



RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENT

NOTICE TO CENTRES

FAO: Schools delivering Critical Thinking

Date: July 2009

Subject: GCE Critical Thinking H052/H452

A2 Critical Thinking Units F503 and F504 – Specimen and Live Question Papers

Following a query in January 2009, a Notice to Centres was issued to draw teachers' attention to the fact that specimen question papers are provided as a guide, not a template, and candidates should be prepared with this in mind. Specimen question papers are written to support centres in the early stages of delivering a new specification, and both specimen and live question papers are likely to change over time, in order to improve the assessment and reduce predictability.

Teachers are asked to note that the above Notice applies to A2, as well as AS, Critical Thinking units.

In addition, two specific changes have been made in the case of the specimen questions 3 and 4 for A2 Critical Thinking unit F503, Ethical Reasoning and Decision-Making.

The aims and fundamental structure of the paper remain the same.

On the live question papers, question 3 (which concerns applying criteria to choices) may no longer require use or evaluation of the documents in the Resource Booklet. This change has been made in order to avoid testing the same skill in question 3 and in question 4 (which concerns applying principles to an issue). Question 3 will concentrate on criteria and will attract fewer marks.

Question 4 will attract more marks, thus allowing candidates to spend more time developing what is seen to be the most important element in the specification, constructing their own arguments in response to real issues (see pages 17-18 of the specification). This question will continue to require candidates to discuss different sides of a difficult issue and to come to a conclusion, but it will not necessarily take the form of resolving a dilemma. The need to be able to pose and/or explain a dilemma remains in the specification, and questions will sometimes be set to test those skills.

An example of this style of questioning (using the documents in the Specimen Assessment Material) is given below:

- 3 Evaluate **one** choice which the UK could make about the possible future use of wind farms. In your evaluation you should use **three** appropriate criteria (such as public opinion). [12]

- 4 Write an argument supporting any **one** choice which the UK could make about the possible future use of wind farms. In your argument you should use some relevant principles, and explain why you have rejected at least one possible alternative choice. Support your answer by referring critically to the resource documents. [36]

Guidance for teachers introducing the new specification is available at a series of training events.

The Specification, Specimen Assessment Materials and Notice to Centres referred to in this Notice are available on the OCR Website at:

http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/asa_levelqceforfirstteachingin2008/critical_thinking/index.html

Any enquiry about this notice should be referred to the OCR Customer Contact Centre, (01223 553998), OCR, 1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU.