

Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCSE in Citizenship
Studies (5CS02/01)

Unit 2: Participating in Society

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General Introduction

This specification is now well-established and many more are opting for the full course. The vast majority of centres were able to deliver the course successfully and candidates had been able to choose appropriate issues for investigation and subsequent action. There was evidence of much hard work, and the candidates are to be commended for their efforts.

Moderators noticed that there was improved research and presentation of work by candidates; as well as literacy skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Also there was evidence of good internal standardising by the teachers, which is so essential where more than one teacher delivers the course. It can be evidenced by the second teacher's initials on the front cover of the Candidate's work. However, there is need to take care when transferring these marks should there be any changes.

Not all submissions were on the official Edexcel task form, which can lead to disorganised folders and may disadvantage the candidate if they have not got the official wording for the question. No centre is permitted to change any question under any circumstances.

Candidate's work should be individually identifiable, and not in group folders where the moderator then has to search for the correct candidate's work. The Candidate Record Form should be completed in full with the candidate's name and number and the centre name and number so that it is easily identifiable by moderators and senior examiners.

Generally there was a wide variation in the amount of guidance and support that a centre offered to candidates. Most used some of the teacher support documents or devised their own. It is imperative that candidates use these as 'notes' and are not submitting them as their response for the question.

Epecially noticeable were:

- The number of candidates who persevered against the odds/unplanned events that would inevitably have an impact their work, and possibly their level of achievement.
- Instances of no response from the people of power, yet undeterred, they either used their back-up plan, or contacted suitable alternatives
- Instances where group efforts were extremely co-operative
- The success rates of raising awareness, fund raising or changing the situation for the better eg bullying in schools
- Those who were mentioned in school newsletters or the local press.

Examples of good practice from candidates included:

- Clear indication of the issue to be researched and appropriate evidence submitted. This was in many cases cross referenced.
- Very good evidence of the participation in action, well referenced or labelled for identification,
- Many who could identify and use citizenship skills of planning, communication discussion and negotiation.
- Many demonstrated good evaluative skills, when analysing and reflecting on the whole process, including peer evaluation and questionnaires with sound analysis
- Clear links with Citizenship
- Enthusiasm, honesty and over-coming shyness were characteristics of a lot of candidates

Centre administration and marking

The use of the 'What to send the moderator' seemed to have been welcomed by some centres, although there were instances of some inefficiency. Those who included this and annotated it showed extremely good organisation and this was appreciated by moderators. A copy of this list is available on www.edexcel.com and it is advisable that teachers use it, and in doing so avoid the additional burden of receiving an E6 from the external moderator requesting amendments or additional samples of work. Any items not sent, and therefore requested will cause undue delay to the external moderating process.

The examples of good practice by centres included:

- Use of the updated Controlled Assessment Candidate Record sheets that could be signed by both the teacher and the candidate, providing the authentication required to meet the requirements set out by Edexcel in the Specification. The updated form is available from www.edexcel.com and replaces the separate authentication form. This also ensures easy identification of the candidate's work.
- The candidate record sheet used to record the marks for the four sections of the task form (issue; advocacy and representation; participation in action; evaluation).
- Where internal standardisation has taken place there is a second assessor's signature or initials, usually in a different coloured ink. All marks should be recorded in pen, not pencil. This evidence of internal standardisation is so essential especially when there are a number of teachers delivering the course and, as stated on the OPTEMS, the teacher signs to say that it has been done.
- Many teachers indicated on the Candidate front cover if it was the highest or lowest candidate's work.
- Some centres provided a checklist for their candidates to check what should be included in their submission. This was very helpful and lead to well-organised work.
- Good use of Witness Testimony Forms.
- Many well-presented Controlled Assessments.

On the other hand...

Unfortunately there were a few areas which are identified below for Centres to consider for future moderation. This will ensure that the external moderation can proceed without any undue delays:

- Ensure the Controlled Assessment Sample arrives by the deadline and preferably in advance of the deadline.
- Full and accurate completion of the Candidate Record Sheet is required showing the candidate's full name and candidate number, the centre name and number, title of the issue to be investigated and the total mark (which should be checked to ensure it has been correctly added up), and signed by both the teacher and candidate.
- It is the centre's responsibility to check all marks, both on the front cover of the candidate's work and the transfer of marks to the OPTEMS/EDI. There was an increase in errors this year.
- Some packaging was rather insufficient for transport purposes so it is advisable to put some kind of additional tie (elastic band) or plastic folder/envelope inside for security.
- It is helpful to receive them in candidate order.
- Please check that the sample includes the highest and lowest candidate's work, even if it is not asterisked, because the work cannot be moderated without it. Should the centre receive an E6 requesting this work, then it should be sent by return to ensure that there is no undue delay in the external moderation. There should also be work sent to replace any asterisked candidates who were absent or withdrawn.
- The top copy of the OPTEMS needs to be sent to the processing centre, Lowton House, in Hellaby, and not to the moderator. When the Centre Assessor does not complete this accurately, there is a delay in ensuring that amendments are actioned. This includes: wrong record of mark, '0' for absent or withdrawn candidates instead of 'X'.
- Witness Statements/Testimony Form should be fully completed to show exactly what was being witnessed and signed by the witness.
- Any CDs or DVDs sent as evidence need to be checked to ensure that the recording can be played. Clear labelling is required so that it is identifiable.
- When the centre is entering candidates for both Units 2 and 4, they should check if the sample is to be sent to one moderator or two different moderators.

Assessment of candidates' work

Most moderators reported that there was a much better application of the marking criteria by teacher assessors. They had used the level descriptors quite accurately and many marks awarded for each section matched the marking criteria, or fell in the right level. It is hoped that the exemplars and the booklet available for Teacher Support on the website have been useful to teachers, as well as other support documents which are available on www.edexcel.com.

As the Controlled Assessment is worth 60% of the marks of the short course it is imperative that centres apply the marking criteria both accurately and consistently. For this reason it is also important that candidates are given opportunity to complete the task form if, for some reason, they were unable to do so on a specified date.

Moderators were in agreement in that they felt that teachers need to prepare the candidates for the Controlled Assessment so that the candidates are aware of the expectations and how to approach the research, interviews and action. These will probably be new skills and less able students will need some guidance as to how to carry out such activities.

Overall there was a lack of evidence to support the interviews and actions. Where this is submitted it should be clearly labelled and the candidate's personal input identified. When working in a larger group it is not always clear exactly what the individual role and input entailed. It is essential that there is evidence for research, the communication with 'People of Power', and their actions. This year the cross referencing of the research to the response in question one was very good and is to be encouraged, as well as some analysis of the evidence. Candidates are expected to refer to the evidence when completing the task form in sub-sections 2b and 3b. This is their opportunity to demonstrate how the individual candidate has worked during the investigation and group work. All too often it was 'we' not 'I'; the marking criteria is clear when it says 'individual' not 'group'.

Annotations are always welcome, and helpful for moderators to understand how the marks awarded by the Centre Assessor have been given.

Internal moderation often highlights where teachers in the same centre have not applied marking criteria to the same standard and it is best for this to be before centre marks are submitted and the centre sample is sent for moderation. When the teacher signs the OPTEMS, this is verification that internal standardisation has taken place. Moderators reported that there was more evidence in the form of signatures or specific forms for this purpose, which is more likely to lead to the candidates' marks being confirmed.

Most candidates opt to work in a group of about four students. Where this is the case, the teacher should assess the level of the individual candidate's work, and not the group as a whole. Evidence can be annotated to ensure that the individual's input is identifiable. A list of appropriate types of evidence is available in the Teacher Support Book which is available on the GCSE Citizenship page of the Edexcel website. Where there is little evidence, and the individual involvement is not explicit, the candidate is unlikely to gain marks beyond level 2. Candidates may need guidance as to whether their chosen issue is appropriate for the Controlled Assessment. Many centres use the 'Ask the Expert' service so as to guide their candidates.

The sections should be taken as a whole and not marked separately i.e. the assessor should not mark (a) and (b) and then add them together for a total for a section. There were a handful of teachers who had marked in this way, and there may be a different level attained at the end of external moderation.

Choice of issues

Many more issues chosen were around the theme of the environment. The best work can be produced from a really local issue, which is the main idea of this controlled assessment.

When choosing the issue it is important to consider whether there is a local perspective, if there are people to communicate with and obtain their views on the issue and whether there are any obstacles which will hinder possible actions.

Issues which were well done included:

- poverty
- homelessness
- Lack of youth clubs
- Stop and search
- Media-representation of different groups in society
- voting age
- bus fares/local transport
- knife/gun crime
- impact of the media
- sex-discrimination
- society-discrimination, cohesion and human rights.

Inappropriate Issues:

Issues arising from ethical or moral situations must be firmly linked with one of the three Themes from Unit 1 of the Specification in order to fulfil the requirements of the Specification. The range and content area should also be easily identifiable in order to be acceptable for entry in this specification.

Specific issues around *health*: eg. teen pregnancy, mental health anorexia, organ donation, smoking to name a few, cannot easily be linked to a theme or range and content area and unless there is a specific local story/group of people, it can be considered as a topic rather than an issue.

Drugs may well be a local issues and if this is linked to legal matters and not the actual drug or health data only, can be well done.

Those pertaining to *body image*, is certainly a topic teenagers are interested in. There is an exemplar on the website called 'Take Shape' which is very useful in that it shows how this can be successfully done.

Animal rights/conservation/abuse are always popular with young people and whereas awareness of the current situation in the UK is possible, it is very hard to relate it to citizenship. If it is linked to responsibilities it is a little closer to the Specification but even then it does not fully meet the criteria.

Some centres use just one issue and the whole cohort investigate and raise awareness of this one issue. Here there is a danger of insufficient opportunity available to all candidates to fully explore, advocate and participate in the tasks. Others, such as child abuse, need to be done with due care and sensitivity, and may well have obstacles such as confidentiality that hinder adequate responses on the task form.

Centres can use 'Ask the Expert' service if you are unsure about the acceptability of a candidate's choice of issue.

Section 1

Where candidates had not considered an issue within the local community, they had chosen one that is a topic that concerns them in some way, and sought to raise awareness through their action. Hence candidates have taken the local link to mean raising awareness locally, but a number of candidates were unable to explain why their issue was important locally. For full marks candidates must describe the link from a local perspective, give their own personal view and explain how the issue is linked to a Citizenship Theme from Unit 1. Candidates are not penalised for discussing links with more than one theme. Candidates should not be penalised for only linking their issue with one of the themes, as this was asked in the question.

A number of centres were awarding marks where candidates had just included the words 'national' and 'local' without explanation, however, credit cannot be given without an explanation. There was a wide variation of responses relating to the links with citizenship themes. Some were just one sentence, without any explanation or analysis, others included comments from more than one theme (quite acceptable), but just one sentence from each does not fully meet the criteria; candidates should explain in part 1b how this issue fully links to the theme/s.

There should be some reference made to the research, with explanations and annotation to indicate their personal research.

The two sections are taken as a whole for the awarding of marks and need not be equal in length.

Section 2

Candidates were frequently awarded marks in level 4 where there was either no interview, or a reported interview but no evidence of such, or any analysis, or a mix of all of these observations. Depending on who candidates tried to communicate with, very much depended on their success. Writing to David Cameron was commendable, but highly unlikely to receive a response. However, it was amazing how many local MP's replied to candidates and for this there should be thanks offered. Sadly there were many candidates this year who experienced lack of replies from invitations to interview.

Centres ought to consider the reasons for this:

> have appropriate people been contacted?

They are less likely to receive replies from Obama and David Cameron than a teacher or other local representative.

> how was the invitation worded?

If it was just along the lines of 'please tell me what you think of' it probably won't have a response.

> was the person actually in a position to reply?

Centres really need to give some guidance as to appropriate people to contact, and how such letters need to be addressed/worded to elicit a response.

When replies were received there was often very little analysis of the views held and even less comparison with their own view (which was not always made evident). Many candidates did approach staff in their school, including Senior Managers. In some cases this was very effective, but others were inadequate-little more than requests to put up posters or something else in school which required permission. This missed the point of trying to find out the views of others and compare such with their own view.

There were also a few instances where credit was given for the action which was also the interview so in effect crediting twice in Sections 2 and 3. Another misinterpretation is where the candidate contacts (usually by email) to ask permission for use of a display board, assembly or to carry out the action-to identify some of the misconceptions. The key words of the question are 'to find out the views of the person contacted'.

Often candidates had described fully how and when they interviewed rather than stating the actual views obtained through questioning. Centre Assessors need to refer to the level descriptors carefully to ensure they mark in the right level. There was a tendency to over mark by assessors, especially where there was no analysis that could be credited. Well organised groups had contacted and interviewed more than two people and submitted views from a wide variety of people. Generally these were well recognised by the centre.

Centres should remind candidates that there is a requirement of evidence to support these interviews: copies of emails, transcripts of questions and answers or CD's are appropriate and acceptable.

However, a number of centres arranged for all candidates to cover the same issue which is quite acceptable but, where the centre arranged for the person to attend a question and answer session, it was difficult to assess the individual candidate's contribution.

Section 3

Marks are not awarded for a description of the activity. Section a) requires a candidate to suggest ways in which action could be taken, what could be ascertained by doing so and whether it would be feasible to carry it out. Credit should be given for group discussion when considering these actions, the description of negotiation and how the evidence demonstrated the citizenship skills, and the impact that is anticipated from the participation in the action. It should also be noted that responses should be written in paragraphs, rather than bullet points. A Witness Testimony Form, fully completed and personalised, would be a good way to inform the assessors as to the performance of the candidate. Where there is a generic Witness Testimony Form, it does not inform of an individual candidate's performance. All it witnesses is the fact that the candidates have taken part in an activity.

The next part, section b) is the place for candidates to describe their action taken. More able candidates clearly described their actions and often outlined the actions of the others in the group and the negotiating skills in allocation of tasks. However, in other cases, it was rather more difficult to ascertain exactly what contribution the candidate made. There should be evidence of the action/s, annotated to indicate the candidate's participation.

Section 4

It was rather surprising how many centre assessors did not accurately credit Quality of Written Communication which should be assessed in this section.

It was also noted that credit was rightly given to candidates who had extended their action to social networking which would give a national perspective or even international perspective to their investigation, and proved to be well documented in this section. More able candidates described their personal view at the end of their action and evaluate their own performance.

In many cases, this was the weaker section of the task and it would be advised to consider how teachers can help candidates to understand what is required in order to 'evaluate'

Candidate Performance

There were a variety of work sheets from support publications, or devised by the centres themselves, used to give direction to candidates to the specific requirements of the task. However, these should not be used in place of the task form.

Candidates are to be commended for their number of interviewees, and number of differing views discussed in section 2 that went beyond the remit of the requirements.

It was noticeable that more candidates were achieving higher levels this year, which is a direct reflection of centre teaching and organisation as well as the Centre Assessor's ability to apply the marking criteria effectively and internal standardisation has made a positive impact.

Those candidates who were not awarded higher marks are those who did not sufficiently analyse the views from various people or who did not to explain their personal input and compare the views with their own.

Where there were brief responses or incomplete sections this could have been as a result of candidates being unsure of what is expected, timing issues or that the candidate was absent for part of the controlled assessment. It is perfectly acceptable to reschedule to allow them the full time for their write up so as not to penalise the candidate if they miss part of the time allowed. It was encouraging to see so many well-organised pieces of work, with appendices referenced, and the acknowledgement that this citizenship activity had afforded new opportunities and development of skills, as well as character-building. Not only had these young people clearly enjoyed their involvement but a number expressed a wish to continue after the examination.

Choice of Issue

There were a good variety of local issues, the most popular were:

Linked to theme 1: 'homelessness /poverty'

Linked to theme 2: Voting at 16/lowering the voting age

Linked to theme 3: Recycling

Where the choice of issue is clearly linked with the local community it was much easier for candidates to respond to the task form effectively. Candidates should make sure they explain the reason for their choice rather than describe the roles and responsibilities of the group, and explore the links with citizenship and stating their personal view of this issue. There should also be references to the research carried out.

Ultimately the issues to be viewed should be either local or national and where possible global. Candidates who extended their enquiry to these different perspectives tended to gain the higher marks. However, candidates performed rather less well when the links with Citizenship were not sufficiently explained.

Advocacy and Representation

The specification requires candidates to communicate with two 'People of Power'. These should be people who have knowledge of, work in or are concerned with the chosen issue. These do not generally include parents, siblings, friends or neighbours unless they have an interest in, or work that is based on this issue.

Those chosen should have specific knowledge of the issue and be able to take action as a direct response to the candidate's power of persuasion. Clearly someone in the peer group cannot be chosen to be interviewed as they will not have the power to put any proposed changes or improvements into practice.

However, a member of the Youth Parliament might be suitable if the issue is one of lowering the voting age to sixteen, or if the adult person has not responded, a peer may be suitable so that the candidate can demonstrate another view.

Many candidates successfully carried out two interviews, submitted evidence (in the form of DVDs, Witness Statement scripts, or questions) and analysed these views with a discussion of differing views. These candidates were able to achieve the higher level of marks.

The Way Forward

Centres should ensure that candidates have sufficient time allocated for effective communication with the people of power and have a back-up plan. Arrangements should be made when candidates are absent from writing up sessions.

The Centre Assessor should draw attention to the requirements:

- i. The importance of discussion of their own personal view
- ii. It must be evident as to what the individual candidate actually did if this was part of group work.
- iii. Successful communication is where the candidate has expressed the reason for their concern and suggested a way in which this could change.
- iv. A contingency plan is advised for use in instances where there is no replies.
- v. Support documents and training details are available on: www.edexcel.com

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