

**ADVANCED GCE
CRITICAL THINKING**

UNIT 3: Resolution of Dilemmas

RESOURCE BOOKLET

MONDAY 21 JANUARY 2008

F493/RB

Afternoon

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Use Documents 1, 2, 3 and 4 to answer the questions.

This Resource Booklet consists of **6** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

Document 1

Is it right to experiment with identity cards?

Growing security concerns since the attacks on America have reduced Britain's traditional opposition to the idea of identity cards. Four out of five Britons questioned in a MORI poll in March [2004] said they would be willing to carry a card at all times. Many minds may be swayed by the Home Secretary's insistence that identity cards might not protect the country against terrorism but 'would make a contribution'. However this is countered by the widespread belief that ID cards, which could ultimately be used to gain access to medical and other services, will protect law-abiding citizens from illegal immigration, identity theft and benefit fraud.

Most European citizens carry ID documents. Britain, unusually, has not issued any since wartime documentation was scrapped over fifty years ago – a point of pride for some citizens who believe that they have the freedom to choose the information they share with the state.

To worry about losing this is understandable but it fails to recognise the ways in which the world has already changed as computerisation diminishes privacy. Any individual who pays for his shopping with a credit card or makes phone calls from a mobile phone leaves detailed records of his life. The introduction of an ID card would make it easier for officials to join the dots of this digital information – it should also mean that opening a bank account or any other official transaction becomes simpler.

Adapted from ID and ego: *It is right to experiment with identity cards*, © The Times, London, 27 April 2004

Document 2

Nobody has nothing to hide

There is no question whatsoever that, should compulsory identity cards be introduced and their production required to gain access to government services, commercial services will immediately follow suit. Regardless of the Home Secretary's weak assurances on the card's limited application, we can be sure that it will quickly become impossible to book a hotel room, hire a car, open a bank account or make any kind of commercial transaction without producing the card.

Currently, you or I can open a bank account under any name we wish. We can produce a credit card under that name. We can have gas, electricity and telephone lines brought to our home and pay for them under that name. We can book into a hotel as Donald Duck or travel around our own country by air or train as Pocahontas, all of which will be rendered impossible when the commercial sector decides to exploit a scheme that ensures customers can hide nothing.

The staunch defenders of the ID scheme will question why one would wish to carry out such deceptions, but the reason is that the enigmatic stranger is a keystone of the British notion of freedom. The romantic ideal that anyone can be who they wish to be is so stitched into our mythology and literature – from strangers on trains to millionaires posing as paupers and ambitious youngsters escaping class restraints by altering their identity – that its loss would be a tragedy.

The “innocent have nothing to hide” cliché implies that it is only the guilty who wish to be deeply secretive, when in fact the innocent also have plenty of valid reasons to wish to do so. Ironically, criminals will be ably assisted by the ID cards, which they will undoubtedly forge with great skill. Since it will be the commercial demands for proof of identity that will bring about the practical and daily curtailment of freedom, the government will be able to hold up hands in mock horror and say: “But we never insisted you show your ID card to join a health club or buy a TV set” Yeah, right.

From © Muriel Gray, *Nobody has nothing to hide: Identity cards will deprive the innocent of one of their most basic rights*, The Guardian, 2 July 2005

Document 3

What is the National Identity Scheme?

There will be four steps to getting an ID card:

- Applying for your ID card
- Your 'biographical footprint' check
- Recording your biometric data
- Issuing your ID card

Your 'biographical footprint' check

Your 'biographical footprint' is simply the basic facts of your life, for example name, date of birth and address.

When you apply for an ID card, we will check your 'biographical footprint' against information held in other databases such as National Insurance or driving licence records. We will not rely entirely on written documents for this information (as they could be forged). You will be asked to visit one of our local or mobile centres in person wherever possible. This will make it harder for someone to pretend to be another person when applying for an ID card.

Recording your biometric data

Biometrics are unique personal characteristics, such as your fingerprints and irises. Once we have checked your identity, we will record your biometric data. Recording facial and iris biometrics is just like having a high-quality digital photo taken. Recording fingerprints is very simple too and no ink is involved. You just press your fingers against a reader. These biometrics will be 'sealed to' or permanently paired with your biographical information to create completely unique and secure identity data.

What are the benefits of the National Identity Scheme?

The National Identity Scheme will:

- Help protect cardholders against identity theft and fraud
- Provide a reliable way of checking the identity of people in positions of trust
- Provide a secure way of making financial transactions, including those made over the Internet
- Offer a secure and convenient way of proving your age
- Reduce benefit fraud
- Help the prevention of organised crime and terrorism
- Help combat illegal working and reduce illegal immigration to the UK

Some facts and figures

- Identity fraud has cost the UK over £1.7 billion
- Over 10,000 fraudulent UK passports are issued each year
- 430,000 illegal immigrants could be living in the UK
- Between £20 million and £50 million of identity-related benefit fraud is committed each year.

Source: Identity and Passport Service, www.identitycards.gov.uk.

Document 4

Public reaction to ID cards

1 Results of a YouGov/Daily Telegraph Survey carried out February 2006

The survey revealed that the following percentages of people thought that the ID scheme would:

- 64% – cut benefit fraud
- 55% – cut bogus asylum-seekers
- 43% – help catch criminals
- 42% – make life simple and more convenient
- 21% – cut chances of terrorist activity

At the same time, the survey showed that the following percentages of people thought that:

- 80% – determined criminals and terrorists will forge the cards
- 74% – the scheme will be enormously expensive
- 71% – information will be hacked or leaked
- 61% – information will be improperly passed to foreign governments
- 60% – the cards will be time-consuming and inconvenient

2 Some of the findings of an ICM Research poll carried out July 2006

- Public support for ID cards had fallen to 46%, while opposition to them had risen to 51%.
- People were asked this question:

The government has proposed the introduction of identity cards that will, combined with your passport, cost about £93. From what you have seen or heard do you think this proposal is a ...?

- *Very good idea – 12%*
- *Good idea – 34%*
- *Bad idea – 29%*
- *Very bad idea – 22%*

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