

GCSE Citizenship Studies: Decisions on Conditions and Guidance



In February 2015 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance we proposed to put in place for reformed GCSEs (graded 9 to 1) in citizenship studies.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions and guidance which would apply to all reformed GCSEs in citizenship studies.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses alongside this document.¹

Conditions and requirements

We proposed that exam boards must:

- ensure that all new GCSEs in citizenship studies comply with the Department for Education’s subject content requirements,² 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).

Most respondents did not comment on these proposals. Those who did suggested that we make changes to the drafting of the requirement to collect statements from schools for consistency with other subjects.

In response to the comments, we have harmonised our approach to school statements with that used in other subjects.

Our other proposed Conditions are consistent with those we have used for other reformed GCSEs, so we have decided to adopt these without any further changes.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-regulations-for-citizenship-studies

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-citizenship-studies

Guidance

We proposed to introduce guidance:

- setting out our expectations for the indirect assessment of taking citizenship action in exams; and
- clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives.

Again, most respondents did not comment on our proposed guidance. Those who did comment felt it would be helpful to have more guidance on the balance of different content elements and on the meaning of ‘citizenship contexts’. One respondent sought clarification of the expected approach to assessing spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In response to these comments, we have made some changes to the drafting of our guidance – clarifying what we mean by citizenship contexts, and making some of our other expectations clearer.

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.

Issues relating to the subject content are a matter for the Department for Education, which carried out its own consultation on its proposals.³

We have already considered whether to include non-exam assessment in GCSE citizenship following our earlier consultation.⁴ None of the responses to this consultation cause us to revisit this earlier decision.

Next steps

Alongside this document, we have published final *Subject Level Conditions*⁵ and *Subject Level Guidance*⁶ for GCSE citizenship studies.

³ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform--2

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-as-and-a-levels-reform-of-subjects-for-september-2016

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-citizenship-studies

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-citizenship-studies