



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

**Citizenship Studies**

**CIST4**

**(Specification 2100)**

**Unit 4: Global Issues and Making a Difference**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **Unit 4 (CIST4): Global Issues and Making a Difference**

### ***General***

This is only the second time this unit has been examined, but there is a noticeable improvement in the quality of answers and in students' engagement with UK and global events. Our thanks must go to Nick Clegg and Colonel Gaddafi for giving candidates plenty to write about.

Entries were 15% up on last year but only about 13% of those completing the AS continue to A2. This may be attributable to the growing number of centres now offering AS Citizenship studies as part of the AQA Bacc. The large number of single and small entries suggests that there are more students keen to continue onto A2 than centres are able to accommodate.

The quality of answers ranged from impressive post-mortems on the failure of the "Yes to Fairer Votes" Campaign to rants about "political correctness gone mad" worthy of any tabloid editor. One student suggested that discrimination was the prerogative of the "older generation" and that it would disappear as they died out; adding that ageism, defined as old people discriminating against the young, was by far the worst kind of prejudice.

In an A2 qualification, more marks are awarded for the skills of evaluation, analysis and synthesis than knowledge and understanding. Students are rewarded for the appropriate use of material from any area of the specification and from their own research, provided that it addresses the question. Also rewarded is the key Citizenship skill of using language effectively (including specialist terms) to construct an argument, particularly one that draws upon the student's own participation or engagement with the topic.

It is as concerned global citizens that most students approach this subject and, on the whole, it is encouraging to see the seriousness with which candidates view these issues and demonstrate an appreciation of their complexity.

### **SECTION A - GLOBAL ISSUES**

Questions are presented in pairs, with each part from a different area of the specification. This often means that a student is well prepared for one but not the other question in a pair. Centres should cover the whole specification when preparing candidates.

#### ***Question 1***

Questions 1 and 2 were by far the most popular pair, with about 60% of candidates attempting them. Question 1 was generally answered well and students appeared to be well prepared. Although most students were able to outline some of the benefits of Globalisation, not all examined who benefited. At this level, candidates should be aware that the benefits for some groups or countries may be disadvantages for others. References to theories of Globalisation and/or examples of its impact, when used to support an argument, all gained additional marks.

#### ***Question 2***

This question asked about abuse of human rights by states, which is not the same as abuse *in* states nor a state's failure to prevent human rights abuse occurring, both of which featured in weaker answers. A few tried to include Baby P and Ryan Giggs as victims of human rights abuse, which rather stretches the imagination. Most answers provided detailed accounts of state-sponsored genocide, terrorism, torture, imprisonment without trial, etc, from around the globe. Better answers considered degrees of abuse or levels of hypocrisy: many

appreciated the complexity and contradictions of statements of rights, although few explored issues of cultural relativity and universality of human rights.

### **Question 3**

About 30% of candidates attempted this pair. Question 3 was generally not answered well: it may only have been selected because it was paired with Question 4. Informal pressure does feature in the specification and it can include any form of pressure put on government, other than by formal means such as elections. The media, in all its forms, is a principal example of informal pressure. This question narrowed the focus to protecting human rights. Unfortunately, examiners were often presented with pre-packaged essays on the media or on human rights. Some students read the question as the media's role in abusing human rights and the unfortunate Ryan Giggs made another appearance.

### **Question 4**

In contrast, this question was often answered well: students enjoyed describing a range of contemporary examples of discrimination and often made good use of their knowledge of legislation. The historical context was generally appreciated but again cultural relativity less so. This question was looking for a synthesis of material covered in AS, together with concepts developed in the A2 course.

### **Question 5**

These were the least popular pair of questions (attempted by only about 10%), which is a pity because they were generally answered well. In Question 5, most students discussed a range of strategies available for conflict resolution, using case studies such as Iraq and Libya to assess their effectiveness. Again, it is important to remind students that the mark scheme rewards analysis of case study material and synthesis from other areas/overarching themes: overly descriptive answers can only receive limited marks.

### **Question 6**

Wide-ranging interpretations of citizen-led campaigns were provided and all were accepted as long as they had a clear focus on global change. Popular uprisings in the Middle East did not really fit this criterion. Many answers used campaigns by pressure groups such as Amnesty International or individual initiatives such as campaigns by celebrity chefs with an international or European dimension.

## **SECTION B - MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

Because the topics for section B are released in November, it is assumed that centres can support students' research in these areas. The questions asked were explicitly contained within the range of tasks suggested. There were still a few candidates who appeared to have no prior knowledge of the topics, but this was much less evident than last year.

### **Topic 1 – Stop the War Coalition.**

This was the more popular option, answered by about 70% of candidates.

### **Question 7**

Those students who had studied the Coalition's campaigns in some detail were able to do well here. Links were made to generic features of campaigning and pressure groups from AS. Those students who had experience of using similar methods were familiar with their

relative strengths and limitations. It is worth reminding students that the mark scheme rewards those answers that go beyond the descriptive, and which provide an evaluative commentary based on an understanding of wider issues and/or a critical analysis of case study material.

### **Question 8**

Some of the material used in the previous question was used again here to construct an argument. To be credited, however, candidates did need to explain how the choice of campaign methods used contributed to or worked against the effectiveness of the campaign. Most students appreciated that the Coalition's aims went beyond the obvious and provided a nuanced commentary on the extent to which each aim was met, offering analysis and suggestions for success or failure. Some students used detailed research into the composition and history of the Coalition to provide a sophisticated critique of the organisation and its methods. Several candidates scored maximum marks, which represents an improvement on last year and does illustrate the standard which can be expected when students have the opportunity to engage fully with the topic.

## **Topic 2 – Unlock Democracy**

Despite the recent AV Referendum, only about 30% of candidates attempted this pair of questions.

### **Question 9**

Unlock Democracy uses the internet extensively in all its campaigns and most candidates were able to apply their AS knowledge (and experience in some cases) of the internet as a campaign tool to explain the benefits in one or more of these campaigns. Stronger answers suggested that benefits of targeted distribution, cost and interactivity could also be disadvantages when it came to converting online support into action, such as voting in a referendum. Weaker answers provided a generic 'internet as a campaign tool' essay without application to a specific campaign. One candidate did point out that the high numbers quoted as visiting the campaign's Facebook page could well be inflated by A level citizenship students.

### **Question 10**

Although Yes to Fairer Votes was the main focus of Unlock Democracy's campaigning during the lead-up to the exam, they have been, and are, involved in a number of other campaigns. Many of these featured in answers, which indicated a wide range of research activity. Full marks could be obtained (and often were) by focussing in detail on one specific campaign. Where centres had invited representatives from both sides to take part in an organised debate, students had clearly grasped the issues and the nature of campaigning on both sides. Again, there were some high-level answers here: the effectiveness of the campaign was linked to the result in the AV Referendum, announced only a few weeks before the examination. There can be few examinations able to claim such a level of contemporary material in their questions.

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

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### **Converting Marks into UMS marks**

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

**UMS conversion calculator** [www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion](http://www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion)