quoted) about them.

Points that might be made include:

Purpose

- Extract A is simply (?) news but with an overtone of warning and no response from the Guatemalan government to form a balanced opinion.
- Extract B is opinionated and has political purposes of (a) attacking and belittling the Conservative party (b) establishing his own credentials (c) supporting subversion (re whistleblowers) (d) contextualising his blogging world.

02 To what extent should governments be nervous of political opinions expressed on the internet?

(8 marks)

Candidates may use any arguments they wish, providing they are backed up by relevant evidence and references.

Assign each of the candidates' responses to the most appropriate level described below according to **its overall quality**, then allocate a single mark within the level. Credit should be given to candidates who support their points with appropriate examples and/or evidence. Negative opinions may be used, again providing they are backed up by something substantial.

Levels	Marks	Descriptors
Level 3	7 – 8	Good to comprehensive response, able to state clear arguments/opinions supported with justifications and appropriate references, written coherently and convincingly with fluency and accuracy.
Level 2	4 – 6	Modest to quite good attempt with some supported opinions and reference to examples, written with reasonable clarity and expression.
Level 1	1 – 3	Bare to limited response, few points offered or developed; lacking in clarity of argument; weak expression with errors.
Level 0	0	No valid response to the question.

Points that might be made include:

Some areas which may be explored

- lack of control
- difficulties of surveillance
- rise of orchestrated pressure groups
- anonymity – no knowledge of who is behind a campaign
- opposition being more credible than policy (and more readily believed)
- whistle-blowing, especially in more secretive/repressive regimes
- steam-roller effect perhaps leading to overthrow or u-turns
- difficulty for government of gauging public and/or international opinion accurately
- freedom from safeguards against self-expression
- open to ridicule/satire without redress
- issues of freedom of expression
- challenges via blogs, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter
- ease of internet for self-expression without responsibility or personal contact.

GENERAL MARK SCHEME FOR SECTIONS B AND C

Each essay should be awarded a single mark out of 25. In awarding the mark examiners should bear in mind the overall assessment objectives for General Studies (see INTRODUCTION) which the essay questions are intended to test in the following proportions:

AO1 – 8 marks

AO2 – 7 marks

AO3 – 5 marks

AO4 – 5 marks

Level of response	Mark range	Criteria and descriptors: knowledge, understanding, argument, evaluation, communication
LEVEL 4	20 – 25 (6)	Good to very good treatment of the question Wide ranging and secure knowledge of topic (AO1); good range of convincing and valid arguments and supporting illustrations, effective overall grasp and logically argued conclusion (AO2); good understanding and appreciation of material, nature of knowledge involved and related issues (AO3); well structured, accurate and fluent expression (AO4).
LEVEL 3	13 – 19 (7)	Fair to good response to the demands of the question Reasonable knowledge of topic (AO1); a range of arguments with some validity, appropriate illustrations with reasonable conclusions (AO2); some understanding and appreciation of material, nature of knowledge involved and related issues (AO3); mostly coherent structure and accuracy of expression (AO4).
LEVEL 2	6 – 12 (7)	Limited to modest response to the demands of the question Limited/modest knowledge of topic (AO1); restricted range of arguments and illustrations but some awareness and attempt at conclusion (AO2); little understanding and appreciation of material, nature of knowledge involved and related issues (AO3); weak structure and variable quality/accuracy of expression (AO4).
LEVEL 1	1 – 5 (5)	Inadequate attempt to deal with the question Very limited knowledge of topic (AO1); little or no justification or illustration, no overall grasp or coherence (AO2); inadequate understanding and appreciation of material, nature of knowledge involved and related issues (AO3); little or no structure/frequent errors of expression (AO4).
LEVEL 0	0	No valid response or relevance to the question.

03 How far do you agree that only those who live a blameless life and act according to their beliefs can justifiably claim to be religious?

The question is based on

- belief and
- how closely belief and lifestyle are interlinked.

Candidates need to consider to what extent they agree that following a religion fully can involve 'buying into' all its principles.

In essence the issues are:

- Transgressing the spirit of religious tenets disqualifies you from claiming to practise that religion
- Only those who live a blameless religious life should be able to claim to be religious
- Those who believe one thing but say (or act) another way are hypocritical.

How far the candidates agree with the validity of the statement is up to them to argue. Any well exemplified, developed and relevant arguments will be rewarded. Thoughts which may arise include:

What is a religious faith?

- comparison of the state of religion and contemporary mores
- how true this statement is in a largely secular world
- examples of situations which may be relevant to a particular religion or religious belief
- relevant case studies (e.g. admission to church schools)
- whether believers have a monopoly on righteous or law-abiding behaviour
- religion as a means of social control
- punishment and the notions of sin, redemption and damnation.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

04 ‘Fashions reflect the prevailing morality of their time.’

Discuss this view and say how far you believe it to be true.

This question may be answered in a variety of ways. The term ‘Fashion’ may refer narrowly to consumer goods, clothes, accessories, music, or it may reflect broader behavioural patterns in society as a whole. Either approach is acceptable –as indeed is a recognition of both.

Dress and morality is fairly easily exemplified from such times as

- Victorian society and prudish morality
- the ‘swinging sixties’
- punk.

However, the connections have to be firmly established by the candidate and recognition of the fact that there are contradictory underlying factors here may be useful.

- Victorian morality was very much a public show; private morality was not necessarily consistent with it.
- the swinging sixties reflected all kinds of issues such as feminism, post-war optimism, freedom for young people and sexual liberation, but for many change was slower.
- Punk represented anarchic ideas of behaviour which passed many people by.

In any such case studies there will be discussion of factors such as

- class
- wealth
- religion
- nationality
- age and gender.

which could offer some insight into the question. At a more basic level there are obvious connections between clothing and sexuality which could offer part of an answer. Change of fashion as a representation of current mores is a fertile area. Although fashions change with time, they are also diverse at any one time.

A wider response might deal with fashion in a more abstract sense. The unfashionable could be said to drive change, through a minority avant-garde which then becomes smoothed, acceptable and percolates throughout society. Do the fashions shape or reflect prevailing morality? We hope some candidates will attempt to tell us in ways we can reward highly.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

05 Discuss what objective criteria can be used to judge the merits of works of art and examine whether they should be judged by objective criteria alone.

Draw your examples from one of the following areas:

(a) music, (b) dance, (c) painting, (d) conceptual art, (e) literature, (f) plays, (g) film.

Only one of the offered areas should be tackled.

This is the standard question on criteria for assessing a work of art. The likely conclusion will be that there are many subjective criteria which contribute to a judgement but the best answers will include direct reference to the wording of the question and will concentrate on objective criteria. Depending on the art form, these will include our usual list of

- stylistic considerations
- communication
- longevity
- impact
- technique/skill
- public/critical acclaim/popularity
- suitability for purpose

and may hopefully offer us as evidence real examples rather than a mere list of titles.

References to subjective criteria may well help candidates to form their conclusion on this matter but the question does ask specifically for objective (universal) criteria and these must be clearly presented to be awarded the highest level.

Candidates may, if they wish, refer to and exemplify from any legitimate genre within their chosen art form. Better answers may well pick up the different criteria which may apply to different genres within their medium – pop and classical music being one obvious area.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

06 ‘After due thought, deliberation and counselling, people should be free to seek voluntary euthanasia.’

‘Existing laws should be enforced to make it more difficult for people to help others to end their lives.’

Discuss both of these arguments before offering your own conclusion.

Here we are offering candidates two opposing views and asking them to discuss both of them. It is expected from the wording of the question that both viewpoints will be examined seriously and that some idea of empathy with both camps will demonstrate the candidate’s ability to empathise with opposing views.

The first view: ‘*After due thought, deliberation and counselling, people should be free to seek voluntary euthanasia.*’ depends on the notion of informed choice. It is not simply pro-euthanasia and candidates should be able to recognise the types of decision to be made – which affect, or are affected by

- family and friends, and
- their approval and sensitivities
- religious sensibilities
- nature and quality of remaining life
- carefully trained and administered counselling.

They may need to unravel the notion of ‘voluntary’ euthanasia – euthanasia by consent – from euthanasia of someone incapable of making a decision for themselves. Recent cases of, for example, the conductor Edward Downes and his wife (July 2009), should be used as evidence.

The second view, that ‘*Existing laws should be enforced to make it more difficult for people to help others to end their lives*’, opens up another area of concern – not simply the view that euthanasia is wrong, but the non-observance of laws by the legal authorities. Many people who are ready to die in this way will end their lives in countries where euthanasia is legal. Many will not be able to afford to go to Switzerland courtesy of *Dignitas*. The religious taboo on suicide will doubtless figure here, but central to the quotation is the idea of the laxity, and even the uncertainty, of the legal system in relation to the issue.

Arguments might include:

- sanctity of life
- relative morality
- finality (irreversibility of the act)
- should the law be pursued on such a personal matter?
- religious objections
- why we have laws that are often ignored.

Any more recent legislation will no doubt inform the answers of the best candidates.

A conclusion is required and candidates who don't make their conclusion clear are not fulfilling the terms of the entire question. They do not need to favour a particular viewpoint – just show their ability to reach a personal conclusion after due consideration.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

SECTION C

07 ‘Violent crime should always carry a custodial sentence. All other crimes should be punished by such measures as community service.’

To what extent do you support these views?

1. Violent crime should always carry a custodial sentence.

They need to consider why someone should think this.

Areas they may consider include:

- What are the degrees of violence which may escape custodial sentence?
- What is the purpose of a custodial sentence?
- Does it work?
- Can there be exceptions?

2. All other crimes should be punished by non-custodial sentences.

Areas they may consider include:

- Are such crimes victimless?
- What sanctions would there be to stop such crime?
- What do community sentences comprise?
- Do they work?
- Is there a class bias here?
- Are these crimes necessarily less harmful than violent crime?
- It's only money!

They have to say how far they support the view and this should be evident in their conclusion or from reading the text. We are judging the essays on the strength of argument put forward, the development of ideas and the illustration/evidence provided. A strong essay will manage all those – a weaker one is likely to be based entirely on unsupported assertions.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

08 Outline the criteria you think should be used to decide who to vote for at a General Election.

Discuss ways in which more people could be encouraged to vote.

There are two aspects to the question.

1. Outline criteria to decide who to vote for.

Remember some of our candidates are voters. They might have voted before the exam. What motivated their choice?

- local considerations
- national considerations
- the Prime Minister
- economic considerations; defence; foreign policy etc.
- parental choice
- media hype
- advertising
- particular issues – NHS, Education, Afghanistan, immigration...
- personal appeal.

2. How can more people be encouraged to vote?

- political education
- easier voting methods (on line, postal etc but with caveats)
- more (or even less!) media coverage
- target new voters and 18 – 24 age range
- virtual voting practice (Tried in Scottish elections)
- advertising more creatively, using role models
- drive towards encouraging others (friends) to vote
- notion of empowerment
- compulsory voting.

Discussion should be balanced and well referenced. A range of points displaying understanding of the issues and of the question is necessary. Unbalanced essays might not offer enough breadth for higher levels of achievement.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

09 ‘British troops should only be used in conflicts which are a direct threat to citizens of the UK.’

Examine this statement and say how far you believe it to be true.

As casualty figures in Iraq and Afghanistan mount, calls for withdrawal of troops become more common. This question asks whether candidates agree that British troops should be involved in far away conflicts which seem to have little direct relevance to Britain.

Candidates may take this question as far as they wish. It can examine a range of issues, including:

- the whole role of the armed forces
- the cost of war in monetary and human terms
- Britain’s role in the UN and peace-keeping forces
- the effectiveness of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan
- war against ‘terrorists’
- alternative uses of troops
- morality of warfare
- what may or may not constitute a ‘direct threat’ to the UK
- intrusion into the affairs of sovereign states
- political alliances
- motivation of senior politicians
- a consideration of the varied roles of the different branches of the armed forces.

Each of these issues is fertile enough to develop into a long passage.

Whatever stance candidates take will be rewarded so long as the arguments, knowledge and analysis are consistent with the demands of the mark scheme. A narrow view may limit the candidate’s coverage of the wider issues of the question – an acknowledgement of contrary views always helps to add authority to a candidate’s work.

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.

10 ‘Being a media celebrity brings with it the responsibility of a role model.’

Discuss whether you believe the statement to be true and explain the kind of responsibility that media figures should have towards the general public.

This was a topical question at the time of setting. The inequalities which seem to be more pronounced than ever at the moment are epitomised by the high-flying lifestyle of celebrities who appear regularly in the literature some of the candidates seem to enjoy reading.

The quotation suggests that being famous through the media channels of television, newspapers and the internet brings with it responsibilities in terms of personal behaviour. In itself this is contentious. The celebrity lifestyle can cause resentment among those who earn as much in a year as a footballer does in a day, or those who are unable to work. Those involved include:

- a small number of celebrities (eg footballers) earn vast amounts of money
- celebrities who appear in TV programmes (reality or otherwise)
- other sports people who become famous and ‘public property’
- pop stars
- supermodels or the likes of Katie Price
- those whose wealth is recorded and celebrated in magazines.

The response of the public may seem to be to adulate but there is in fact a great deal of schadenfreude in the public attitude. Careers are sometimes short; sometimes ended abruptly and sometimes the public enjoys watching the slide to ruin and oblivion.

What are the ‘responsibilities’? Presumably to live a life with as little sign of human weakness as possible. Remembering that many of the celebrities are young and healthy and suddenly have fame and huge wealth thrust upon them, this is a very difficult task and some are subject to harsh pressures in their everyday life as a result of their position. Hopefully candidates will be generous enough to acknowledge this.

Areas where responsibility might be exercised are

- lifestyle
- to the less fortunate
- morality
- conspicuous consumption
- legal behaviour
- curbing temper when interference becomes intrusive
- charity work.

Why should they have any responsibility to anyone else?

Candidates should be able to achieve marks in the highest band with a selection of relevant points, not necessarily the complete range.

Any other valid points not included here should be credited.