



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
(Short Course)
June 2012**

Citizenship Studies

41052

(Specification 4106)

**Controlled assessment: Citizenship Studies –
Advocacy and Representation**

Report on the Examination

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Unit 2 (41052): Controlled Assessment – Advocacy and Representation

General

The controlled assessment is worth 60% of the marks for the short course (41052).

For this unit, there are three tasks for the students to choose from; schools and colleges are reminded that these are the only permissible tasks. The tasks are set by AQA and must not be altered or replaced in any way. Schools and colleges must not set their own tasks.

In 2012, the Moderating Team saw work of exceptional quality, with students tackling their work enthusiastically. It is obvious that the vast majority of the students of Citizenship have been well prepared, supported and guided through the process and many have shown themselves to be involved in active citizenship.

In Task 1, students are asked to advocate the aims of a voluntary group, charity or pressure group. Many chose this task; however, care must be taken not to focus on a particular *cause* or *issue* that the chosen group may be campaigning for at the time. The focus must be on the *group*.

Task 2 was popular, with many students raising awareness of sustainability issues in their communities. Recycling and, in particular, the wastage of paper was of great interest.

The new Task 3 was undertaken by a small number of students. The vast majority of these were extremely well-researched and the campaigns were interesting and varied.

There are still a number of schools and colleges who are using home-produced tasks instead of the three generated by AQA. This is a serious infringement of the requirements of the specification. If centres are unsure about the appropriateness of their task they are encouraged to contact their Controlled Assessment Adviser or the Subject Department at AQA.

The Skills Profile Form is the only acceptable way of presenting the written work for moderation. It is possible to expand the space available within each box in the various stages for students to write their responses. The Controlled Assessment can be handwritten or word-processed.

The final writing-up stage of the process must be undertaken in controlled conditions. Many schools and colleges adopt examination conditions for this. A teacher should witness the advocacy and comment on the degree of active participation. Students can work in small groups or on their own. The outcomes, however, must be individual ones. No other evidence apart from the Skills Profile Form and an attached Candidate Record Form should be sent to the moderator. Where other evidence has been included, moderators are instructed not to consider it in their assessment. The evidence should be retained within the school or college.

Teacher comments at the end of each stage should be addressed to the moderator, not the student. The teacher comments should help to justify the mark awarded, especially for Stage 3.

The Skills Profiles should be either stapled together or fixed together with a treasury tag. Large folders and plastic pockets are unnecessary.

The Skills Profile Form was amended in 2012 and schools and colleges are asked to ensure that they are using the correct version.

Schools and colleges are reminded that a Controlled Assessment Adviser is appointed by AQA for each school or college. This person has been trained and is available throughout the year to give advice and guidance on any aspect of the controlled assessment task and the Skills Profile Form.

Information and advice is also available on the AQA website – www.aqa.org.uk – and on e-AQA in particular; ask your Exams Officer for login details. The three permitted tasks for Unit 2 are to be found in this section. Documents giving advice about the expected responses for a Unit 2 task and guidance during the completion of the Controlled Assessment are also there. These documents have been reviewed in line with the new Skills Profile Form. It may be useful to use these in conjunction with the rest of this report.

The following observations are intended to offer guidance to schools and colleges, to aid in the further development and understanding of the new controlled assessment, to build on the successes of this year and to make improvements for next year.

STAGE 1 - INFORM YOURSELF

Students must link their chosen activity to the specific task set. They will either advocate the aims of a charity/voluntary organisation/pressure group, discuss which aspect of an eco-friendly community they are going to pursue or highlight which campaign they are going to focus on.

Students should be able to identify citizenship skills and concepts that are associated with their chosen advocacy in Stage 1 so that they will be able to review this in Stage 5 and explain where they have used skills and gained greater understanding of concepts during the task. Many students highlighted key skills rather than citizenship skills in their profiles; some did not identify any citizenship concepts. Students should have a limited number of aims that are clear, realistic and which are achievable within the time constraints set by the centre.

Responses to Question 3 should give details of what research is necessary, and the vast majority of the students included some reference to the internet. In Question 4, at least two different opinions should be discussed, as well as details of how other opinions will be sought. These different opinions will come from within the group and from the wider community. A historical perspective may be relevant alongside a contemporary one. Question 5 asks for reasons why the student chose to work with particular colleagues. There were some very good answers to this question, with students explaining the various skills their friends had; they then went on to describe how these skills contributed to the decision on who would do what in Question 6.

Students who have chosen to work on their own should still describe what skills they have and how these will contribute to the successful completion of the advocacy. They should also consider others who they may be contacting during the task, eg teachers, peer group, friends, family, neighbours, members of a specific organisation, a local councillor or council official.

STAGE 2 - JUSTIFY CHOICES

In Question 1, students are asked to describe who their audience will be. There are a number of possibilities. The most popular are the student's class, a class of younger children in the same school, a whole year group via an assembly, a group from a local primary school or an audience of parents, governors and teaching staff. Important decision-makers usually

include the head teacher or, in several cases, the school caretaker. Other decision-makers outside the school community often play a major role in successful advocacy.

Question 2 should contain details of what the student wants to achieve, with particular emphasis on change.

In Question 3, the student identifies the key points of the advocacy. This was clear and concise in the majority of cases; only a few students produced a shopping list.

Questions 4 and 5 produced some excellent responses, with students listing many types of media and giving sound reasons why they had made their choices. Question 6 did prove to be difficult for some. Assessing the impact of the advocacy is linked to later stages; many concentrated on questionnaires and/or surveys before and after the advocacy, in order to gauge whether they had made a difference to attitudes and behaviour. Question 7 was often briefly answered, as students struggled to plan their time effectively and seemed unaware of how long their advocacy/action might take.

STAGE 3 - ADVOCACY AND TAKING ACTION

This stage accounts for 20% of the total mark for this controlled assessment. It is in this stage that the student needs to demonstrate what it is they are trying to achieve with their advocacy. How are they going to raise awareness and make a difference? How are they going to change the attitudes and opinions of their audience? How are they going to persuade people to support a cause, or effect a change in behaviour? In Question 1, the best responses were extremely detailed and gave a real flavour of what took place, providing a thorough account of the advocacy and action, demonstrating interest and enthusiasm for a cause. The poorer responses lacked detail and moderators struggled to perceive exactly what had occurred.

Many students had given a good account and the teachers' comments both supported the advocacy/action taken and confirmed the active participation. However, where details were sparse and teachers' comments generalised and not specific to the students, or where teachers had made no comment at all, it was difficult to see where credit had been given and why. High marks cannot be expected unless students have given a good account of the advocacy and the teacher's comments are supportive and fully justify how well the student had performed throughout the activity.

Responses to Question 2 did not always reflect the standard of the advocacy/action that had taken place. There were some excellent responses where students gave detailed descriptions of the evidence they had collected, where it had come from and how it was used. At the other end of the spectrum, there were brief lists of types of evidence, with no link to the action that had taken place.

STAGE 4 - ASSESS THE IMPACT

Many students found this stage a difficult one to complete. The measuring of the impact of the advocacy ranged from the use of questionnaires before and after the presentations, to simply talking to people to see how their opinions and attitudes had been altered. The evidence gathered should be analysed and conclusions reached. Students would benefit from some lesson time where the focus is the teaching of research skills that would help in this stage. Moderators saw evidence of poor responses being awarded high marks without supporting comments from the teacher.

In Question 1, the community could refer to the school community if the task was school-based or it could be the wider community – this will depend on the task chosen and the method of advocacy chosen.

Question 2 should see some analysis of the results of Question 1. Comments associated with the analysis should be specific and relevant rather than vague generalisations.

In Question 3, the students need to revisit their original aims and give an honest assessment of whether they think they persuaded people to change their views and opinions. Many students talked about the impact of their work on the wider community and few said that they did not feel that they had made any impact.

In the final question of this stage, the students are asked to consider what further action they could do to pursue the advocacy/action. Many gave this a great deal of thought and the results were encouraging. They included a host of appropriate and relevant ideas as well as some that were unachievable. This could be the starting point of a task in Unit 4 where there is an opportunity for students to follow up the advocacy with responsible action.

STAGE 5 - REFLECT AND EVALUATE

As in previous years, there was a great variation in responses to this stage.

Question 1 should at least give opposing views on an issue. The students with the best responses called upon opinions from within the group and from the wider audience. There were some vague and confused responses with only one view, and that was from the student.

Responses to Questions 2 and 3 showed a marked improvement. There was evidence of good teaching as students quoted citizenship skills which they had learned and employed. High scoring students linked the skills learnt to actual stages in the process of advocacy, which was praiseworthy.

In Question 4, most students could describe how their contribution helped to make the advocacy successful; however, on occasion modesty prevailed and the student undersold themselves considerably.

Question 5 saw many responses just give a description of what others in the group had done rather than a critical appraisal of how others had made the task successful. There were references to others from the wider community who had helped, as well as others who had failed to help by not responding to communications or failing to arrive for meetings.

In Question 6, the student is expected to revisit the aims laid out in Stage 1 and give a critical review of how successful they had been in achieving those aims. The best students understood the importance of this link and executed it with examples taken from their advocacy.

Some of the unexpected consequences described in Question 7 were well documented and revealing; responses in Question 8 showed honest reflection and a true desire to move forward after a successful advocacy.

Administration

The Moderating Team wish to thank all centres for their support in preparing and guiding students through their Controlled Assessments.

The vast majority of schools and colleges sent their Centre Mark Forms to the moderators before the deadline. Several were very late and this impeded the moderation process.

In schools and colleges with a large entry, there was evidence of good internal standardisation. The importance of thorough internal standardisation cannot be stressed too much. The Centre Declaration Sheet should be signed by all those responsible for marking work and by the person in charge of internal standardising. This should be enclosed with the Controlled Assessment sample. It is helpful to the Moderating Team if larger centres enclose an indication of which teacher has taught each student. A signature on the Candidate Record Form will suffice.

If a Skills Profile Form is lost, there are established procedures for dealing with this. Please include a copy of the appropriate letter to the Moderator when submitting the Centre Mark Form and identify the students whose work has been lost.

Schools and colleges are asked to ensure that all forms are correctly and fully completed. Candidate numbers should be on Candidate Record Forms and on the Skills Profile Form. Care should be taken with the addition of marks and the transfer of marks from the Skills Profile to the Centre Mark Form. It would be helpful if the centre could ensure that the second and third copies of the Centre Mark Forms were checked before posting, to make sure they are readable. There should be no blank mark boxes next to the candidate's name and number on the Centre Mark Form. If a candidate is absent, ABS should be written in the mark box.

This year has seen a large number of exceptional pieces of work where students have selected an issue that they feel passionate about and advocated that issue with considerable skill. The Moderating Team would like to thank centres for encouraging and motivating students to take part in active citizenship.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website: <http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/stat.html>.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into marks on the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion