



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **General Studies 5761**

## *Specification A*

**GA3C Society, Politics and the Economy (Coursework)**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2007 examination - June series*

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## GA3C Society, Politics and the Economy (Coursework)

### General points

The entry for the June 2007 series was slightly smaller than last year, comprising 625 candidates from 21 centres. The quality of work seen by the moderation team was generally good. Many centres had acted upon the advice offered in the centre specific feedback forms and in previous Principal Moderator's Reports and teachers' meetings. Disappointingly, in a few centres, candidates appeared less well briefed about the nature of the coursework task and performed at a level below what they were capable of. A broad range of titles was seen, demonstrating awareness on the part of centres of the scope of this component, and enabling candidates to explore an issue of genuine interest to themselves.

### The nature of the coursework task

Most, but not all, centres seem to be aware of the nature of the coursework task. Candidates are well supported where their centre encourages them to adopt a structured approach to their assignment planning. The source analysis nature of the assignment requires candidates to choose four or five sources, reflecting differing views of the issue that they are studying. The following form, devised by one centre, to help its candidates analyse and use the chosen sources, is an example of good practice.

#### Framework for Source Analysis

Source number Title Author etc	
Can anything be inferred from the source?	
Is it opinion or fact? How much is objective/subjective?	
How reliable/unreliable is the source?	
Examples of supporting quotations, including exaggerated language.	
What are the strengths and weaknesses of the source?	
How does this source compare with the other sources examined?	

The last question in the form above serves to remind candidates of the need to compare and contrast their chosen sources. Too often the moderation team saw work that was no more than a summary of different sources without any attempt to use these to answer the question posed in their title.

The type of questions which candidates should be asking about their sources are

- Who is the author?
- What is/was the purpose of the source?
- Who is its intended audience?
- What issues are raised by the source?
- What is the context of the source?
- What issues are raised by the language of the source?
- What contradictions may be evident in the source?

Ideally, the sources chosen should not be drawn exclusively from the Internet, but it is accepted that given the topicality of many of the issues with which students engage, this may not be practical. If all sources are drawn from the Internet then they should not be chosen from the same type of site, e.g. four or five articles all from BBC news pages, as this makes any meaningful analysis difficult.

Centres could usefully address issues of this type in test pieces, before candidates start work on their own assignments.

It is good practice for candidates to submit both copies of their chosen sources and a plan with their assignments. Such appended documents and plan are **not** included in the word count.

### **Assessment of candidates work**

The moderating team are grateful to the majority of centres where assignments are clearly annotated and supporting comments are provided on the Candidate Record Forms. In the main the allocation and justification of marks awarded to candidates by centres was clear to the moderator but a few centres provided no supporting comments to justify the award of marks, and this made the moderator's task harder.

In some cases work was submitted that was not of a source analysis nature, and this was over rewarded by centres. The advice offered in previous Reports should be noted. Candidates cannot score above the Basic band for AO1 Application, as it will not be possible for the candidate to show that they have explored any sources. Likewise, AO2 Communication marks are likely to be limited to the Basic band as 'the material is not presented in an entirely clear manner and the most appropriate form of presentation may not have been selected'. For AO3 Interpretation & Evaluation it will be difficult for the candidate to achieve marks beyond the Basic band as they will not have presented information 'in a manner that facilitates analysis and drawing of conclusions', and for AO4 Discrimination & Discernment there will be few opportunities to demonstrate 'discrimination between, and verification of, the information selected'.

Centres must offer on-going support and advice to their candidates about the nature of the assessment objectives, and how they should be met. In a few cases it seemed to the moderation team that, after an initial discussion, candidates were 'left to get on with it', and potential pitfalls were not dealt with. The moderation team were, however, impressed with the obvious quality of support offered by many centres and it was clear that this had enabled candidates to fulfil their potential.

It was of some concern, that in a few cases, centres allowed work to be submitted which was considerably in excess of the word limit. It is a requirement that the word count is stated on the Candidate Record Form, and this should serve as a reminder that the assignment should be no longer than 1,500 words.

Centres are reminded that they can approach their coursework adviser at any time if they are unsure of any aspect of the coursework task.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.