

Pearson response to the Ofqual Consultation on GCSE Citizenship Studies: Conditions and Guidance

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Organisation details

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Would you like us to treat your response as confidential?*

If you answer yes, we will not include your details in any list of people or organisations that responded to the consultation.

() Yes (X) No

Is this a personal response or an official response on behalf of your organisation?*

() Personal response (Please answer the question 'If you ticked 'Personal views'...')

(X) Official response (Please answer the question 'Type of responding organisation')

If you ticked 'Personal views' which of the following are you?

() Student

() Parent or carer

() Teacher (but responding in a personal capacity)

() Other, including general public (Please state below)

If you ticked "Official response from an organisation/group", please respond accordingly:

Type of responding organisation*

- Awarding organisation
- Local authority
- School or college (please answer the question below)
- Academy chain
- Private training provider
- University or other higher education institution
- Employer
- Other representative or interest group (please answer the question below)

School or college type

- Comprehensive or non-selective academy
- State selective or selective academy
- Independent
- Special school
- Further education college
- Sixth form college
- Other (please state below)

Type of representative group or interest group

- Group of awarding organizations
- Union
- Employer or business representative group
- Subject association or learned society
- Equality organisation or group
- School, college or teacher representative group
- Other (please state below)

Nation*

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Other EU country
- Non-EU country

How did you find out about this consultation?

- Our newsletter or another one of our communications
- Our website
- Internet search
- Other

May we contact you for further information?

- Yes No

Question 1

Do you have any comments on the draft Conditions for new GCSE citizenship studies?

(X) Yes () No

If yes, please provide them here:

In condition 3.2 (a) on page 9, we suggest removing the phrase “which confirms that each learner to which that centre has delivered the assessments ... has undertaken citizenship action.” It would not be manageable for awarding organisations to monitor that this requirement has been met at an individual candidate level – for example, if a candidate is absent for a period of time it would not be appropriate for this to preclude them from being entered for the examinations. Removing this phrase would also ensure the requirement is consistent and comparable with other reformed GCSEs – for example, the conditions for GCSE Geography do not require the statement to relate to each learner, but rather to the centre entering candidates for the qualification.

Question 2

Do you have any comments on the draft guidance in relation to assessments for new GCSE citizenship studies?

(X) Yes () No

If yes, please provide them here:

In Section 1.6 on page 8, the guidance on the 'Assessment of taking citizenship action' section should make clear that the 15% relates only to the questions that pertain to the citizenship action that students have taken themselves. The five bullet points listed can and should be assessed elsewhere in the qualification without contributing towards this 15%. For example, "present their own and other viewpoints ... in relation to citizenship issues, causes, situations and concepts" does not need to (and cannot) be limited to questions regarding the student's own citizenship action given the requirement to have a reasonable balance between elements 1a, 1b and 1c in AO3. It is unclear currently whether this would be acceptable.

The assessment of taking citizenship action requires questions that relate to a student's own action which will therefore need to be broad enough to encompass the range of activities students may have undertaken. Given this requirement, it would be more appropriate to amend the final paragraph of 1.6 on page 17 from "avoids predictability" to "minimises predictability of the assessments". This would also ensure comparability and consistency with other reformed GCSEs – for example, "minimises predictability" is the wording which is used in the GCSE Geography guidance on the assessment of fieldwork, which has similar issues to the assessment of active citizenship in terms of the need to ask questions that relate to students' own independent investigation.

Question 3

Do you have any comments on the draft guidance on assessment objectives for new GCSE citizenship studies?

(X) Yes () No

If yes, please provide them here:

On page 12, AO1 – we suggest that in the second bullet point of the coverage column the maximum allowed % of knowledge only (recall) questions be reduced to 10% or 15% to bring this in line with other reformed GCSEs. As the guidance is currently written it would make it possible for only 10% of the qualification to assess knowledge and understanding combined, which is not in line with the level of demand of other reformed GCSE subjects.

On page 13, AO2 – in the third bullet point of the coverage column, we suggest removing “and actions” from the end of the sentence as the local, national and global dimensions in the subject content are only intended to apply to contexts, not to actions.

In the third bullet point of the interpretations and definitions column it is not clear how developing ideas and making links relates to contexts that are not predictable – this describes what questions might demand of a student, but not how unpredictable contexts should be defined. We suggest amending “not predictable” to “unfamiliar” and deleting the second part of this sentence. This would make this bullet point read “Assessments should expect Learners to respond to unfamiliar contexts”.

In the penultimate bullet point on page 14 of the interpretations and definitions column, we would suggest adding guidance to clarify that if elements 1a and 1b are assessed via a case study it will only meet the 15% requirement for taking citizenship action as specified on page 10 of the DfE GCSE subject content for Citizenship Studies if the question specifies that students must draw on their knowledge and understanding gained through taking citizenship action.

Question 4

We have not identified any ways in which the proposed requirements for reformed GCSEs in citizenship studies would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic. Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?

Yes No

Question 5

Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic? If so, please comment on the additional steps we could take to mitigate negative impacts.

Yes No

Question 6

Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Yes No