

OCR Citizenship Studies

# Revision Guide

for GCSE full  
and short courses



Steve Johnson



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ENGAGING IN  
SOCIETY

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# OCR Citizenship Studies Revision Guide

for GCSE short and full courses

**Steve Johnson**

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© Steve Johnson 2009  
First published in 2009 by  
Hodder Education,  
An Hachette UK Company  
338 Euston Road  
London NW1 3BH

Impression number 5 4 3 2 1  
Year 2013 2012 2011 2010 2009

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Produced for Hodder Education by White-Thomson Publishing Ltd. 0845 362 8240 [www.wtpub.co.uk](http://www.wtpub.co.uk)  
Cover photos: *Protest* © Keith Reichner; *deforestation* © iStockphoto; *policeman* © Rudi Tapper/iStockphoto;  
*couple at market* © Brand X/JupiterImages/Photolibary; *lawyer* © Stephen Coburn/Not for Zombies.  
Illustrations by Stefan Chabluk  
Typeset in TheSans 10.5 pt by Andrew Solway  
Text design: Big Blu Design  
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Hobbs the Printers, Totton, Hants.

A catalogue record for this title is available from the British Library.

**ISBN: 978 0340 99131 2**  
**Student's Book ISBN: 978 0340 98249 5**  
**Teacher's Resource Book ISBN: 978 0340 98282 2**

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# Section 1 Introduction

## Outline of the OCR Citizenship Studies specification

### What are the aims and learning objectives?

The OCR specification is designed to help you prepare for your role as an informed and active citizen in your school, college and wider community.

By studying the short course (two units), you should learn the knowledge, understanding and skills defined in the national programme of study for Citizenship.

By studying the full course (four units), you will have the chance to broaden and deepen your knowledge, understanding and skills to help prepare you for a leading role as a citizen of the future.

The specification is designed to enable you to:

- Understand what it means to be British and the importance of community cohesion for the social and economic well-being of our society.
- Develop and apply the knowledge and understanding necessary to become an informed, active and responsible citizen on local, national and global scales.

- Advocate particular points of view based on evidence, while showing an understanding and respect for the views of others.
- Engage in your school, college and wider community as an active, responsible citizen.
- Research local, national and international issues and consider sustainable ways forward that are consistent with improving people's quality of life and respecting their human rights.

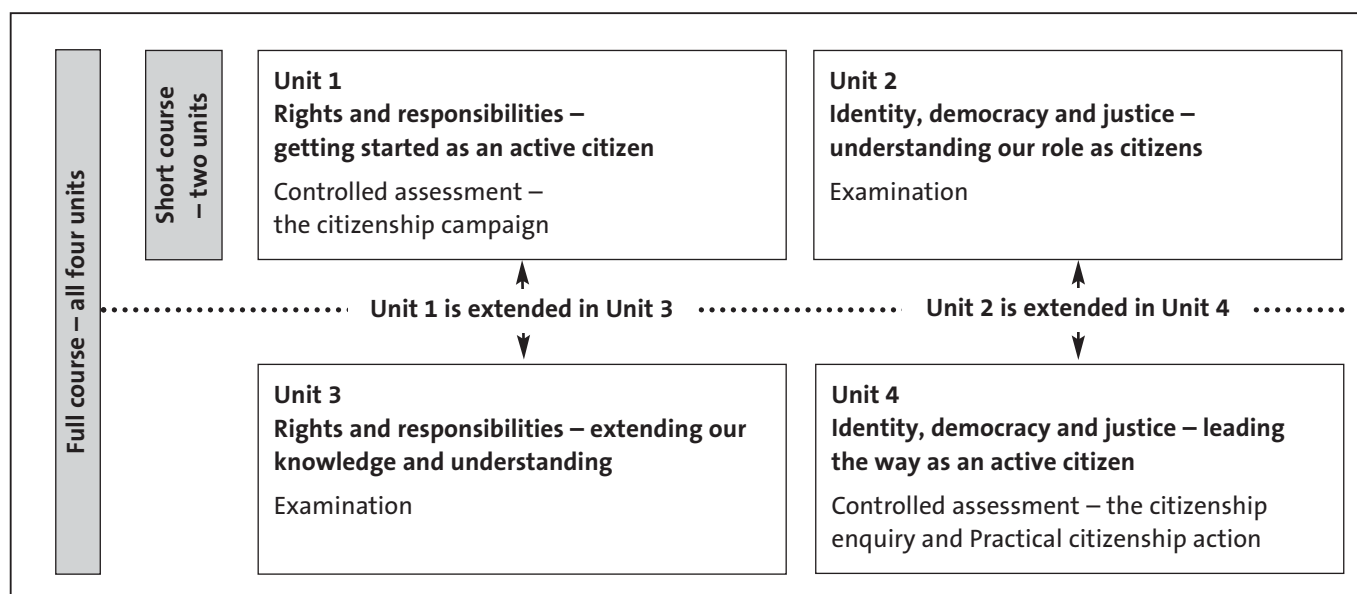
### How is the specification organised?

The specification is organised into two themes (see diagram below):

- 1 'Rights and responsibilities', and
- 2 'Identity, democracy and justice'.

By studying the two short-course units, you should develop a reasonable understanding of each of these themes. By taking the two additional units of the full course, you should develop a very good understanding of both themes.

### How the OCR Citizenship specification is organised.



## How does the assessment work?

### Short course

You need to complete two units for the short-course certificate.

- Unit 1 Rights and responsibilities – getting started as an active citizen
- Unit 2 Identity, democracy and justice – understanding our role as citizens

**Unit 1**, on rights and responsibilities, is assessed through your planning, organisation and evaluation of a citizenship campaign. You will need to work with at least one other person on your campaign as you will be assessed partly on the effectiveness of your team-working and leadership skills. You will have a maximum of 37 hours to complete the assessment, which is worth 60 per cent of the overall short-course mark. Your teacher will guide you through the assessment.

**Unit 2**, on identity, democracy and justice, is assessed through a one-hour written examination. This book has been written to help you do well in this short-course exam.

### Full course

If you would like a full-course certificate in Citizenship Studies, you complete two additional units.

- Unit 3 Rights and responsibilities – extending our knowledge and understanding
- Unit 4 Identity, democracy and justice – leading the way as an active citizen

**Unit 3**, on rights and responsibilities, is assessed through a one-hour written exam. This book will help you to do well in this full-course exam.

**Unit 4**, on identity, democracy and justice, is assessed through your research into a citizenship issue, and your planning, organisation and evaluation of some practical citizenship action. To help you with the citizenship issue, OCR provide a guide and selection of source material to get you started. You will need to work with at least one other person on your practical citizenship action, although your enquiry can take place independently. You will have a maximum of 37 hours to complete the assessment, which is worth 30 per cent of the overall full-course mark. Your teacher will guide you through the assessment.

## How much is each assessment worth towards my final certificate?

The grid below shows how much each assessment element contributes towards the Citizenship Studies GCSE.

Units	Assessment activity	Short-course value	Full-course value
1	Citizenship campaign	60%	30%
2	Exam	40%	20%
3	Exam	–	20%
4	Citizenship enquiry and practical action	–	30%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>





## 2.3 Democracy and voting

### How are decisions made at school and in the wider community?

#### At school

- Students make decisions in tutor groups, year groups or houses.
- Students vote for Student Council representatives.
- The Student Council decides on issues in school.
- Parents vote for School Governors.
- School Governors decide about what should happen in the school.

#### In the community

- Citizens make decisions in neighbourhood groups, community associations and residents' associations.
- Citizens vote for parish, town, borough, district, city or regional councillors.
- Citizens vote in local referendums (votes on a particular issue) when these are held.
- Councils or Local Authorities decide on issues in the community.

Complete the grid below to show examples of decisions made in your school and community.

School or community body	Example of a decision with an impact on school or community life
The Student Council	
The School Governors	
Your Local Authority or Council	

### How has the right to vote been extended in the United Kingdom (UK)?

Table D. History of the right to vote

<b>1832</b>	Act of Parliament gives voting rights to the richest 15 per cent of men.
<b>1838–48</b>	A pressure group (The Chartists) campaigns for voting rights for all.
<b>1859</b>	Liberal Party formed. It promises to extend voting rights.
<b>1871</b>	Workers gain the right to form trade unions.
<b>1884</b>	Vote extended to the wealthiest 60 per cent of men over 21.
<b>1897–1918</b>	Women campaign for the right to vote.
<b>1906</b>	Labour Party founded. It campaigns for all adults to have the vote.



Table D continued

1914–18	First World War. Women prove they can do 'mens' jobs'.
1918	All men over 21 gain the right to vote. So do women over 30.
1928	Women gain the right to vote at 21.
1969	Voting age cut from 21 to 18.
2009	Should the voting age be cut to 16? Should prisoners have the right to vote?

📌 Women were prepared to break the law to gain the right to vote.



### Womens' campaign for the right to vote

The move for women to have the vote started in 1897, when Millicent Fawcett founded the National Union of Women's Suffrage. Progress was slow and, in 1903, Emmeline Pankhurst and her daughters Christabel and Sylvia founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). They wanted women to have the right to vote, and they were not prepared to wait. The WSPU became better known as the Suffragettes. Members of the Suffragettes were prepared to use violence to get what they wanted.

However, when the First World War started in 1914, the Pankhursts stopped the campaign of violence and supported the Government in the effort to win the war. The work done by women in the war was vital, and in 1918 women over 30 were given the right to vote.

## How are power and authority different in democratic and non-democratic societies?

### Power and authority in a democracy

In a **democracy**, **power** is in the hands of all the citizens. Each citizen has the right to vote, form a **political party**, join a pressure group and campaign for what they believe in.

In a democracy, **authority** (the right to make and implement decisions on behalf of others) is held by elected politicians. Civil servants (government administrators) have authority because they carry out the decisions made by the politicians. Judges have authority because they interpret and uphold the law. In a democracy, judges are independent of the elected politicians. This means that although politicians make the law in the first place, they cannot interfere with the decisions made by judges.

Examples of countries with democratically elected governments include the United Kingdom, Germany, India, Thailand, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, the United States of America and Russia. Most of the world's nations are democracies.

### Key terms

**Authority** Having the right to use power.

**Democracy** A system of government in which decisions are taken either by the population directly, or through representatives they have elected.

**General election** An election to choose the MPs who will form a new parliament. A general election is held at least once every five years.

**Media** Newspapers, TV, the internet and any other means of communicating ideas or information.

**Power** Making decisions that affect others.

## Power and authority in non-democratic systems of government

Dictatorships and single-party states are both examples of non-democratic forms of government.

In a dictatorship or single-party state, power is in the hands of one person, a small group of people or the leaders of a single political party. There are no **general elections** and no rival political parties.

People who become members of the single political party have the right to discuss its policies and to choose its leaders.

Any campaigns against the government are stamped out. Authority is held by the leading group, or single political party, and by the civil service, the police and the judges they control.

Examples of countries with non-democratic governments include Saudi Arabia, China, North Korea, the United Arab Emirates and Myanmar (Burma).

## Why are human rights likely to be under threat in non-democratic societies?

In a democracy people have the right to use their vote to get rid of an unpopular government. There are regular elections. (In the UK elections are held at least every five years and, in the United States, citizens elect their president every four years.) If citizens are generally unhappy with their government, they are usually prepared to wait for the next election and vote for a different set of politicians. If citizens feel strongly about something, they can campaign for change between elections. Citizens can also campaign to persuade political parties to adopt new ideas.

In a democracy, the media is free to support the government or to support a rival political party. Peaceful protests or demonstrations are allowed, even if they are against the government. Most democracies are relatively peaceful and stable because citizens know that they can express their views freely and that change is possible.

People who live in a country with a non-democratic government have no right to vote for a different government. To stay popular, the non-democratic government tries to control the media so that only good news about the government and its leaders is printed and broadcast. People are encouraged to support the government by, for example, joining the single political party. By joining, people find it easier to get a well-paid job and they can have some influence on decision-making.

Non-democratic governments use the police and the army to discourage protest. Opponents of the government are likely to be imprisoned or expelled from the country. Their families may also be discriminated against or subjected to violence.



⤴ A poster from the 1960s shows smiling Chinese workers reading the *Thoughts* (sayings) of Mao Zedong (the first Chinese Communist leader). In reality, many people were unhappy living in a country where human rights were limited.

⤵ A Japanese reporter filming anti-government protests in Myanmar (Burma), 2007. He was shot and killed by soldiers as they fired to disperse the crowd.



### Case Study – North Korea

**Politics:** Supreme leader Kim Jong-il is at the head of a secretive, communist government that doesn't allow any opposition. Kim Jong-il's father was the previous leader of North Korea. There are no elections.

**The economy:** North Korea has set out to be independent of other countries and to rely on its own resources for its wealth. All businesses are owned and controlled by the government. There are severe food shortages.

**Human rights:** There are reports of torture, public executions, slave labour and people being imprisoned without trial. It is estimated that there are up to 200,000 political prisoners in North Korea.

## Why are human rights likely to be protected in democratic societies?

Study the grid below. Link the human rights in Table E overleaf with the human rights listed in the grid by filling in the empty column.

Features of a democracy	Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights linked to this feature
All citizens have the right to vote.	
Citizens are free to vote for whoever they choose.	
Citizens vote in secret.	
All citizens have freedom of speech.	
Citizens can form their own political parties.	
Citizens are free to join or form pressure groups.	
Citizens have a right to complain or protest.	
The media is free to express opinions.	
All citizens have the same legal rights.	
Citizens have the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time.	
Judges are independent from the government.	
The law protects citizens from wrongful treatment by the government.	

**Table E. Selected articles from the European Convention on Human Rights**

<b>Article 5</b>	You have the right to liberty. If you are arrested, you have the right to know why. If you are arrested, you have the right to stand trial soon, or be released until the trial takes place.
<b>Article 6</b>	You have the right to a fair trial by an unbiased and independent judge. You have the right to be assisted by a lawyer who has to be paid by the government if you are poor.
<b>Article 9</b>	You have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
<b>Article 10</b>	You have the right to say and write what you think, as long as it does not harm others. You have the right to give and receive information from others.
<b>Article 11</b>	You have the right to take part in peaceful meetings and set up and join groups to protect or promote your interests.
<b>Article 13</b>	If you think that your rights have been denied, you can make an official complaint.
<b>Article 14</b>	You have your rights whatever your skin colour, sex, language, political or religious beliefs or origins.
<b>Article 3 of Protocol 1</b>	You have the right to elect the government of your country through a secret vote.

## What is a representative democracy?

Democracy means the rule of the people. Each individual in a democracy has a vote about what to do. There is no queen, king or supreme ruler, and anybody can suggest a new law.

The earliest democracy in the world began in Athens, now the capital city of Greece, in 510bc. Athens was one of several Greek states. When democracy proved to be successful in Athens, many other Greek states chose it for their government, too. Only adult male citizens who owned land or their own houses had the right to vote. Men would go to a meeting place to vote on the issues of the day while their slaves did most of the work. This system of government, with frequent and direct voting by citizens, is known as **classical democracy**.

A problem for classical democracies was that it was very inconvenient for men to always be going to the meeting-place to vote. Even Greek citizens had some work to do and they couldn't always be voting. So most classical democracies sooner or later ended up choosing a few men who would do most of the voting and do their best to represent the other citizens. The others only came when there was a really important vote. This system has become known as **representative democracy**.

### Key terms

**Classical democracy** A form of democracy in which citizens vote frequently and directly on issues of the day.

**Representative democracy** A form of democracy in which citizens choose representatives, who vote on issues and do their best to represent all citizens.

It was hard to decide how to choose these few men, and different states did it different ways. Athens did it by a lottery. If you got the winning ticket then you were on the Council of 500. Men served for a year.

Representative democracies now choose those men and women who will represent the rest by holding elections. Anyone can stand for election as a **candidate** and they campaign to get as many votes from the other citizens as possible. At first, most of the representatives were popular or important people in their communities. As populations grew and communications improved, people standing for election would get together with other candidates with similar views to form a political party. This makes it easier for voters to decide who to vote for. They may not know the candidates standing for election in their **constituency** but they can find out which political party they prefer and vote for the candidate representing that party.

## What is the difference between Parliament and the Government? How does Parliament make the government accountable to the citizens?

The UK Parliament is not the same as the Government. In fact it is the job of Parliament to check on the actions of the Government and to make sure that citizens' interests are being safeguarded.

### What does Parliament do?

- Members of Parliament debate the major issues of the day.
- Parliament receives reports from the **Prime Minister** and other members of the Government.
- Once each week, any Member of Parliament (MP) can ask questions, and the Prime Minister must attend Parliament to answer them.
- MPs examine and discuss Government proposals for new laws.
- MPs vote on new laws.
- MPs vote on the Government's plans for raising and spending money.

In these ways, Parliament makes sure that Government actions are always examined and questioned.

### What is the connection between Parliament and the Government?

After an election, the 646 newly elected MPs form a new Parliament. The political party with the most MPs forms the Government.

The Queen invites the leader of the largest political party to become Prime Minister. The Prime Minister then chooses some of the most experienced and skilled MPs in his or her political party to help run the country. These senior MPs meet with the Prime Minister at least once a week to discuss the major issues facing the country. This group of senior MPs is known as the **Cabinet**.

### Written questions

The 646 United Kingdom MPs can ask written questions to find out more about what the Government is doing or planning to do. Each year MPs ask 30,000 written questions. Government departments must answer these questions within a set time.

### Key terms

**Cabinet** The Prime Minister and the senior MPs he or she has chosen to help run the country. There are usually around twenty people in the Cabinet.

**Candidate** A person who asks people to vote for him or her as their representative.

**Constituency** An area of the country with around 60,000 voters. Each of the 646 constituencies in the UK elects one MP to Parliament.

**Prime Minister** The Prime Minister is leader of one of the political parties in Parliament – usually the party with the most MPs. He or she is asked by the Queen to select the Government to run the country.

## What does the Government do?

- The Government proposes new laws to Parliament.
- It draws up plans for raising and spending money.
- It makes sure that new laws are put into action by instructing **civil servants** to carry out Government **policy**.
- It responds to emergencies and deals with day-to-day issues. For example, the Government will send emergency aid to another country without asking for Parliament's permission first.

## How can citizens play an active part in local and national elections?

Everyone aged eighteen and over, except convicted prisoners and members of the House of Lords, can vote in UK elections. A general election to choose MPs for the UK Parliament takes place at least once every five years.

To be able to vote, you need to be on the **Register of Electors**. This is easy. Each year a registration form is sent to every house or flat in the country. You simply put your name on the form and send it back. Then you will get an invitation to vote every time there is an election.

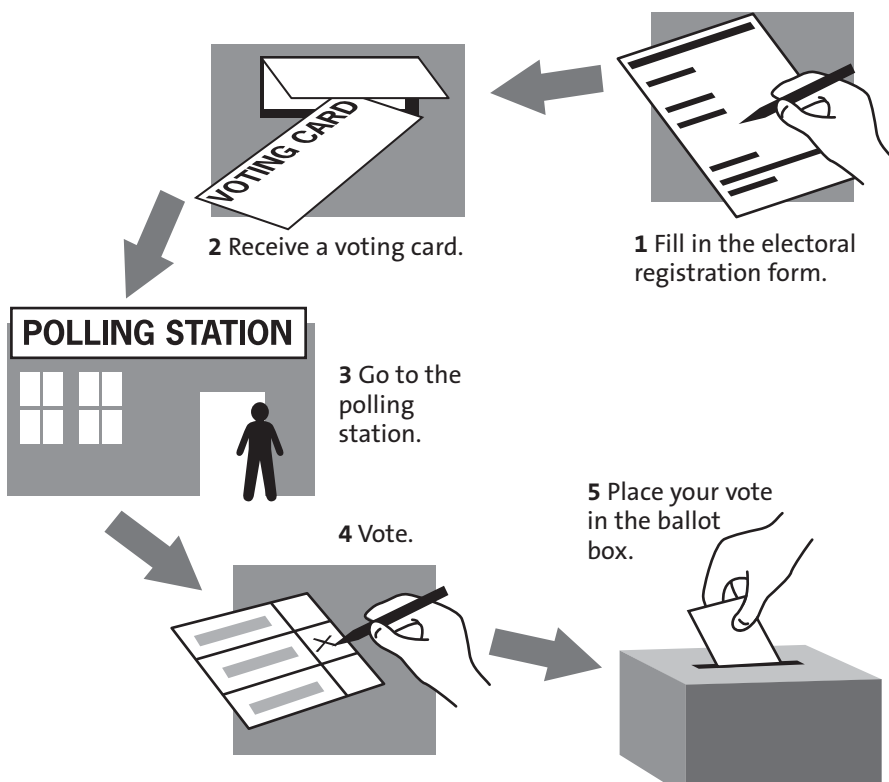
You may be asked to vote by post or by going to a special place called a polling station. This is usually a local library, school or church hall. Voting is secret. You just mark a cross next to the name of the person you want to vote for.

## Key terms

**Civil servant** A professional administrator employed by the State (the country) to carry out tasks given to them by the government. Civil servants should not support a particular political party. They put new laws into operation and carry out government policies. For example, politicians could decide to build a new university, but civil servants would be responsible for actually making it happen.

**Policy** A statement about what a political party will do on an issue such as education, health care or taxation, when it gets into power.

**Register of Electors** A list of those people who can vote in an election.



← How to cast your vote.