



**General Certificate of Education**

**Citizenship Studies 2101**

**Unit 3 (CIST3) Power and Justice**

**Report on the Examination**

*2010 examination - June series*

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## **Unit 3 (CIST3): Power and Justice**

### ***General Comments***

This was the second time that CIST3, one of the new A2 level units introduced by the new specification, was examined.

Most candidates had been well prepared and were able to produce accurate and reasoned answers. It was, however, disappointing to note that, as in January, some answers were unbalanced in that candidates answered Section A well but Section B more superficially or *vice versa*. Some candidates also answered more questions than required by the rubric.

It was, however, satisfactory to observe that candidates tended to score better marks for AO2 – analysis and evaluation. There are more marks for this assessment objective in the A2 papers than in the AS papers. Six marks are available in the 15 mark questions and eight marks in the 25 mark questions – a total of 28 marks in the whole paper. Centres appeared to have prepared candidates more carefully for this aspect of the paper than was the case in the January examination. Candidates must be made aware of the need to analyse and evaluate the material that they explain/examine/describe if they hope to score marks at the top of the range. It is also important to remind candidates that Citizenship has a range of terminology, language and concepts that needs to be correctly applied to the question. Good spelling and use of English is also important in this context.

On a positive note it was gratifying to observe that many candidates were able to give good, up to date examples of the issues that they were discussing – in some cases referring accurately and appropriately to press stories current at the time of taking the examination.

Questions 3 and 4 were the most popular questions on Section A and questions 7 and 8 in Section B.

### **Section A – Crime, Justice and Punishment**

#### **Question 01**

This was a popular question but unfortunately many candidates did not fully understand what was meant by pre-trial hearings. Examiners accepted answers which dealt accurately with either the first appearance in the Magistrates Court or the proceedings in the Crown Court after the accused had been returned there for trial.

### **Question 02**

Candidates awarded high range marks were able to refer to the creation of the Judicial Appointments Commission and discussed its role in the appointment of judges, pointing out that it ensured that candidates for the judiciary were now considered purely on merit but that the JAC had to take into account the desirability of having judges at all levels who were representative in terms of gender and ethnic origin. Weaker responses accepted the quotation as being true without questioning it at all and concluded, often on social or moral grounds, that this was a bad state of affairs about which citizens ought to be concerned.

### **Question 03**

Good responses were able to explain the role of the Legal Services Commission in administering the Criminal Defence Service, the different duty solicitor schemes and the emergence of Public Defenders. Very few candidates were able to give a convincing account of the Criminal Defence Service and most merely asserted that the state paid for legal representation in criminal cases. There was very little attempt to explain the difference between advice and representation and the Duty Solicitor scheme was rarely mentioned.

### **Question 04**

While stronger responses did consider the various purposes of sentencing, and showed what can be achieved by tailoring the sentence to the individual in each case, Section 142 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003, which sets out five purposes of sentencing that a court must always take into account when deciding on the sentence in every case, was rarely mentioned.

Weaker responses often did not understand what was meant by 'sentencing' – many thought that unless an accused was sent to prison, he or she was not sentenced. Others did not fully understand the difference between conviction and sentence or between charge and sentence. A number of candidates did not realise that the question was limited to sentencing 'young people', so discussions about prison were inappropriate.

### **Question 05**

Questions 05 and 06 were the least popular in Section A. Candidates who did attempt Question 05 were usually able to explain the role of the criminal division of the Court of Appeal with reasonable accuracy.

### **Question 06**

Those achieving top marks were able to give an assessment of the powers of arrest now enjoyed by the police under the most recent legislation. Weaker responses often confused powers of stop and search with powers of arrest. Even the better responses were rarely aware of the changes made to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005.

## **Section B – Politics, Power and Participation**

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### **Question 07**

The question asked candidates to explain two ways in which MPs can be held to account, but some candidates only explained one. These responses could not score more than Level 2 marks. Some candidates explained three or more ways, and in these cases, examiners could only give credit for the best two explanations. Weaker candidates tended to suggest vaguely that ‘the government’ could hold MPs to account and failed to consider how their party or their electorate could do so. Others confused holding MPs to account and holding the government or the Prime Minister to account.

### **Question 08**

Some candidates tried to answer this question without fully explaining what was meant by ‘ideology’ and weaker responses confused it with policy. It is not expected that candidates should develop a detailed analysis of the different definitions attributed to the concept of ideology, but they should have a broad understanding of ideological issues and how they relate to the major political parties. Candidates who were able to explain the relationship between policy and ideology scored well.

### **Question 09**

Most candidates were able to identify two international organisations (other than the EU) in which the UK had a role, but many of them then struggled to examine that role in anything other than the most superficial way. It was, for example, disappointing that some candidates appeared unaware that the UK has a permanent seat on the Security Council of the UN.

### **Question 10**

Many candidates were confused by the implications of the first past the post voting system and condemned it on the basis that they deemed it unfair that the party with the most MPs should form the government. Candidates also often struggled to explain one or more of the methods of proportional representation. This is clearly a topical issue.

### **Question 11**

Most candidates were able to suggest two ways of participating in the political system without standing for election, and the recent election made this a topical question. It was therefore surprising that a small minority of candidates (and not always the weakest) did not mention voting in this context. The question asked candidates to ‘consider’ these methods of participation and it was here that the weaker candidates struggled to explain the significance of the proposals that they made.

### **Question 12**

This question was often not well answered. Many candidates thought that ‘the executive’ meant the Prime Minister alone – and some thought that it was the Queen or the House of Lords! Those candidates who argued that the supremacy of parliament was enough to ensure that it was not dominated by the executive were given some credit for understanding the theory. Stronger responses appreciated that the whip system, party loyalties, patronage, etc all allowed the executive to exercise, at the least, a very considerable influence over Parliament.

## **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html>.