



General Certificate of Education

General Studies 1761 *Specification A*

GENA1 Culture and Society

Report on the Examination *2010 examination - June series*

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Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

Unit 1 Section A

(GENA1 AS Culture and Society)

This component is an objective test for which the following list indicates the correct answers used in marking the candidates' responses.

1.1	D	1.16	A
1.2	C	1.17	C
1.3	B	1.18	B
1.4	D	1.19	C
1.5	C	1.20	B
1.6	A	1.21	C
1.7	A	1.22	A
1.8	D	1.23	C
1.9	A	1.24	D
1.10	B	1.25	A
1.11	C	1.26	D
1.12	D	1.27	D
1.13	A	1.28	C
1.14	D	1.29	B
1.15	B	1.30	B

Unit 1 Section A

Question 1

The 30 multi-choice questions in this section were based on a passage entitled “Get your rear into gear”, the main theme of which was social participation. Candidates appeared to find the passage accessible and seemed able to understand and engage with the topic and questions successfully.

The average score was 20 out of 30 giving a mean facility of 65% which means that candidates performed slightly better than in the last two examinations where, in both examinations, the average score was 18.3 and the mean facility 62%.

The majority of questions performed as expected although one question – 1.16 – proved difficult.

Although the most popular answer with a facility of 29.9 %, it was obvious that the bulk of candidates were unable to identify an allegory. At the other end of the spectrum, four questions – 1.14, 1.20, 1.22 and 1.28 – were found to be particularly easy each with a facility above 80%.

Most questions were able to discriminate adequately between the stronger and the weaker candidates. Only two questions – 1.13 and 1.18 – discriminated poorly while in only one question did more candidates opt for a distractor rather than for the correct answer. In 1.23 more candidates chose alternative D rather than C which was the correct answer. Here candidates opting for D obviously believed that the author advocated the teaching of audience participation in schools but this suggestion does not appear in the passage whereas the idea that the author had a low opinion of the media (included in C) figures clearly in paragraph 4.

Overall, the statistics indicate that this part of the examination was a fair and appropriate test of the abilities of the candidates.

Unit 1 Section B

General Comments

The majority of candidates responded positively to the written element of the paper. The theme of culture and cultural diversity seemed to be within the compass of most candidates and average scores were marginally better than in the January examination. The sources, as a whole, were accessible to candidates. The vast majority managed their time effectively and attempted all four questions, although some would have been well-advised to consider more carefully the marks allocated to each question and not spend a great deal of time on Questions 2 and 3 at the expense of questions carrying much higher marks. Presentation was of variable quality but most candidates were able to communicate their ideas in a clear and direct manner. Evidence of essay planning for Questions 4 and 5 showed a slight improvement from the January exam.

Question 2

Generally this question was answered well with the majority of candidates able to select three relevant reasons from the source material regarding the introduction of apprenticeships for the creative industries. The best answers came from those whose answers focused solely on the identification of the three reasons. Some candidates opted to extend their explanations significantly, possibly compromising time available for other questions. A few candidates ignored the requirements of the question and responded from their own knowledge, thus gaining no marks.

Question 3

This question, which required candidates to draw on their own knowledge, was generally answered well. The best answers were clear in their explanation of arguments against the use of government funding to support cultural activities, reference being made to such areas as, alternate government spending priorities, the elitist nature of cultural activities and specific alternative funding arrangements. A disappointing number of candidates concentrated solely about the challenges faced by the government in financing other public service areas, eg. the NHS, the Police, or Education. Unfortunately a significant minority failed to recognise that this question was independent from Question 2 and attempted to integrate aspects of Source B into their responses. Others again lost marks by attempting to use information gleaned from Source C on cultural education within schools.

Question 4

This question was often answered well by those who were able to extend their own ideas alongside development of key points within the source. However, too often some responses were over reliant upon information contained within Source C. Most candidates were able to use the source to make points for and against the compulsory introduction of cultural education into schools with clear, informed supporting development. Lower level responses basically quoted sections from the source with very little or no development offered. A minority of candidates appeared to misunderstand the aspect of cultural education, either confusing it with aspects of cultural diversity or concentrating upon compulsory Citizenship Education.

Question 5

Despite this being the final question responses were generally encouraging with the majority of candidates making a very positive attempt to complete their answers. The higher level candidates utilised the source material very well alongside extended knowledge of their own to exemplify both the positive and negative issues. References were made to aspects of the debates presented within the recent General Election including EU immigration changes and the balancing nature of U K migration. In addition some very sophisticated responses outlined the historic nature of the debate and the moral obligation of Great Britain to continue accepting immigration from war torn and impoverished countries. Candidates generally recognised the problems resulting from immigration, eg the pressure on housing, the welfare state and employment, with many acknowledging the relevant benefits, eg increased skill base and cultural diversity.

As ever the best responses to the more demanding Questions 4 and 5 were clearly written, balanced and well informed.

New Numbering System and New Style Answer Book

Centres are thanked for preparing so thoroughly their candidates to work with the new numbering system and the new style answer book. The majority of candidates responded well to the changes to the June 2010 exams, but where difficulties were experienced, centres are asked to draw candidates' attention to the comprehensive range of guidance material that is available on this subject in order that they are confident about what is required of them in future examinations. Support available on this issue includes Guides for teachers and students, and specimen question papers and mark schemes showing the changes in action. All documents published in support of the changes to exams can be accessed via notices published on all qualification homepages, all subject notice boards, and on the parent and student area of the web.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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