

Analysis of Responses to our Consultation on Conditions and Guidance for GCSE Citizenship Studies



July 2015

Ofqual/15/5734

Contents

Executive summary	2
1. Introduction	3
Background	3
2. Who responded?.....	4
3. Approach to analysis.....	5
Data presentation	5
4. Views expressed – consultation response outcomes.....	6
Other issues	8
Appendix A: List of organisational consultation respondents.....	9

Executive summary

Our consultation about the Conditions and guidance for GCSE citizenship studies took place between 26th February 2015 and 27th March 2015.

The consultation questions were available either to complete online or to download. A copy of the consultation is available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-regulations-for-citizenship-studies.

There were eight responses to the consultation – two from individuals and six from organisations. All responses were in a form that matched or broadly followed the layout of the online consultation.

The majority of respondents commented on issues that were outside the scope of this consultation, specifically:

- the Department for Education’s subject content; and
- our earlier decision to require 100 per cent exam assessment in GCSE citizenship studies.

Where respondents did comment on our proposals, they were largely supportive. Respondents did, however, suggest that more guidance was needed to clarify how some aspects of the subject content should be assessed.

1. Introduction

This report is a summary of the views expressed by those who responded to our consultation on the Conditions and guidance for GCSE citizenship studies which took place between 26th February 2015 and 27th March 2015.

Background

Reformed GCSEs are being introduced in England. The primary purpose of the new qualifications will be to provide evidence of students' achievements against demanding and fulfilling content and a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and employment. If required, the qualifications should be able to provide a basis for schools and colleges to be held accountable for the performance of all of their students.

Following earlier consultations, we have already taken decisions on:

- the general design of reformed GCSEs;
- our policy and technical arrangements relating to those subjects that are due to be introduced for first teaching in 2015;¹ and
- the design of the reformed GCSEs in citizenship studies that are to be introduced for first teaching in 2016.²

This consultation focused on more technical matters – that is, on the regulatory arrangements that we must put in place to make sure that exam boards design, deliver and award the new GCSEs in citizenship studies in line with our policy decisions.

¹ Reformed GCSEs in English language, English literature and mathematics will be taught from September 2015.

² www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcses-as-and-a-levels-new-subjects-to-be-taught-in-2016

2. Who responded?

We received a total of eight responses to our consultation.³ Two responses were from individuals and six were from organisations. All of the responses were from individuals or organisations based in England or Wales.

Table 1: Breakdown of consultation responses

Personal / Organisation response	Respondent type	Number
Personal	Educational specialist	2
Organisation	Exam board	2
Organisation	Other representative group or interest group	2
Organisation	Union	2

³ Where responses were received in hard copy we entered them into the online platform.

3. Approach to analysis

We published the consultation on our website. Respondents could choose to respond using an online form, by email or by posting their answers to the consultation questions to us. The consultation included six questions.

This was a consultation on the views of those who wished to participate and while we tried to ensure that as many respondents as possible had the opportunity to reply, it cannot be considered as a representative sample of the general public or of any specific group.

Data presentation

We present the responses to the consultation questions in the order in which they were asked.

The consultation asked six questions and each had a different focus. Respondents could choose to answer all or just some of the questions.

During the analysis phase we reviewed every response to each question.

4. Views expressed – consultation response outcomes

In this section we report the views, in broad terms, of those who responded to the consultation document. We have structured this around the questions covered in the consultation document and provide analysis of the data broken down by stakeholder.

A consultation is not the same as a survey and the responses only reflect the views of those who chose to respond. Typically these will be those with strong views and/or particular experience or interest in a topic. What follows is a fair reflection of the views expressed by respondents to the consultation.

A list of the organisations that responded to the consultation is included in Appendix A.

Question 1 – Do you have any comments on the draft Conditions for new GCSE citizenship studies?
--

Our draft Conditions stated that exam boards must:

- ensure that all new GCSEs in citizenship studies comply with the Department for Education’s subject content requirements,⁴ and with our published assessment objectives;
- comply with any rules and guidance we put in place around assessments (we asked a separate question about our proposed guidance on assessment); and
- require schools to provide statements that confirm students have completed citizenship action (as required by the subject content).

Two respondents (both organisations) did not comment on our proposals.

Four (one individual, three organisations) commented on issues outside the scope of the consultation. We discuss these under ‘Other issues’ below.

Two (one individual, one organisation) suggested rewording our proposed Condition around the statements provided by schools for consistency with other subjects that have similar requirements (such as GCSE geography).

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-citizenship-studies

Question 2 – Do you have any comments on the draft guidance in relation to assessments for new GCSE citizenship studies?

This question referred to our guidance on assessments, which set out our expectations for the indirect assessment of taking citizenship action in exams.

Two respondents (one individual, one organisation) did not comment on this question.

Three (all organisations) raised issues outside the scope of the consultation. We discuss these under 'Other issues' below.

Two (one individual, one organisation) provided detailed comments (and suggested alternative wording) on the proposed text.

One (an organisation) sought clarity on how spelling, punctuation and grammar should be assessed.

Question 3 – Do you have any comments on the draft guidance on assessment objectives for new GCSE citizenship studies?

This question referred to the draft guidance on assessment objectives which outlines how we expect exam boards to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective, coverage expectations and key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective.

Four respondents (two individuals, two organisations) did not comment on this question.

Four commented that further clarification of the meaning of 'contexts' was needed.

Two questioned whether the suggested maximum proportion of marks for 'recall-only' questions was consistent with other subjects.

Some respondents also suggested alternative wording that might address the issues raised.

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.¹⁴ Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?

Six respondents (two individuals, four organisations) did not comment on this question.

The two respondents (both organisations) who commented raised issues outside the scope of the consultation. We discuss these under 'Other issues' below.

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.

Seven respondents (two individuals, five organisations) did not comment on this question.

The one (an organisation) that did comment suggested that non-exam assessment should be retained.

Question 6 – Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Seven respondents (two individuals, five organisations) did not comment on this question.

The one (an organisation) that did comment suggested that additional teacher training could help to ensure that citizenship studies remains an inclusive subject.

Other issues

Throughout their responses, respondents raised concerns about two issues that were outside the scope of the consultation:

- Subject content
- Our earlier decision to require 100 per cent exam assessment.

Appendix A: List of organisational consultation respondents

When completing the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

Below we list those organisations that submitted a response to the consultation. We have not included a list of those responding as an individual. However, all responses were given equal status in the analysis.

ASCL

Citizenship Foundation

Expert Subject Group for Citizenship

OCR

Pearson

Voice

We wish to make our publications widely accessible. Please contact us at publications@ofqual.gov.uk if you have any specific accessibility requirements.



© Crown copyright 2015

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: publications@ofqual.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofqual.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation

Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UB

2nd Floor
Glendinning House
6 Murray Street
Belfast BT1 6DN

Telephone 0300 303 3344

Textphone 0300 303 3345

Helpline 0300 303 3346