

Citizenship Policy

Albany Academy

Origins of the Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 Citizenship Studies programme of study has been developed in line with Department for Education guidance on *GCSE Citizenship Studies Subject Content* (2022). It reflects our commitment to delivering a high-quality, inclusive education within our Alternative Provision setting. It is designed to ensure that all students, regardless of pathway length, have access to a broad, challenging curriculum that reflects the standards and expectations of mainstream education. The curriculum complements the learning provided by students' home schools while preparing them for successful progression into post-16 education, training, employment, and active participation in society.

The aim of the Citizenship Studies curriculum is to develop informed, reflective and responsible citizens who understand their rights, responsibilities and role within local, national and global communities. Through the study of democracy, government, law, identity, social participation and active citizenship, students develop the knowledge and skills required to engage critically with the world around them. The curriculum encourages students to question, analyse and evaluate information, construct informed arguments, and make reasoned judgements about contemporary issues. We aim to equip students with the confidence and understanding necessary to participate effectively in public and democratic life.

At Albany Academy, we endeavour to re-engage students through relevant, meaningful and contemporary topics that reflect issues affecting young people and wider society. Through discussion, debate, investigation and enquiry-based learning, students are encouraged to develop their own viewpoints whilst respecting the perspectives of others. The curriculum promotes curiosity about current affairs and empowers students to consider how individual and collective actions can create positive change within communities.

We believe that Citizenship Studies plays a vital role in supporting students' personal development and wellbeing within Alternative Provision. Understanding society, identity, belonging and participation enables students to develop a greater sense of self-worth and agency. Citizenship education provides opportunities for students to explore their values, consider moral and ethical issues, and develop an understanding of how they can contribute positively to society.

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We are committed to delivering a broad and high-quality curriculum that equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate modern life confidently and responsibly. Participation in Citizenship Studies develops critical thinking, communication, resilience and decision-making skills that support success beyond school. Through collaborative discussion, investigation and active participation, students develop empathy, cooperation, negotiation and leadership skills. Ultimately, we believe that a strong citizenship education enhances both personal development and future opportunities, supporting students to become informed, active and responsible members of society. Our pupils come from a variety of home schools, resulting in them following a range of curriculum experiences prior to joining our provision. In recognition of this diversity, we have carefully designed our curriculum focusing on key knowledge, concepts and transferable skills rather than solely following a specific examination pathway. This approach enables us to address gaps in learning while developing the knowledge and understanding required for success across GCSE Citizenship Studies specifications and wider educational experiences.

Discussion, enquiry and critical thinking skills are prioritised throughout the curriculum, as we recognise the importance of developing students' confidence in articulating and justifying their views. We also understand the critical role that prior knowledge plays in supporting new learning. However, disrupted educational experiences can result in significant gaps in understanding. To address this, the curriculum has been designed with built-in flexibility, allowing for responsive adaptations that meet individual learning needs and support meaningful progress.

Given the possibility of short-term pupil placements, it is essential to carefully sequence the delivery of the curriculum. At Albany Academy, Citizenship Studies is delivered in a way that is responsive to the individual needs of our cohort. Students attending our pathways have often experienced diverse and disrupted educational journeys. As a result, considerable time is invested in identifying and addressing gaps in knowledge, ensuring that students receive the support required to develop secure understanding and make sustained progress. Our Alternative Provision setting allows teachers the flexibility to adapt content and delivery to support each student's personal development while maintaining high academic expectations.

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Content and Sequencing

The curriculum is designed to cover the key knowledge and concepts within the Department for Education Citizenship Studies GCSE Subject Content whilst being thoughtfully adapted to accommodate the unique and often time-limited nature of placements within our pathways. It incorporates concentric elements to provide regular opportunities for revisiting and reinforcing key concepts, supporting long-term retention and understanding. Learning objectives are carefully sequenced to support progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding while ensuring opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning.

The fundamental areas of our curriculum are built around the core themes of citizenship, identity, rights and responsibilities, democracy and government, law and justice, participation in society, and active citizenship. These concepts are introduced early and revisited regularly through a sequenced programme of study that deepens understanding and supports long-term retention. Students develop their ability to investigate issues, evaluate evidence, construct reasoned arguments and engage in informed discussion. This concentric approach ensures that students can build on prior learning regardless of the length or continuity of their placement.

Our responsibility is to ensure that all students are taught the knowledge and skills needed to become informed and active citizens. We aim to foster an understanding of democratic values, social responsibility and civic participation, encouraging students to engage thoughtfully with the world around them. The curriculum promotes collaboration and respectful discussion, enabling students to develop empathy, negotiation, cooperation and leadership skills while considering diverse viewpoints and experiences.

Where appropriate, students may work towards Pearson Edexcel GCSE Citizenship Studies. The curriculum has been designed to ensure that students can access key areas of the specification, including opportunities to complete Citizenship Action projects that support engagement with real-world issues and active participation within their communities.

It is important to note that this policy is written to reflect the fractional curriculum offer of this pathway. Dependent on a student's prior educational experiences, refinements or adaptations may

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be made to curriculum content using the programmes of study to ensure it remains appropriate and responsive to their individual needs and circumstances.

Overview of units of study:

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	- What is Citizenship? - Identity - Rights and Responsibilities - Councils	- Regional Government - Income and Expenditure - Groups and Participation in Society	- UK and Europe - UK and the Wider World
Year 2	- Electoral Systems - Democracy - Parliamentary Democracy - Legal Systems	- The Role of the Media - Citizenship in Action Project	- Civil and Criminal Law - Systems of Justice - Youth Justice - Sentencing

Assessment and Outcomes

Formative assessment is embedded throughout all aspects of Citizenship Studies teaching. Teachers continuously monitor students' progress through discussion, debate, written work, questioning and investigative activities. These ongoing assessments provide immediate feedback and inform responsive teaching. Assessment data is used both to evaluate individual progress and to inform broader curriculum development and instructional practice.

Assessment is used to inform future planning and teaching. Gaps in learning and misconceptions are addressed rapidly through targeted support and carefully designed learning activities. Students are encouraged to reflect on their progress and evaluate their understanding through self-assessment and peer-assessment activities. This process supports students in developing confidence as independent learners while strengthening their ability to monitor and improve their own performance.

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Citizenship and the Wider Curriculum

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)

Citizenship Studies provides extensive opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Spiritually, students explore questions of identity, belonging, values and personal responsibility. Morally, they consider ethical issues and develop their ability to evaluate complex social and political questions from multiple perspectives. Social development is promoted through discussion, debate and collaborative activities that encourage empathy, communication and respect for others. Culturally, students gain an understanding of diverse communities, traditions and perspectives, developing appreciation and respect for the richness and diversity of modern society.

British Values

The KS4 Citizenship Studies curriculum provides explicit opportunities to teach and explore British Values. Democracy is central to students' understanding of elections, government and political participation. The Rule of Law is examined through studies of the legal system, criminal and civil law, courts and justice. Individual Liberty is explored through discussions of rights, freedoms and responsibilities. Mutual Respect and Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs are promoted through the study of diversity, identity and participation within society. Students are encouraged to debate sensitive and controversial issues respectfully, developing informed opinions while appreciating the perspectives of others.

Cultural Capital

The curriculum aims to broaden students' understanding of the world through the exploration of local, national and global issues. Students are exposed to a range of perspectives, institutions, political systems and cultural experiences that help prepare them for life beyond school. Opportunities to engage with current affairs, community issues and public institutions contribute significantly to students' cultural capital and understanding of society.

Careers

The fast-changing world of work places increasing importance on communication, critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills. Citizenship Studies supports students in developing these essential employability skills while also introducing careers linked to politics, law, public services, journalism, social research, campaigning, community development and education. Students are

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encouraged to consider how active participation and civic engagement can contribute to future pathways and opportunities.

Reading

Students are introduced to a wide range of subject-specific texts including news articles, political speeches, legal case studies, government publications and contemporary commentary. Planned units of instruction contribute to the development of reading skills across the key stage, including the interpretation of complex information, analysis of viewpoints and evaluation of evidence. Teachers model reading strategies and support students in developing the literacy skills needed to engage confidently with subject-specific vocabulary and challenging texts.

Citizenship and the wider curriculum

Citizenship Studies provides many opportunities to enrich the broader curriculum. Students develop literacy through discussion, debate, extended writing and critical evaluation. Numeracy skills are developed through the interpretation of statistics, polling data, budgets and demographic information. Students enhance their digital literacy through research and the evaluation of digital sources and media content. The subject also supports the development of critical thinking and enquiry skills that transfer across the curriculum, enabling students to become more informed, reflective and independent learners.