



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

**Citizenship Studies**

**CIST3**

**(Specification 2100)**

**Unit 3: Power and Justice**

***Report on the Examination***

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## **GCE CITIZENSHIP CIST3 – POWER and JUSTICE**

### ***General***

Entries for this unit continue to rise gradually which is pleasing to note and most students appeared to be well prepared for the examination. Stronger students really got to grips with discussion of the issues raised by the questions and were able to draw upon current examples to illustrate their answers.

Students are still referring to the increase in university fees and EMA allowance and last summer's city riots. The Murdoch press phone hacking scandal and subsequent Leveson enquiry and MPs' expenses controversy provided relevant material for illustrative examples.

Very few students infringed the rubric of the paper by answering unpaired questions or attempting to answer too many questions. Weaker students showed a lack of knowledge and understanding of key concepts and did not take sufficient notice of what the question actually required.

Centres must, when teaching this course, ensure that students have a clear understanding of the key concepts, without which they cannot develop their knowledge or create a valid argument. Students must also be encouraged to consider both sides of an argument before reaching a reasoned conclusion.

Again, it was disappointing that even some strong students could not spell some terms such as 'parliament' correctly and there were some very original spellings of 'coalition' government including "collision" government. Students should be prepared to learn key terminology correctly and to refrain from using slang terms in their answers.

On the whole, students seemed to manage their time efficiently and there was little evidence that students were unable to finish the paper because of shortage of time. Some students wrote very brief and undeveloped responses which could not reach higher level marks.

Generally, students did not take account of the marks available for synthesis and did not refer to synoptic material from other areas of the specification. However, when schools and colleges had trained students to refer to work from other units in the GCE Citizenship specification and to their work on Active Citizenship, this was duly rewarded when awarding merit for Assessment Objective 4.

### **SECTION A**

#### ***Question 01***

This, linked with Question 02, was by far the most popular question in this section – perhaps this was accounted for by the choice given by the question. Most students chose to link criminal behaviour with social class, ethnicity or gender. Very few students chose to link criminal behaviour with locality.

The question was, on the whole, well answered with students drawing clear links between criminal behaviour and their chosen factors, using illustrative material featuring the city riots of summer 2011, the Stephen Lawrence case and police stop and search procedures discriminating against ethnic minorities. Stronger students were able to quote sociological theories such as 'broken windows' and labelling theories. This was excellent. Weaker

students gave short generalised answers which were lacking in depth and were undeveloped.

### **Question 02**

Although most students achieved with Question 01, this was not the case with Question 02, and very few robust responses were seen. Few students outlined the work undertaken by lay magistrates or referred to the stringent selection procedure and their training. Some students confused magistrates with juries or thought that if judges were introduced to replace lay magistrates then a jury would be required in the Magistrates Court. Their answers seemed to focus on the class difference between lay magistrates and judges, rather than valuing the amount of work carried out on a voluntary basis by lay magistrates. It was generally pointed out that it would cost the taxpayer if justices of the peace were to be replaced by professional judges. Students did not refer to District Judges or their role within the Magistrates Court but did refer to JPs leaning on the legally qualified Justices' Clerk.

Some students did not address both sides of the argument for retaining or replacing lay magistrates.

### **Question 03**

Although jury questions are normally a popular choice for students, this question linked with Question 04 had a low response. Some students misunderstood the term 'qualifications' for jury service, frequently making the point that no qualifications were required in order to sit on a jury. Very few students were able to outline the three basic requirements for jury service, namely to be aged between 18-70, to have name on the electoral roll and a residence of at least 5 years from age 13, and although it was mentioned that selection was random, little was said on disqualification, although mention was made of sifting out potential jurors with criminal convictions.

Students seemed unaware of the Central Summoning Bureau and also of selection in court, challenges or jury vetting. It was expected that students would outline the qualification and selection procedure prior to evaluating them.

### **Question 04**

Students seemed aware of the need for protection of both witnesses and victims in the trial procedure, referring to the witness protection scheme and use of screens or video-linked evidence in order to protect either a witness or victim of crime. However, Victim Support was rarely mentioned, with little reference to counselling and support options.

Some students thoughtfully gave reasons as to why victims and witnesses needed support and protection and outlined problems of post-traumatic stress and psychological conditions following crimes, especially rape or other sexual assaults.

### **Question 05**

Although not many students ventured to respond to this question, answers seen were very encouraging. Some students merely outlined the differences between crime and morality and gave examples, but other well-prepared students were able to name theorists from Aristotle and Aquinas to the Hart/Devlin debate. This was impressive.

Students discussed the differences in upbringing, religion and culture which gave rise to different perceptions of morality and used examples such as theft and murder contrasting these with the morality, but lack of legal sanction for adultery. Students stressed the moral

content of crimes, such as rape, with crimes appearing to contain no moral content, such as parking offences and strict liability offences.

### **Question 06**

This question produced some very pleasing responses: students were able to outline the sentencing aims as contained in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, and comment on the type of punishment given in line with such aims and the likelihood of the aim being achieved. Students referred to reoffending rates and the need to rehabilitate young offenders. The use of examples assisted higher level responses and the city riots of summer 2011 proved to be useful in illustrating deterrence as an important aim.

A few students, unfortunately, did not refer to the sentencing aims, but answered as if the question was focused on powers of the court.

## **SECTION B**

### **Question 07**

This question, linked with Question 08, was not attempted by many students and generally was not answered particularly well. Most students did not give extensive responses and merely outlined the role of MPs and maybe mentioned one other type of elected post in passing. Very few included Assembly members, MEPs or even local councillors. Some responses strayed into irrelevant material such as the social class of MPs rather than discussing their role.

No reference was made to the hierarchy of elected posts and little comment made on the effectiveness of the roles. Students should be encouraged to respond to each question with evaluative and analytical material at this level of examination.

### **Question 08**

This question was not widely answered and most students merely referred to Prime Minister's question time (some muddling this with the television programme 'Question Time') and the Opposition in debate. Few students referred to the whip system, or public bill and select committees. It was surprising that the work of the House of Lords was rarely mentioned.

Some students included how the media hold the government to account, which was not the subject of the question and therefore did not improve their response. Few examples were given: those that were mostly related to the MPs' expenses scandal and Leveson enquiry, which were not strictly relevant to Parliament holding the government to account.

### **Question 09**

Few students explained the position of Prime Minister or composition of the Cabinet as an introduction to their answers. Some students referred solely to the current coalition government, citing problems between Liberal Democrat and Conservative policies which was good, but such responses failed to take account of other Prime Ministerial and Cabinet relationships. The significance of bodies such as Cabinet Committees and the Cabinet Office, and the Prime Minister's powers of appointment and dismissal, were rarely mentioned.

Stronger efforts were made by those who referred to the relationship between John Major, Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair, Gordon Brown and David Cameron and their respective Cabinets, including such examples as the poll tax and the Iraq war. Some students managed to draw a link between the size of the majority and the mandate to govern, and the relationship between the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, which was an excellent analytical observation.

### **Question 10**

This question was not particularly well answered. Students chose a very narrow range to discuss, mainly First Past the Post and Alternative Vote, citing the 2011 referendum and its result.

It seemed that students did not possess a grasp of many of the other systems or indeed correct terminology. Little, if any, mention was made of local elections, mayoral elections or devolved assembly elections and most concluded that reform was not required due to the AV referendum result.

Stronger students were able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems outlined above, but usually failed to note the full range of other voting systems.

### **Question 11**

This question, along with linked Question 12, was undoubtedly the most popular in this section of the examination paper. Again, this may be due to the choice made available. The most frequently used key international organisations for student responses were NATO, United Nations and the European Union. A few students chose to write about G8 and a few unfortunate students responded with various pressure groups such as Amnesty International in which the UK as a nation does not have membership or a role. Students should be well versed in identifying key international organisations as per the Citizenship specification.

Stronger answers gave examples of the work carried out by their chosen organisation, but many did not focus on the UK's role in such organisation or evaluate its worth.

### **Question 12**

Citizen's voice questions appear to be very popular, and the most frequently cited reasons for the lack of citizens voicing their opinion included apathy, belief that their single vote would not make a difference, and disillusionment with politicians. Students tended to focus solely on voting in general elections and very few referred to other ways of political participation such as through pressure groups, lobbying, e-petitions or protests.

Very few students took issue with the question and argued that although the numbers voting had dwindled, other methods of participation as outlined above meant that citizens were indeed politically active and that there was no need for concern.

Most responses suggested that education regarding political issues and the importance of voting was the key to more citizen involvement. It was pleasing to note that some considered that GCE Citizenship should be a compulsory subject as it had raised their awareness of the importance of participating in the democratic process.

### **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>.

### **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)