

ACT Quality Mark for citizenship education resources

ACT principles of effective citizenship education

The principles below form the basis of the standards we use to judge the quality of resources submitted for the ACT Quality Mark for Citizenship Education Resources.

To establish the conditions in which to develop outstanding teaching and learning in citizenship in schools in England, the following key principles need to be considered.

The first six are considered as essential principles. The last three are desirable. Resources which achieve the Quality Mark must meet the standards required by the first six.

Principle 1. Consider the contexts and backgrounds of all pupils and any issues that will be particularly sensitive or controversial for them. For example, how diversity is considered and represented in materials; and establishing a safe learning environment to discuss sensitive topical issues and considering the needs of pupils who may be affected by such issues.

Principle 2. Establish what pupils know, understand, and can do and use information about pupils to plan rigorous and challenging citizenship teaching and learning that meets national policy requirements and is appropriate in pitch and challenge for pupils. (National requirements for citizenship are the non-statutory national framework for citizenship at key stages 1 and 2; the National Curriculum programmes of study for citizenship at key stages 3 and 4 and/or; the subject criteria for GCSE or A level Citizenship Studies). Some aspects of citizenship can be planned for and taught alongside other curriculum subjects. However, the quality mark will assess the citizenship aspects of the resource and not any other subject work that is included.

Principle 3. Focus teaching and learning on developing pupils' understanding of citizenship concepts, knowledge, understanding and skills and their use and application of these, as the essential foundations of high quality citizenship education. Citizenship concepts include politics, democracy, government, law, justice, rights and responsibilities, participation, community, equality, identities, diversity, media literacy, digital citizenship, economic and financial understanding. Citizenship skills include critical thinking and researching, enquiry, tackling controversial issues, oracy, discussion and debate, advocacy, influencing, campaigning and other forms of citizenship action, collaboration and teamwork, problem solving and critical reflection.

Principle 4. Use a range of types of teaching and learning activities that promote deep learning in relation to citizenship concepts and skills including active citizenship. These should include different types of written work including extended writing; different types of oral work including informal discussion and formal debates; a range of opportunities for pupils to participate in deep and critical thinking; and collaboration with others in active citizenship. Active citizenship involves taking forward planned courses of informed and responsible action to address issues of concerns within the school and wider community aimed at making a contribution to democratic and public life.

Principle 5. Make use of topical and controversial issues and debates to bring citizenship teaching to life in a safe and secure learning environment. This involves developing skills to explore, discuss, and critically evaluate citizenship issues and debates from different viewpoints. When political issues are explored, content includes a range of viewpoints. Care is taken to avoid bias and maintain impartiality and promote and uphold democratic values and human rights.

Principle 6. Provide opportunities for pupils to take part in individual and group work, both in and beyond the classroom, where appropriate with members of the local and wider community. Effective citizenship education includes providing opportunities for active learning (e.g. enquiry, research, critical thinking and collaboration) rather than simply teacher directed learning) and active citizenship, where pupils explore issues and take action with others involving opportunities to meet and work with people in the wider community.

Principle 7. Look for appropriate opportunities to make connections between citizenship and other curriculum subjects and wider curriculum activities and be sure to establish clear citizenship objectives and outcomes where such connections are made. For example where appropriate to develop links with other subjects such as History, RE or English or the RSHE framework or the DFE fundamental British Values.

Principle 8. Set high expectations in citizenship with clear learning intentions and success criteria, as the basis of good teacher assessment. For example, being clear about what pupils will learn and the standards expected of them to be successful.

Principle 9. Create a range of ways to recognise, celebrate and share pupils' achievements within the school, with parents and the wider community. For example, where appropriate promoting recognition of student achievement in citizenship. This might include a reference to ACT's ACTIVE Citizenship Award Scheme.

Application for ACT quality mark for citizenship education resources: Part 1

Thank you for your interest in the ACT quality mark for citizenship education resources.

Please complete the following information to register your application. We will be in touch to let you know whether your application can then move to part 2 of the quality assurance process.

Your details

Your name		
Name of organisation		
What kind of organisation are you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commercial education publisher ● Registered charity (please give charity commission number) ● Government department ● Other 		
Email		
Contact telephone number		
Are you an organisational member of the Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)?		

Eligibility

Our quality assurance process may not be appropriate for all resources. Please complete the checklist below to ensure your resource is eligible.

	Yes	No
An education resource to support teaching and learning (we do not quality assure training, workshop or consultancy services)		
Designed for teachers and schools (we do not quality assure resources aimed at parents, children or young people)		
Intended to be used to plan, develop and deliver citizenship lessons and learning		

We assess your resources against the 9 principles of effective citizenship education.

	Yes	No
Please confirm that you have considered these principles		

About your resource

What is the title of your resource?	
Please provide a brief description of your resource to tell us the audience, topics addressed and how it is intended to be used. Short bullet points are fine.	
What is the format of the resource? (e.g. printed book, download for a website, website pages, videos etc)	
Please indicate the size in terms of content e.g. no of pages, no of webpages	
What age group is the resource aimed at? (Please state key stage/s it is designed for)	
Is there a charge for your resource? (If yes please explain any pricing structure if relevant eg annual charge for online access)	
Please indicate whether your resource is complete and published or under development and any relevant timeframes you are working to.	