



General Certificate of Education
Advanced Level Examination
June 2014

General Studies (Specification A)

GENA3

Unit 3 A2 Culture and Society

Monday 2 June 2014 1.30 pm to 3.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an AQA 12-page answer book.

Time allowed

- 2 hours

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The **Paper Reference** is GENA3.
- Answer **all** questions in Section A, **one** question from Section B and **one** question from Section C.
- Do all rough work in your answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 70 (20 for Section A, 25 for Section B and 25 for Section C).
- This paper consists of **three** sections.
 - Section A** contains two compulsory questions based on source material.
 - Section B** contains four alternative essay questions based on aspects of culture.
 - Section C** contains four alternative essay questions based on aspects of society.
- Write your answers in continuous prose as if you are addressing the intelligent general reader. You will be marked on your ability to:
 - use good English
 - organise information clearly
 - use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Advice

- Where appropriate, use examples to illustrate your answer.

Section A

Study **Sources A, B and C** on **State Benefits, The Welfare State** and **Tax Avoidance** and then answer **Questions 01** and **02**.

Use your own words, rather than simply repeating those used in the sources, to show your understanding of the points being made.

Source A

Hatred against those receiving benefits is out of control in Cameron's Britain.

The Tories transformed a crisis of capitalism into a crisis of public spending, and determined that the most vulnerable would make the biggest sacrifices. But taking away support from the disabled, the unemployed and the working poor is not straightforward. It can only be achieved by a campaign of demonisation – to crush any potential sympathy. Benefit recipients must only appear as feckless, work-shy scroungers, living in opulent quasi-mansions with wall-to-wall widescreen TVs, rampaging around the Canary Islands courtesy of handouts from the squeezed taxpayer. Benefit fraud does exist – according to Government estimates, it is worth less than 1 per cent of welfare spending – but the most extreme examples are passed off as representative, or as the ‘tip of the iceberg’. The reality is all but airbrushed out of existence.

Six of the biggest disability charities have warned that the campaign of demonisation – by both journalists and politicians – has led to a surge in abuse towards people with disabilities. According to the disability charity Scope, two-thirds reported abuse in September last year, up from 41 per cent just four months earlier.

Half a million people are to have their disability living allowance taken away, even though the estimated fraud rate is just 0.5 per cent. People with serious illnesses are being stripped of their employment and support allowance, after undergoing the horrendous (and often humiliating) ordeal of a points-based assessment by French corporation Atos. One man with a degenerative lung disease was awarded no points – just a few weeks before he died of his illness.

But we rarely see this reality: it is intentionally hidden from us. The Government and much of the media divert anger from those who caused the crisis, to your ‘scrounging’ neighbour down the street.

Source: adapted from Owen Jones, ‘Hatred for those on benefits is dangerously out of control’
The Independent, 18 May 2012
www.independent.co.uk

Source B**The welfare state was meant to be the protector of the genuinely poor and vulnerable ...**

... but in modern Britain it has become an engine of social destruction by promoting fecklessness, irresponsibility and family breakdown on an epic scale. Far from lifting people out of deprivation it encourages a poverty of ambition.

Above all, this monster welfare state is a brutal injustice at the heart of society. Through their pose of generosity, bleeding-heart politicians have created a perverse welfare structure that punishes diligence and rewards idleness.

Taxpayers, propping up the £200 billion social security racket, are often worse off than many benefit claimants whose income and accommodation is provided by the state.

Such a culture is a betrayal of hard-working households.

That is why reform of benefits is such a vital task for the Tory-led coalition. At a time of recession, with the public finances in crisis, the present system is unaffordable and ruinous to the economy.

Some significant changes have been made in the past two years. Among reform measures have been new sanctions for those who refuse to look for work, tougher tests for incapacity benefit and a £400-a-week cap on housing benefit, thereby ending the farce where jobless scroungers could live in multimillion-pound London mansions at public expense.

All this was accomplished in the face of hysterical opposition from Labour and left-wing pressure groups who filled the airwaves with outrage.

Source: adapted from Leo McKinstry, 'Time for action on benefit scroungers'
The Express, 25 June 2012
© 2013 Northern and Shell Media Publications

Source C**Tax avoidance is bigger than benefit fraud**

Tax avoidance – that is, large companies and wealthy individuals who 'take advantage' of the system – costs us £70 billion a year. In addition to this, £26 billion is going uncollected, adding up to a staggering total – or, to put it in context, over half of the annual deficit. To put it in yet more context, the amount lost to disability fraud is estimated at £1 billion – and this figure should be considered in the context of benefit underpayment, which consistently saves more than the fraud costs. This does not of course excuse fraud, but it does make a mockery of the coalition's claims that abuse of the system is costing money that they will save by being 'efficient' – another euphemism.

Source: adapted from Caroline Criado-Perez, 'Who benefits from disability cuts?'
New Statesman, 4 October 2012
© New Statesman 1913–2013

Turn over ►

0	1
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Compare and contrast the views and arguments expressed in the three sources.

[10 marks]

0	2
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Assess how far it is the responsibility of the state to pay benefits to those who are unemployed but capable of work.

[10 marks]

END OF SECTION A

Section B

Answer **one question** from **03** to **06**.

There are **25 marks** for each question.

Where appropriate use examples to illustrate your answer.

Either

0 3

Examine the proposition that the 21st century is the best time to be alive.

[25 marks]

or

0 4

The 20th-century philosopher Bertrand Russell said:

“It is possible that mankind is on the threshold of a golden age; but, if so, it will be necessary first to slay the dragon that guards the door, and this dragon is religion.”

Explain what you think he meant and discuss how far you believe he was right in his negative assessment of the role of religion.

[25 marks]

or

0 5

The BBC Charter has always stated that the BBC has a responsibility to inform, educate and entertain the public.

Discuss how far television companies such as the BBC and commercial stations live up to those ideals.

[25 marks]

or

0 6

In 2012, one of the four versions of Edvard Munch’s painting *The Scream* was auctioned for a record £74 million.

Discuss how such high prices might be considered appropriate and what criteria can be applied to value such works of art.

[25 marks]

END OF SECTION B

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

Section C

Answer **one question** from **07 to 10**.

There are **25 marks** for each question.

Where appropriate use examples to illustrate your answer.

Either

0 7

There are contemporary issues where culture and beliefs seem to be in direct conflict with the laws of the land.

Examine a range of such issues and discuss the moral dilemmas they pose.

[25 marks]

or

0 8

‘The position of Britain as an off-shore island has always hampered its relationship with the rest of Europe.’

Discuss how far you believe this has been true in the past and how it affects our position within the EU.

[25 marks]

or

0 9

Examine what politicians can do to restore the confidence of the voters and encourage a larger turnout at general elections.

[25 marks]

or

1 0

Discuss to what extent users of the internet should be allowed complete freedom of speech and expression.

[25 marks]

END OF QUESTIONS

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