



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Rewarding Learning

GCSE subject criteria for citizenship studies

December 2007

QCA/07/3443

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Introduction

1. GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in citizenship studies. They provide the framework within which an awarding body creates the detail of the specification.
2. Specifications must also meet the regulators' general requirements, including the common and GCSE criteria as defined in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications* (QCA/04/1293).
3. Subject criteria are intended to:
 - help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
 - ensure that the rigour of GCSE is maintained
 - ensure that specifications build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established by the national curricula for England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and facilitate progression to higher level general or vocational qualifications, and employment and training
 - help higher education institutions, employers and other stakeholders such as learners and parents/guardians know what has been studied and assessed.
4. Any GCSE specification that contains significant elements of citizenship studies must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

Aims and learning outcomes

5. GCSE specifications in citizenship should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. This should enable learners to gain the confidence and conviction to participate in decision making and play an active role as effective citizens in public life.
6. GCSE specifications in citizenship studies must enable learners to:
 - engage with topical citizenship issues and contribute to debates on challenges facing society involving a wide range of political, social and ethical ideas, issues and problems in different contexts (local to global)

- develop and apply understanding of key citizenship concepts (justice, democracy, rights and responsibilities, identities and diversity) to deepen their understanding of society and how communities change over time
- use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts, opinions and bias, build arguments and make informed judgements
- develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to take action with others to address citizenship issues in their communities.

Subject content

7. The content of GCSE specifications in citizenship studies must reflect the learning outcomes.
8. GCSE in citizenship studies must be a broad specification based on learners' involvement in citizenship and consistent with the national curriculum key stage 4 programmes of study requirements in the orders for England.

Assessment objectives

9. All specifications must require candidates to demonstrate their ability to:

Assessment objectives		% weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of citizenship concepts, issues and terminology	25–35
AO2	Apply skills, knowledge and understanding when planning, taking and evaluating citizenship actions in a variety of contexts	40–50
AO3	Analyse and evaluate issues and evidence including different viewpoints to construct reasoned arguments and draw conclusions	30–40

Scheme of assessment

10. GCSE specifications in citizenship studies must allocate a weighting of 40% to external assessment and a weighting of 60% to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.

11. Question papers must be targeted at the full range of GCSE grades.

Grade descriptions

To be added later