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**Post-16 Citizenship
Support Programme**

SIX APPROACHES TO POST-16 CITIZENSHIP

4. Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to:

LSN consultant Trisha Fettes who took the leading role in writing this booklet.

The post-16 citizenship team at LSN (Bernadette Joslin, Rob Pope and Helen Lim).

Introduction

Different approaches to delivering post-16 citizenship

Six distinct, but related, approaches to post-16 citizenship have been identified.[1]

Examples of each can be found in all the post-16 education and training settings, including the informal sector, although the approaches may be implemented in somewhat different ways in various contexts. Young people led, active learning is a crucial underlying principle of effective practice across the approaches and in all settings.

The approaches are: *Citizenship through*

1. learner voice and representation

2. qualifications and personalised programmes

3. group tutorial and enrichment programmes

4. voluntary and community-based activities

5. single events

6. research projects

Each title in this series of six booklets will examine and illustrate one of the above approaches. However, in practice it is desirable, and indeed common, that organisations combine several different forms of provision to ensure, for as many young people as possible, a range of citizenship learning opportunities. Undertaking a variety of citizenship activities will also help learners to reinforce their citizenship learning and recognise its usefulness in different arenas.

What is post-16 citizenship?

Citizenship enables young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities, to understand how society works, and develop knowledge and understanding of social and political issues. Through citizenship education young people are encouraged to take action on issues of concern to themselves and to play an active part in the democratic process, thereby becoming more effective members of society. They are encouraged to express their views, to have a voice and make a difference to the communities in which they operate, and to reflect on what they have learnt.[2]

Whichever approach is used, it is essential that learners experience the key opportunities for post-16 citizenship learning in order to:

1. identify, investigate and think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events of concern to them

2. decide on and take part in follow-up action, where appropriate

3. reflect on, recognise and review their citizenship learning.[3]

Why do citizenship post-16?

There are clear benefits for the young people themselves and the organisations in which they learn. The young people show increased confidence and self-esteem, a greater interest in the world around them, an ability to get things changed, knowledge about 'the system', experience of taking part in challenging and worthwhile activities, and a more positive attitude. The organisation gains constructive involvement of staff and learners in decision-making, and more motivated learners, leading to increased retention and achievement and better relations with the local community. Moreover, citizenship can provide some coherence in an organisation's response to many of the educational initiatives outlined on pages 20–21.

Teaching and learning strategies

Citizenship education can be delivered effectively post-16 in a variety of ways, either as discrete, specially-designed activities, or as part of existing courses and programmes. However it is delivered, the most effective teaching and learning strategies involve active participation by young people, engaging collaboratively with real issues, selected by them. The activities should be led and owned by the young people and should be stimulating and fun. The Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme (see page 19) provided examples of citizenship through, for example art, photography, video making, role play/simulations, websites, music, newsletters, radio stations, discussions and debates, conferences, exhibitions, graffiti walls, banners, dance, comedy, drama, investigations, surveys, and campaigns. Experience of the Development Programme, and indeed the findings of the external evaluation[4] and Ofsted reports[5] all point to the importance of active learning in citizenship education. Active learning involves learning by doing and then learners reflecting on their activities, so that they can develop knowledge and understanding from their own experiences. They identify, review and summarise their learning and then apply it to new situations.

PLAN AND DO

APPLY

What skills and knowledge will be needed in a new situation?

How can I acquire these?

Who can help?

Active Learning Cycle

REFLECT

What happened?
What went well?
What didn't?
Would I do the same again?

REVIEW

What skills and knowledge did I already have?
What new skills and knowledge did I learn?
What do I have yet to learn?
How can I learn this?
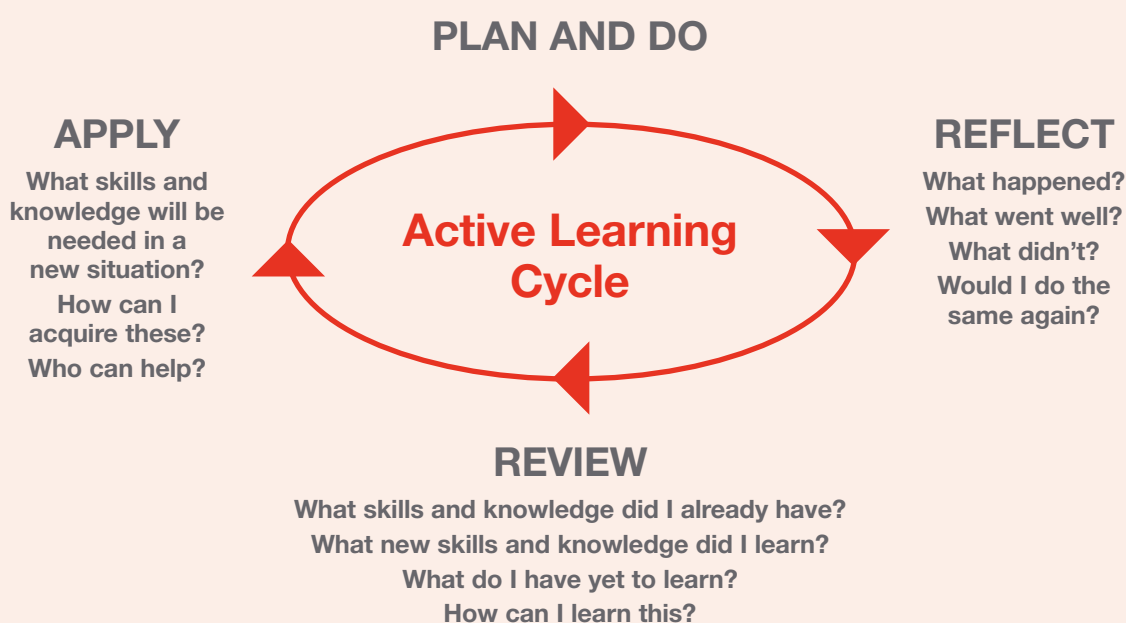
Active learning also involves a dialogue and interaction with others. It is clearly an important learning strategy for active citizenship because it develops many of the skills required, including:

• ability to empathise with others' points of view

• critical thinking to weigh evidence

• ability to form considered opinions and communicate them

• confidence and interpersonal skills to engage with others to effect change.

However, not all active learning is necessarily citizenship learning. Citizenship learning involves knowledge and understanding of social and political issues, so the context of the activity is important.

Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities

Why should young people get involved?

Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities creates links with the wider community and gets young people involved in real situations, new things and wider activities. Young people find their involvement in community activities (often voluntary and informal) enjoyable and motivating. Social action has been shown to 'impact on young people's confidence and self-worth, on their sense of who they are and their personal identity, and on the development of skills and attributes'[6]. Their sense of belonging, profile and pride in their community can also be enhanced.

'Citizenship has brought a new light to my life and it has made me realise that complaining about the world doesn't make it a better place, but the actions we take together will improve the societies we live in... It has also helped me in making the decision to become a teacher.'
Ex-college student

'I have got a lot of new skills and qualifications as a result of my volunteering. I also got a lot of experience which enabled me to be successful when I applied for a post of project support officer.'
Youth volunteer

'I now understand what happens in the world, how some countries intimidate others... we need to work together to make a difference.'
Childcare trainee

A life-changing experience

Students from Aquinas College in Stockport had a life-changing experience working in a small school in India with children from the streets and slums of Mumbai. As well as working with pupils at the school, students ran classes on artwork with clay for underprivileged children from another charity – Akanksha.

Each student kept a journal during the visit which has been used, along with video and photographs, for a PowerPoint presentation, assemblies and displays.

'I wasn't sure what to expect – seeing people living on the streets and living in what can only be described as propped up sheets and corrugated iron was shocking and sad, especially compared to where I live. But merged with the slums were the likes of Armani billboards, Pizza Hut and Baskin-Robbins! It was like two different cultures mixed into one diverse city.'
Extract from a student journal

'There are enormous opportunities to use the India project experience to further understanding of development and other global citizenship issues within the college... The experience will enrich the college's tutorial and general studies programme, giving a new reality to topics...'
College tutor

Voluntary and community activities also have benefits for the organisation and wider community – for example by developing positive community relationships and profile, potential community leaders, and products or services of direct benefit to community members. Partners can gain increased knowledge of citizenship issues of relevance to their business or social enterprise, and opportunities for staff development.

The government wants to see 'empowered and confident communities, with higher levels of democratic participation and citizen engagement', and to support people 'who want to make a difference'[7]. Youth-led action has also been highlighted as important, with new initiatives being developed across the UK to encourage and support young people in volunteering and community activities. For example:

• 'Making a positive contribution to society' is one of the five outcomes for young people set out by the government in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*[8] and followed up in the *Youth Matters* Green Paper[9]. The aim is to engage more young people in 'positive activities', including volunteering and community involvement. Volunteering is regarded as 'the full range of ways in which young people can make a contribution to their local communities, including leading action, campaigning and fund-raising'. The initiative is supported in each local authority by Youth Opportunities funding for young people to establish, with support, their own projects.

• The government's study into youth action and engagement (the Russell Commission) recommended that a National Youth Volunteering Programme (NYVP) was created within a framework to improve the quality, quantity and diversity of youth volunteering. The V charity[10] has been launched to develop the NYVP and champion youth volunteering in England for 16–25 year olds, with an advisory board of 20 young people. It funds organisations to create new opportunities for young people, works with the voluntary sector to develop tools and infrastructures, and promotes greater awareness and understanding of volunteering amongst young people. There is a website specifically for young people: **www.vinspired.com** offering advice, information, blogs, forums and volunteering opportunities.

Types of voluntary and community activities

Activities in the post-16 citizenship programme have ranged from those taking place within organisations attended by young people to examples of international work. The main examples of participation have involved:

1. Campaigns
2. Community-based projects
3. Mentoring schemes and support groups.

1. Campaigns

Involvement in community activities can encourage young people to do more to try and promote change.

'I've noticed that volunteering is not enough for our committed students. One student has been involved as a volunteer in the community but has been frustrated that good works don't necessarily change things... The young people have worked together to agree their own ground rules and objectives and have led workshops on their chosen campaigning issues... Students have moved from simply highlighting key issues in the community like racism, drugs, crime and education, to a constructive engagement with opinion formers, learning that achievement is best measured in small steps along the road to solving bigger problems.'
TELCO Student Organiser who worked with students at Tower Hamlets Sixth Form College

Participation in campaign events and activities organised by others from local or national organisations is one way for young people to take action on an issue of concern to them and to learn about campaigning.

Campaigning for a living wage

Students at Tower Hamlets Sixth Form College worked in partnership with The East London Communities Organisation (TELCO) and took a very active part in the campaign to raise the minimum wage to a living wage. They were concerned about the local impact of the minimum wage when they heard about a bank's plan to contract-out cleaning services. A group persuaded the bank's chairman to meet with TELCO to discuss the issue and a strategy.

'Active citizenship for our students wasn't going to be just about being a tutor rep or campaigning for cheaper canteen prices – they can do that already. It was much more about issues that concerned them within the community and working with a wide range of local organisations on those issues.' **Director of Tower Hamlets Sixth Form College**

A multicultural community

The students at Croydon College have 'created a thriving multicultural educational community' within the college. The citizenship programme is delivered through enrichment, and is seen as 'a powerful force for integration and development'.

The Enrichment Committee has been a springboard for a number of student-led campaigns such as campaigning on 'making poverty history' and fund-raising for a local hospice. A link was built with Oxfam's campaign against arms, with key skills being developed through active citizenship. Starting with the facts and campaign opportunities, the aim was to stimulate learners to react to issues in a way they found appropriate – they decided.

Other issues of concern to students have led to working with Envision on litter and graffiti, and involvement with the wider community through Croydon Youth Service.

If young people wish to organise their own campaign, this will need careful thought and preparation. It can start in a small way.

Lois Pendlebury, a student at Bradford College, was encouraged by citizenship in the college to become involved in trade justice.

'I chose trade justice as a campaigning issue because you can have impact through everyday activities by buying Fair Trade products... I wrote to a number of NGOs for information and to get promotional material. They gave advice on organising a vote in college on Fair Trade products, writing press releases, and how to run a successful campaign.

'I think I was able to show how citizenship could be really active and needn't be based only on written work. Many students wanted more information and some have now become world development activists.'

Saving the local hospital

Young people at the Vale of Evesham School for students with a very diverse and complex range of abilities and needs were involved with a campaign to save their local community hospital. They wrote letters to people of influence, including the Secretary of State for Health, the Prime Minister and the local press, and had some replies. At the time, the campaign was successful, showing students how their input, though small, when added to that of others could contribute to change.

Student pressure gets results

Confronted with a management decision, with no student consultation, to restrict the spring half-term to three days, rather than five, students at St Vincent College, Gosport, successfully campaigned to reinstate the five days.

Tutor group representatives discussed the matter at a full meeting of the student council where the executive were charged to take action. They organised a petition from students and sent a letter to the college Principal setting out their arguments. The NUS contact officer got the backing of the NUS who gave very helpful advice on campaigning for change. Teachers were also consulted. The full executive met the Principal, who was not convinced, at that stage, of the need to change the decision. Using their right of access to the governors, the executive got the matter on the agenda and a second meeting with the Principal, but again no success.

More direct action was needed. A planned Ofsted visit was used to put pressure on the college management, with a sit-in and boycott of lessons organised prior to the visit. This action succeeded in changing the Principal's mind, who was complimentary about the group's 'spirit and determination'.

'It was a matter of mutual respect... We had shown how we could work within the rules to campaign for change.' **Student Council member**

The success of the campaign raised the profile of the student council among students who realised it could have a real influence on college policy. The ethos of the college encourages participation.

Stages in running a campaign[11]

- **Decide to do something about the issue** – there may be strong concern about the issue, but is a campaign the most appropriate way to go, will it be worth the effort this will take?

- **Investigate the issue and groups with similar interests** – collect and check facts and figures and background information (e.g. from local council, government departments/agencies, pressure groups, local groups) to inform reports and leaflets and meetings; identify groups that are involved in the same or similar issues that are able to provide advice.

- **Check out the legal aspects** of running campaigns, including libel laws (i.e. when using the media) and health and safety (e.g. for public meetings or demonstrations) and do a risk assessment.

- **Establish a campaign group** by finding other people who feel strongly about the issue but are also willing to help manage and run the campaign – ask other learners, friends, parents/carers and neighbours, advertise locally, post a notice on Action Network. Hold a meeting.

- **Get the group organised** – identify clear objectives; choose an appropriate name for the group; agree roles (e.g. coordinator, secretary, treasurer and publicity officer) and responsibilities; agree the rules for how the group will be run and decisions made; identify ways people will be able to contact the group and get information about the campaign (e.g. email, website); identify a timetable for the campaign, including group meetings; make arrangements for handling finances and any necessary fund-raising.

- **Lobby people of influence**, for example youth council, student union, senior managers in the school/college/training/youth and community centre, governors, local MYP, MP or local council members.

- **Gather supporters** – be clear about why people should care about the issue, what the campaign is aiming to achieve and what they could do; hold and go to social events; use websites; make leaflet drops and follow up; hand out stickers or badges; join with other groups campaigning on similar issues.

- **Get positive media coverage and publicity** – to get noticed there has to be some news-worthy stories; obtain support from a local celebrity or other high-profile person to increase media interest; use posters in public places; do press releases; get stories reported on websites, in school/college magazines, local newspapers/on local TV, radio, write letters to the letter pages, participate in phone-ins or vox-pops.

- **Show support from across the community** – for example by people attending a public meeting, writing letters, signing a petition (paper-based or on-line), participating in a protest event, such as a vigil, protest march, a stunt such as a piece of street theatre, a sit-in. Consider the pros and cons, including risks, of each method.

- **Keep in touch** – people like to know what is happening. Have regular meetings and other communications with the group running the campaign; consider a newsletter to up-date others; remember to thank those involved in the campaign.

2. Community-based projects

Community-based projects are diverse in nature with examples ranging from groups and individuals working to improve the environment or services for young people, to tackling issues such as 'crime and safety' and young people's health issues. Some activities have started within the community of a school, college or training organisation, and then taken into the local or wider community.

Fair Trade activities

A group of sixth-formers at King Edward VII School, Melton Mowbray, set up a Fair Trade group after hearing a talk from the organisation 'People and Planet' on the plight of farmers in poor countries.

Activities have included selling Fair Trade products to staff, parents and fellow students. The group has also started to work with the Enterprise Coordinator and Year 10 students during the enrichment programme to promote Fair Trade across the school.

Following this success, the group spoke to more than 60 primary and secondary teachers at a conference on global citizenship. Several teachers spoke to them afterwards about establishing a similar group in their schools. The group was also invited by the Mayor and the Leader of the town council to give a presentation on their work to a full council meeting on whether Melton should apply for Fair Trade status. The motion was passed, with the Mayor believing opinion was swayed by the group's arguments.

The group's members gave up their time because they believed strongly in Fair Trade and have been rewarded by others in the school and wider community listening to what they have to say.

Local community resource

YP MiX is a one-stop website offering advice, information and news to young people from across Plymouth. Launched by the City Council, the website is the achievement of a group of committed young people who conceived the idea, decided on content, worked on the design and promoted the site.

'We wanted to get involved with something city-wide and had our chance when the council organised a meeting to find out how they could better engage young people through the web. The council agreed that young people should take ownership and make all the key decisions.'

'We managed to fill the council chamber with youth organisations which were all keen to find out more about our work... they wanted to be part of it as a gateway to their own information.'

To oversee the development of the website, two advisory boards were set up: one for young people and one for adults. One young person sat on both boards. The site offers quick access to information, including a section on 'know your rights' and a new section is planned called 'Grill a Councillor'. Interactivity is a key feature to encourage young people to choose the topics they want to discuss.

On the day of the launch more than 700 came to enjoy a range of activities and find out about the website.

'We decided to concentrate on and invite the harder-to-reach young people in youth groups and clubs around the city... and then involve the schools.'

The site can be viewed at: **www.ypmix.co.uk**

Community safety

At Kingston College, students designed a series of 12 postcards to raise awareness of a wide range of issues affecting young people in the local community – for example racism, street crime, Internet safety and weapons. The aim was to inform other young people about dangers out in the community and ways to get access to help and support if these issues affected them.

Groups of students worked with the Metropolitan Police and various local support groups. All the postcards were translated into the five other languages of Polish, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean and French so that other sections of the local, multicultural community could have access to the safety information.

At an event at the Guildhall in Kingston, the students presented the postcards to the Mayor who then spoke of his admiration of the students' contribution to help their local community.

Taking citizenship from post-16 to a primary school

Following his success performing his raps at several national citizenship conferences, Kenneth During has been running workshops with other young people to help them write their own raps on citizenship issues.

He went to Ben Rhydding Primary School in Ilkley to work with pupils to explore what citizenship means and to create raps on related issues. Kenneth talked about how rapping is a means of communication and a way of getting your voice heard. Children in year 6 worked in small groups to discuss issues such as conflict, war, the environment, bullying and racism, and how something could be done about them, before composing and performing their own raps.

'Having Kenneth there was a real enrichment and enhancement opportunity. These children have the opportunity to become the movers and shakers of tomorrow and I want to see them make the most of their advantages and understand their responsibility to make a positive contribution to society.' **Headteacher**

Primary education in the developing world

Students at Bradford College were concerned about lack of resources – basic educational materials – at a school in Kenya. Firstly, they decided to raise money through various activities such as running primary school assemblies, Fair Trade events and sponsored meals for Bradford business people. Students then went on to visit and work with the Kenyan school.

A wider social perspective

All curriculum areas at Whalley Range High School have business links – a powerful vehicle for getting students into the community and also showing the wider world what a multicultural school is like. Many of the sixth-formers have taken up the offer of getting involved in voluntary work. Not only do they get to help others and explore the reasons why people need help, but also accumulate 'Millennium Volunteer points'. The students themselves get an insight into other people's lives in a way that widens their social perspective.

Conservation project

Students at Oldham FE College and Rochdale teamed up with the local Groundwork Trust in a Prince's Trust initiative that aimed to help disaffected young people to learn citizenship life skills by giving them responsibility for organising conservation and community projects. Students who have been on the initial 12-week course are being trained to bring on younger students.

'We're training them to deliver what they've already experienced through Groundwork. We want to give them the sense of ownership to plan and manage their own projects. After the 12 weeks, the change in the young people is almost unbelievable and we have a good idea of those who will make inspiring leaders for the younger group.' **Groundwork trainer**

Working with partners

Successful social action groups are most commonly those which are facilitated and supported by youth and community organisations, schools, colleges, local councils, national bodies or other partners.

Effective citizenship activities in the community rely on a good working relationship with community partners. Developing partnerships extends opportunities for young people to:

• engage in active citizenship through participation in local community projects and other activities

• develop awareness and understanding of ways in which national and global issues impact on the local community

• learn about how different organisations operate from a citizenship perspective.

Partner organisations include:

• charities and voluntary bodies

• business, social or community enterprises

• local government departments and public services such as the police and those to do with health/welfare, education and the environment

• political organisations such as political parties and pressure groups

• the media

• legal and financial advice agencies.

Each type of partner may offer benefits, for example information, material resources, mentors, visits or placement opportunities, to support voluntary activities and community projects. But work with partners may also raise issues, for example legal, health and safety, child protection or ethical issues that will need to be addressed before young people engage with them. Some forms of action may be more risky than others. Whilst not wanting to discourage young people from taking action, it will be important that both staff and learners are aware of the regulations and constraints under which they, and their partner's organisations work.

To help ensure successful partnership working:

• get to know people in local organisations and the range of opportunities for participation and obtaining resources

• check that legal, health and safety, and other requirements can be met

• be realistic about what is possible, for example in the time available to young people and their partner(s)

• identify potential areas of risk, sensitivity or controversy and carry out a risk assessment

• make clear to all participants the objectives of the partnership and potential benefits

• prepare both the young people and partners for the realities of working together for citizenship purposes

• keep in regular touch with those involved to review and evaluate experiences.

3. Mentoring schemes and support groups

Peer mentoring in citizenship contexts can involve mentors and mentees of similar age with, in some cases, participants taking turns to take on the mentoring role. More often, mentors are older than their mentees, for example sixth-formers mentoring younger pupils. The focus for mentoring may be to support citizenship activities and learning, or other forms of personal development, skills or subject learning.

Intergenerational mentoring provides opportunities for young and older people to meet, and benefit from each other's life experiences, help break down stereotypes and correct misconceptions, and to share common issues. It can also be used to support the social inclusion of young and/or older people.

Mentoring across the generations

Aylesbury High School gives year 12 students time for voluntary activities. Students have developed their peer-mentoring skills and helped to teach political literacy to year 8 and GCSE citizenship to year 10.

At **Shipley College** the need for community cohesion is seen as part of sustainability. An intergenerational mentoring scheme was set up with the Bradford Community Accord, initially working with a Methodist church group. The scheme encourages young people to meet with senior citizens to exchange experiences.

'Before they went out, the learners had very negative ideas of the elderly. These ideas were effectively challenged through meeting older people and discussing life styles. It was very much a two-way process; the senior citizens were just as interested in the backgrounds and cultures of the learners.' **College tutor**

It is planned to expand the scheme to other community groups and involve more young people, using those with experience to train others.

While mentoring can take place on a day-to-day basis without becoming too formalised, citizenship programmes can also be designed to include explicit and planned opportunities for young people to volunteer as mentors within their own organisation or elsewhere. Successful mentoring schemes need clear aims and objectives; careful planning and preparation; opportunities for briefing participants and for training mentors; and on-going support, monitoring, reviewing and evaluation.

Confronting prejudice

Lance, a member of Democratic Action for Bath & North East Somerset Youth (DAFBY), has been working with a new group to support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual young people.

'It's partly a question of giving support especially for those who feel isolated in their communities... We've consulted with groups in Bristol to see how interest can be raised and encourage people to bring their personal problems to share with the group. There's no pressure – some people want to keep their involvement low key and many young people are still unsure of their sexuality, but all will be welcome.'

The group intends to campaign on public issues, especially homophobic bullying in schools, and develop a schools' charter to support teachers.

A peer support group may be established which includes mentoring activities, as well as more general opportunities for members to share experiences and learn from each other.

A stronger sense of community

Two students at Coulsdon College took the initiative to establish a group within the college after developing their interest in issues affecting young black people through reading works on black history and religion. The group, now named The African Caribbean Society, runs fortnightly meetings during enrichment time. All are welcome whatever their ethnic background, but those attending have been predominately black or of mixed race. Its popularity has been largely due to word of mouth. The aim is to create a greater sense of community among black people – how they can work together to counter violence and disagreement, and stereotyping.

'We wanted to make it clear it wasn't a class, but a matter of learning from each other... we haven't made any rules for the meetings except that everyone is equal and everyone should be willing to listen to and respect other people's views. Some of the teachers have come and made points, without seeming to be authority figures.'

Longer term, students would like to bring other South London colleges into a wider group and see ex-students come back to discuss their experiences and aspirations.

Key issues in establishing a peer-mentoring scheme

Before setting up a peer-mentoring scheme, it is vital to establish what are the aims of the scheme and how it will support citizenship learning objectives. Also there should be early discussions with potential participants to seek their views:

Further information on setting up a peer-mentoring scheme can be found in *Mentoring students and young people: a handbook of effective practice*, by Andrew Miller[12].

This publication gives valuable advice and guidance in relation to the following key areas of peer-mentoring:

• Planning the programme

• Information required by mentors

• The recruitment of mentors

• Training for mentors and support resources

• Information for stakeholders

• Matching mentors with mentees

• The preparation of mentees

• Providing supervision and support

• Reviewing and evaluating a peer-mentoring programme.

Assessment of voluntary and community activities

'Assessment of citizenship helps young people to recognise and value what they have learnt...'
(QCA, Play your part, p.34)

Celebrations of learning can be a whole community event involving displays or performances, plus opportunities for discussions with community members.

A wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding can be developed through voluntary and community activities that relate to the citizenship learning objectives set out in the QCA Framework for Citizenship Learning[13] such as:

• demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities

• exercise responsible actions towards and on behalf of others

• consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation

• demonstrate understanding of and respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination

• represent a point of view on behalf of others.

The QCA Framework of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTs)[14] includes a specific skill set relating to citizenship – *effective participation* – as well as other skills relevant to citizenship such as teamwork and self-management.

The effective participation skill set focuses specifically on the abilities of young people to 'actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them, so they play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves'.

Young people are expected to:

• discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed

• present a persuasive case for action

• propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps

• identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves

• try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions

• act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own.

Evidence of citizenship learning can include as examples photographs; audio or video tape clips; observation records or witness statements; and material produced during the project such as products, notes, a paper-based or electronic journal or diary. Assessment can be informal, involving recording and reflecting on own learning and/or peer-based.

A citizen's ID

Aylesbury high school students have written a handbook *Citizens I.D.* for sixth-formers engaged in community involvement. It includes space for recording skills, and evaluating and reflecting upon volunteering experiences – for example one student worked as a volunteer in a local women's refuge.

Union action

At Gosforth High School, the student union has supported various volunteering and action groups, including one on recycling and another which raised funds for an earthquake disaster and developed awareness of the role of voluntary organisations. The union offered peer-based, formative assessment, including critical feedback.

Assessment can also lead to accreditation through, for example, Millennium Volunteer, Prince's Trust, Duke of Edinburgh, youth awards and other national schemes, as well as local awards.

'The focus is on self-assessment, with young people being encouraged, at the start, to identify the skills they need to be improved. Skills are then reviewed at the end and the young people can score themselves on how they have performed. There is also an opportunity to gain accreditation through, for example, a Groundwork award.' **Groundwork Trust trainer**

Fit for citizenship

Training for Life, offering training on health fitness and sports-related issues, introduced citizenship into the Community Sports Leader's Award. Sessions started by looking at personal issues, before making connections with wider social and political issues that influence young people's perspectives and life chances.

Peer mentoring has been a key element in the delivery of this award course, involving about eight young people who had already completed the course acting as mentors for the next intake. Supported by the lead trainer, they were largely responsible for devising, implementing and pacing the learning activities. In this respect, the course was very much youth-led. Acting as peer mentors added a new dimension to young people's learning:

'We were given the opportunity to be leaders... that was a good thing for us... that gave us skills as well – leadership skills... talking to people, letting them understand where we're coming from.'

Citizenship learning has been assessed informally throughout and at the end of the course. This has been done through question-and-answer sessions with peer mentors, and short debriefing sessions at the end of specific learning activities. The young people were asked to reflect on and express what they had learnt.

Full case study at: **www.qca.org.uk/downloads/cs_training_for_life.pdf**

Training in the skills for voluntary and community activities

It cannot be assumed that young people know how to carry out all the tasks involved in, for example, mentoring, running a support group, conducting campaigns and participation in community activities, without some training. They will need opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills.

Extending citizenship learning

At City College Norwich students are offered the opportunity to gain a variety of citizenship-related qualifications, such as those offered by the National Open College Network. Short courses support and extend the citizenship learning of students who take on voluntary roles in the college and wider community, for example:

- Information, advice and guidance in practice (Level 2) – this offers volunteer student mentors the opportunity to gain accreditation for their mentoring training and voluntary work

- Understanding the role of young people as peer mentors (Level 1) – this course is offered to learners enrolled on Level 1 courses and would like to be mentors

- Understanding active citizenship in the local community (Level 2) – a qualification designed particularly for Student Union volunteers.

Students from the college have acted as mentors, taken part in lobbies to Parliament and a Student Union lobby over fair funding for FE colleges and adult learning, and have staged a protest at County hall over student bus tickets.

Skill development is a process that involves:

- identifying the skills required

- developing these skills through various activities and interventions

- practising skills in different tasks and receiving constructive feedback, for example in 'low-risk' situations within their centre

- consolidating and applying skills in wider, higher-risk situations

- reviewing and reflecting on their skills.

Voluntary activities and campaigns can be conducted within the community of a school, college, training or youth centre. This is a way of developing skills within a lower-risk situation, providing opportunities for constructive feedback and support before skills are applied more widely in other community settings.

'The 12 session training course really prepared me well for handling the wide variety of different issues and topics, but the skills I developed from the practical side of running the helpline is citizenship for real and not just theory. Within Youthcomm young people work together within a team... show amazing commitment to the project, and gain respect from the staff who are facilitators and enablers, not leaders.' **Youthcomm volunteer**

Background to post-16 citizenship

Citizenship has been a statutory subject at key stages 3 and 4 in secondary schools since 2002, following the recommendations of the first advisory group on Citizenship[15], chaired by Sir Bernard Crick. The report identified three inter-related components of citizenship:

• social and moral responsibility

• community involvement

• political literacy.

It also stressed that young people should be provided with the knowledge, skills and opportunities to take responsible action and to influence decisions. The Crick report explicitly recommended that young people participate in active citizenship, in which they engage in their communities and also gain knowledge and understanding. Active citizenship is defined by the National Foundation for Educational Research[16] as being when young people are 'given the opportunity to put their citizenship understanding and skills into practice and participate in a community or public context'.

Post-16 citizenship was the focus of a further advisory group chaired by Sir Bernard Crick[17], whose report recommended that:

• *an entitlement to the development of citizenship, of which participation should be a significant component, should be established which would apply to all students and trainees in the first phase of post-compulsory education and training*

• *all such young adults should have effective opportunities to participate in activities relevant to the development of their citizenship skills and to have their achievements recognised.*

The Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme was set up in 2001 at the request of the then Secretary of State for Education and Employment and in response to this report. The Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA, now LSN) was given the responsibility for managing the programme on behalf of the DfES and, from April 2006, on behalf of the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA). The programme set up pilot projects across England to investigate the best ways to establish citizenship activities and to encourage young people to become effective citizens. Following the success of the Development Programme, QIA commissioned LSN from September 2006 to run the Support Programme for post-16 citizenship, accessible to all providers in England. The Support Programme is working with school sixth forms, sixth-form colleges, further education and tertiary colleges, training providers, employers, youth services, voluntary groups and offender educators. Its aim is to encourage providers of education and training, whatever their setting, to enable young learners to develop their citizenship knowledge, skills and understanding, and give them the opportunities to put this learning into practice.

Citizenship and wider policy development

Since 2001, citizenship has become increasingly important on many Government agendas and commands broad political support. It is recognised that giving all members of our society, including young people, a stake in their communities and an opportunity to voice their views, makes for better community relations, more stable neighbourhoods and more engaged citizens.

There are a wide range of current educational initiatives which impact on citizenship:

- The 14–19 White Paper made a renewed commitment to citizenship in the national curriculum and stressed the importance of active citizenship for the whole 14–19 age group: *'We need to be confident that everyone leaving education is equipped to be an informed, responsible, active citizen. In an ever more complex, interdependent world, where an engaged population is crucial to the health of our society, we continue to put citizenship at its heart too.'* (14–19 White Paper, DfES, February 2005).

- The 14–19 Diplomas, of which the first five lines of learning will be available in 2008, provide opportunities for citizenship through the extended projects and the proposed six personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS). These include 'effective participator', which focuses on *'young people actively engaging with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.'*

- QCA and LSC are working on a strategy to bring coherence to the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT), in order to rationalise the units and qualifications available at Entry and level 1. Provision within the FLT will consist of three strands: subject-based and vocational learning; personal and social development; and skills for life and work. A set of design principles for qualifications will be published which all qualifications aimed at supporting programmes within FLT will have to meet.

- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19, influences all provision. The Government's aim is for every child and young person, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, and achieve economic well-being. Children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them as individuals and collectively, and inspectors will listen to their views.

- *Youth Matters*, a Government Green Paper launched in July 2005, set out proposals designed to improve outcomes for 13–19-year-olds. It proposed that young people should have:

  - More things to do and places to go in their local area – and more choice and influence over what is available

  - More opportunities to volunteer and to make a contribution to their local community

  - Better information, advice and guidance about issues that matter to them, delivered in the way they want to receive it

  - Better support when they need extra help to deal with problems.

The aim is to empower young people to shape their local services, involving them in local decision making and providing opportunities for them to give something back to their communities. The Government said: *'We know that when young people participate in decisions affecting their learning and social experience they are more likely to achieve and become active citizens.'* (**www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters**). The Youth Opportunities Fund has been set up to provide resources (£31 million) for young people to become more involved in their communities.

- Personalised learning and learner voice, are central tenets of the FE White Paper, 'Raising Skills, Increasing Life Chances'.[18] This makes proposals for colleges, and other providers of further education and training, to *'put the learner at the heart of the learning experience'* by making improvements in advice, guidance, quality of teaching/training, pastoral support and, crucially, provision for enabling students to have their say in influencing and driving up the quality of provision available. A key recommendation arising from the *Foster Review*[19] is that all providers of further education and training should, by September 2007, have a learner involvement strategy, which is published and monitored. Personalised learning requires providers to listen to young people about how they learn best, what does and does not work for them, and to invite learners to 'co-design' the curriculum. The Gilbert report[20] brings schools into the same arena. The report recommends that Ofsted should provide clearer guidance on the expectation that schools' self-evaluation should draw on pupils' feedback, specifically on learning and teaching. The report suggests ways in which pupils could be actively engaged in shaping teaching and learning:

  - using pupils as learning resources for one another

  - inviting pupils to work with teachers in curriculum teams to review schemes of work

  - asking pupils to provide feedback on particular lessons

  - conducting regular surveys on the quality of the school experience, and

  - involving pupils in the selection process for new staff.

- New national guidance is being published by the LSC, and will be available from April 2007 in order for all providers to put learner involvement strategies in place by September 2007.

- A curriculum review that is taking place for key stages 3 and 4, to be followed by additional qualifications in Citizenship Studies being available from awarding bodies. Currently there are plans for a full GCSE in Citizenship Studies, in addition to the existing short course, and new A/AS level qualifications in Citizenship Studies (from 2008/9). The importance of education for diversity within the school curriculum has been emphasised by Sir Keith Ajegbo, in his curriculum review, *Diversity and Citizenship*[21]. The vision underpinning the report is *'in five years, for all schools to be actively engaged in nurturing in pupils the skills to participate in an active and inclusive democracy, appreciating and understanding difference.'*

Notes

1. Based closely on the '7 approaches' identified in the Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme, 2001–2006, and cited in *Play your part: post-16 citizenship*, QCA, 2004

2. *Getting started with post-16 citizenship*, LSN, 2006

3. *Play your part: post-16 citizenship*, QCA, 2004

4. *Taking Post-16 Citizenship Forward: Learning from the Post-16 Citizenship Development projects*, NFER, HMSO, 2004

5. An evaluation of the post-16 citizenship pilot, 2004/5: a report from Ofsted and the Adult Learning Inspectorate, Ofsted, October 2005

6. Roker, D. and Eden, *A longitudinal study of young people's involvement in social action.* Report submitted to ESRC (2002)

7. Communities and Local Government Department: **www.communities.gov.uk**

8. **www.everychildmatters.gov.uk**

9. **www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/youthmatters**

10. **www.wearev.com**

11. Based on practice from the post-16 citizenship development programme and information provided by the BBC's Action Network **www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork/**

12. Based on practice from the post-16 citizenship development programme and information provided in *Mentoring students and young people: a handbook of effective practice*, Andrew Miller (2002), Kogan Page Ltd

13. *Play your part: post-16 citizenship*, QCA, 2004

14. QCA: **www.qca.org.uk/secondarycurriculumreview/lenses/skills/ personal-learning/definitions/**

15. *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools*, DfEE/QCA, 1998

16. *Taking Post-16 citizenship Forward: Learning from the Post-16 Citizenship Development Projects*, NFER, Report RR604, 2004 (p.iv)

17. Citizenship for 16–19 year olds in education and training: report of the Advisory Group to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, DfEE/FEFC, 2000

18. 'Raising Skills, Increasing Life Chances', DfES, March 2006, arising out of the Foster review of FE

19. Realising the potential: a review of the future role of further education colleges, Sir Andrew Foster, DfES, November 2005

20. 2020 Vision – Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group chaired by Christine Gilbert, DfES, December 2006, PPOAK/D16/1206/53

21. *Diversity and Citizenship*, Sir Keith Ajegbo, Dr. Dina Kiwan and Seema Sharma, DfES, January 2007, PPSLS/D35/0107/14

Useful websites

Action Network **www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork** (resources on campaigning)
Health and Safety Executive **www.hse.gov.uk**
The National Council for Volunteering **www.volunteering.org.uk**
The National Council for Voluntary Organisations **www.ncvo-vol.org.uk**
Media UK **www.mediauk.com** (list of media contacts)
Common Purpose **www.commonpurpose.org.uk**
Friends of the Earth **www.foe.org.uk**

References and resources

Play your part: post-16 citizenship. Guidelines for providers of post-16 citizenship programmes, QCA, 2004 (**www.qca.org.uk/post16index.html**)

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Keeping it Safe: a young person-centred approach to safety and child protection, standards and guidelines (2002), National Council for Voluntary Youth Services (Telephone: 020 7422 8630).

Action for Change, Will Ord, Don Rowe and the Trust for the Study of Adolescence (2003). National Youth Agency (ISBN: 0 86155 276 8)

Making a Success of Youth Action, Richard Parsons, NYA (**www.nya.org.uk**)

A longitudinal Study of Young people's Involvement in Social Action (report submitted to ESRC, June 2002), Dr Debi Roker and Karen Eden, Trust for the Study of Adolescence (available at **www.post16citizenship.org.uk**)

Mentoring students and young people: a handbook of effective practice, Miller, A. (2002), London: Kogan page Ltd

Available from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme (www.post16citizenship.org)

Post-16 Citizenship: what? why? how? (VHS video and CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2004

Citizenship Uncovered (DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Make it happen: effective practice in post-16 citizenship (VHS video/DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Making it click: an interactive guide to post-16 citizenship (CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Staff development for post-16 citizenship, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Agree to disagree: citizenship and controversial issues, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

The real picture: citizenship through photography, LSDA (now LSN), 2004

More than words: citizenship through art, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Get up, stand up: citizenship through music, LSDA (now LSN), 2005

Reality check: citizenship through simulation, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Choosing an angle: citizenship through video production, LSDA (now LSN), 2006

Getting the show on the road: skills for planning and running citizenship events, LSN, 2006

For the sake of argument: discussion and debating skills in citizenship, LSN, 2006

'We all came here from somewhere': diversity, identities and citizenship, LSN, 2006

Getting started with post-16 citizenship, LSN, 2006

More than profit: work, social enterprise and citizenship, LSN 2007

A case for action? Skills for active citizenship research, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in school sixth-forms: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in colleges: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in work-based learning: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

Post-16 citizenship in youth and community groups: an introduction to effective practice, LSN 2007

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