

Citizenship Studies

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE J269**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **GCSE J029**

Report on the Units

January 2010

J029/J269/MS/R/10J

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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A342 Identity, democracy and justice

General Comments

This was the first sitting of the new A342 Citizenship paper. This paper constitutes 40% of the marks for the short course and 20% of the marks for the full course. It is available to be sat in both January and June sessions with one option of a resit for candidates. Parts of the paper are similar in appearance to the legacy specification paper 1048/01 but in a lot of cases different theory is being assessed as this unit concentrates on identity, democracy and justice.

A good range of marks was awarded to candidates with some very good work seen at the top level. There was good evidence that candidates had been prepared for the exam, with techniques used on 1048/01 being evident on A342.

Comments on Individual Questions

The multiple choice questions are differentiated and therefore some are harder than others. Candidates were using the technique of crossing off alternatives which were definitely wrong in their eyes leaving the best alternative as their chosen answer. Candidates need to make it clear which alternative they are selecting to be marked.

Questions 6 to 10 allow candidates to demonstrate their knowledge of the specification content. Once again, these questions are differentiated. All questions were worth one mark and had the command word state. Candidates need to be made aware that if one word answers the question then that is all they are required to write. Some candidates spent a lot of time re-writing the question. For example question 9, candidates could have written 'protesting' rather than 'one way in which a pressure group might try to influence decision-making is protesting.

Some candidates seemed to find question 11 difficult to answer. When bullet points are given after a question they are there as guidance to ensure that all points are covered when answering the question. Candidates need to check that their answer does in fact answer the question set. Ticking off the bullet points when complete is another technique which has been used successfully on 1048/01 and can also be used on longer questions on A342.

The use of PEE - point, evidence, explanation helps candidates to reach higher levels in this type of question. Evidence or an example to back up a point made is extremely important to score higher marks.

Questions 12 and 13 will always refer to data given, in this case a chart. Candidates need to familiarise themselves with the data before attempting the questions that follow.

Question 14 is similar in style to question 11 and the same advice as stated above also applies in this case.

Candidates had strong views when answering questions 15 and 16. They must ensure that all of the bullet points are covered in their answer to allow them to move into level 2. A number of candidates wrote at great length explaining why they had chosen their alternative without explaining the rights or responsibilities arising from the case. In order to score high marks, candidates need to ensure that their answers are not purely theoretical when it comes to explaining rights and responsibilities. These need to be in context of the case. Candidates selecting the incorrect alternative can score up to 3 out of 4 marks for their evaluation.

Report on the Components taken in January 2010

Candidates of all levels of ability were happy to write at length. This was very pleasing to see and the good practice developed from 1048/01 needs to continue within Centres. Many candidates used the planning box and this seemed to help them to put all of their ideas down before starting to answer the question.

There are a range of exam techniques which are involved in successfully answering question 17. Candidates need to ensure that the question itself is answered as well as the bullet points being addressed. The bullet points can be ticked as they have been addressed. Using PEE as described above is highly recommended.

Grade Threshold

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January 2010 Examination Series

Unit Threshold Marks

Unit		Maximum Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U
A324/02	Raw	40	35	30	25	21	17	13	10	7	0
	UMS	40	36	32	28	24	20	16	12	8	0

The total entry for the examination was:

A324/02 = 889

For a description of how UMS marks are calculated see:
<http://www.ocr.org.uk/learners/ums/index.html>

Statistics are correct at the time of publication.

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