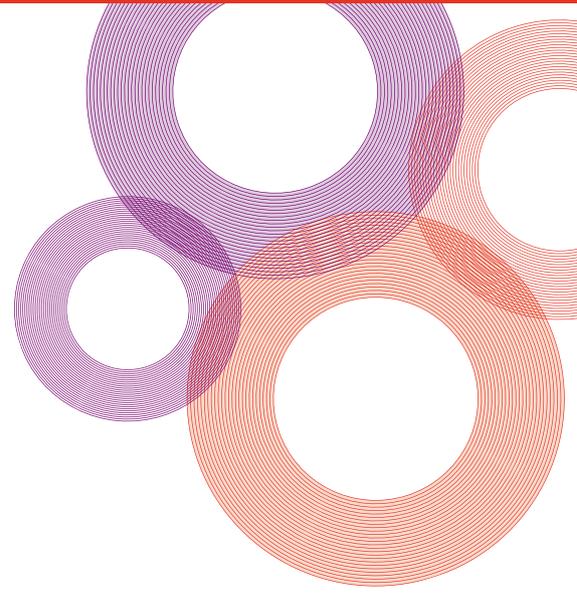


More than volunteering: active citizenship through youth volunteering



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Comments on the pack and other enquiries should be sent to:

Post-16 Citizenship Team
Learning and Skills Network
Regent Arcade House
19–25 Argyll Street
London W1F 7LS
Tel: 020 7297 9186
Fax: 020 7297 9242
Email: bjoslin@LSNeducation.org.uk

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More than volunteering: active citizenship through youth volunteering

Contents

Introduction	5
Section A: Volunteering and citizenship	
Activity A1: Volunteering and citizenship	9
Activity A2: Why volunteer?	14
Activity A3: How engaged are you in your local community?	17
Activity A4: Citizenship questions	20
Section B: Volunteering opportunities	
Activity B1: Volunteers wanted	23
Activity B2: Negative opinions, positive opportunities	27
Activity B3: Overseas volunteering	33
Section C: Youth-led volunteering	
Activity C1: Community citizenship project action plan	37
Resources from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme ..	46

More than volunteering: active citizenship through youth volunteering

Introduction

About the pack

More than volunteering conveys an important message that citizenship knowledge and skills can be developed through volunteering, but this must be planned. Sir Bernard Crick has commented that:

'Citizenship involves volunteering but not all volunteering involves citizenship. Some volunteering is young people being told exactly what to do. They would learn citizenship skills if they were given the objective and left to find out the needs by discussing amongst themselves and finding out what information they need in order to achieve those objectives. People left in that way will make mistakes but so do older people; it is the way we learn.'

Community involvement, service learning and youth-led projects are all valuable activities for participants and those people who benefit from the services provided. Community involvement is part of the citizenship curriculum in schools. Service learning is the American idea that students can volunteer but at the same time gain academic credits for the learning derived from their placements. Youth-led projects to meet the needs of the local community have become a staple feature of post-16 citizenship. However, for these activities to be real active citizenship it is important that social and political learning results. As Professor John Annette has written:

'Thus community involvement in the new citizenship curriculum based on the pedagogy of service learning must address the question of how the learning experience can best be structured to challenge students to become 'political' – and aware of the political significance of civic engagement in local communities (either linked to local government or through community development).'

'Community, Politics and Citizenship Education', p.146 in Lockyer A, Crick B and Annette J (eds.) (2003) *Education for Democratic Citizenship*, Ashgate, Aldershot

This pack aims to provide materials to help all those involved in youth volunteering and post-16 citizenship education to ensure that there are some citizenship learning outcomes from these valuable experiences. The pack has been produced by the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme to help the integration of citizenship education into post-16 education, training and youth work programmes. It forms one of a series of publications which the programme continues to develop on teaching and learning materials for specific themes. The activities aim to be flexible enough for use in the whole range of post-16 settings including school sixth forms, colleges, work-based training, youth services and community groups.

Post-16 citizenship

Citizenship education is an important part of the development of young people. It enables them to learn about their rights and responsibilities, to understand how society works, and to develop knowledge and understanding of social and political issues. It prepares them for dealing with the challenges they face in work and life. Volunteering and community action are important aspects of citizenship. Through citizenship education, young people can 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. Young people are encouraged to express their views, to have a voice and make a difference to the communities and organisations in which operate, and to reflect on what they have learnt.

It is a Government aspiration, expressed in the 14–19 Education and Skills White paper, that ‘everyone leaving education is equipped to be an informed, responsible, active citizen’. Citizenship education can be delivered effectively in a variety of ways and in a range of programmes and courses, as well as in the youth and community sector. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance on post-16 citizenship states that all young people should have three essential opportunities in their curriculum:

1. To identify, investigate and think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events of concern to them
2. To decide on and take part in follow-up action where appropriate
3. To reflect on, recognise and review their citizenship learning.

QCA has also identified 10 learning objectives for post-16 citizenship which have been used in the development of the activities in this pack (see table below).

The 10 QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Demonstrate understanding of respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

(Play your part: post-16 citizenship, QCA 2004 p.21)

Evaluation evidence shows that young people benefit from post-16 citizenship education through increased confidence and self-esteem; greater interest in the world; an ability to bring about change; better knowledge about ‘the system’; experience of participating in challenging activities; and greater motivation and a more positive attitude. Organisations benefit from the constructive participation of staff and young people in volunteering and decision-making, from increased motivation leading to better achievement and retention, and from stronger relationships with the local community.

Youth volunteering

The Government through the report of the Russell Commission and its implementation through V has given a major push to youth volunteering. The Commission published *A National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement* in March 2005 which identified as a key theme the importance of involving young people themselves in the design and implementation of volunteering opportunities. V has established a national portal for access to youth volunteering and there is an aspiration of attracting one million more young volunteers over five years.

Research on youth volunteering undertaken prior to and as part of the work of the Russell Commission provided a baseline of activity. The 2001 Home Office survey showed that 40% of 16–24 year olds had been involved in formal volunteering in the previous 12 months. A YouthNet survey for the Russell Commission found that 64% of young volunteers worked in the community, 43% for a charity, 20% for a cause or campaign and 14% for neighbours.

The challenge for citizenship educators is that the main fields of interest and types of activity in volunteering do not make it easy to include social and political knowledge. The most popular fields of interest for youth volunteering in the Home Office survey were sports-based (60% men, 34% women), hobbies/recreation/arts/social clubs (28%), children's education/schools (26%), and youth/children's activities outside school (25%). The most common types of activity were organising or helping to run an activity or event (55%), fund raising (49%), giving practical help (32%) and giving advice/information/counselling.

The activities

The main purpose of the training and learning activities in this pack is to plan for citizenship outcomes from youth volunteering. It is likely that without such structuring of the volunteering experience little citizenship learning will occur. The activities use a variety of active learning methods to maximise learner participation including card sort, discussion exercises, formal debate, two-person role play, research task, simulation, investigative and reflective questions, web search, and action plans.

Section A: Volunteering and citizenship comprises preparatory exercises.

Activity A1: 'Volunteering and citizenship' (page 9) draws distinctions between straight volunteering, work experience and volunteering which has citizenship outcomes.

Activity A2: 'Why volunteer?' (page 14) asks young people to think through the benefits of volunteering, distinguishing between personal and societal benefits.

Activity A3: 'How engaged are you in your local community?' (page 17) places volunteering in the context of key indicators of civic engagement.

Activity A4: 'Citizenship questions' (page 20) provides a list of questions for investigation and for debriefing of volunteers placed with charities or other organisations. By investigating the answers to some of these questions and reflecting on responses in the debriefing, then there will be some citizenship knowledge outcomes from the volunteering.

The activities in **Section B: Volunteering opportunities** focus on the opportunities that are available for young people in the UK and overseas.

Activity B1: 'Volunteers wanted' (page 23) is a simulation in which teams apply for particular volunteering 'jobs' adapted from the Volunteers page in *Society Guardian*. It aims to encourage young people to think about the skills required and can be developed through particular placements which have great potential for citizenship learning because of their context.

Activity B2: 'Negative opinions, positive opportunities' (page 27) aims to challenge the negative stereotypes which some young people have about volunteers and volunteering as found by research for the Russell Commission. Following an initial discussion activity, young people create a template for their ideal volunteering opportunity then search the UK youth volunteering websites to find out what is available.

Activity B3: 'Overseas volunteering' (page 33) raises issues about the politics of volunteering overseas and gap-year placements through the provision of source material and a web-search activity.

Section C: Youth-led volunteering focuses on action planning. Activity 8: 'Community citizenship project action plan' (page 37) is a tool to help young people wanting to set up their own projects to discuss and agree the main organisational features of their scheme.

Section A:

Volunteering and citizenship

Activity A1: Volunteering and citizenship

Background, organisation and resources

Active citizenship involves volunteering, but not all volunteering involves citizenship. The purpose of this icebreaker is to make young people aware of the diversity of volunteering opportunities that exist today. Many young people do not identify things they have taken part in as volunteering. At the same time not all of these opportunities help develop active citizenship knowledge and skills in an obvious way. The activity raises the issues of:

- *What is volunteering?*
- *What is active citizenship?*
- *What is the relationship between active citizenship and volunteering?*

The task involves a card sort to stimulate small-group discussion about these questions. You will need to cut up enough sets of cards (pages 12–13) for the number of groups. It is helpful if each group of three to four is able to sit around a table. The activity can be used as an icebreaker at the start of a workshop or series of sessions on volunteering. It can also be used as a professional development activity to clarify the meaning of active citizenship.

Aims of the activity

- To raise awareness of the different types of youth volunteering
- To consider the forms of volunteering that also provide opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills for active citizenship.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others.

Tasks

Begin the session by asking each group to discuss what they understand by 'volunteering'. There are four main points that should emerge:

- It is usually unpaid
- People's time is freely given
- It benefits the community and society
- It also benefits the volunteer.

Then ask groups to discuss and agree what they understand by 'active citizenship'. Some of the points that should emerge include the opportunity to:

- think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events
- plan and take part in action to tackle issues
- reflect on learning from such experiences.

Explain that each group will receive a set of cards. On each card is an example of a young person acting as a volunteer. Their task is to read and discuss each example. They need to place each card in one pile reflecting whether:

- this is not really volunteering
- this is volunteering with little or no opportunity to develop active citizenship knowledge and skills
- this is volunteering which provides good opportunities to develop active citizenship knowledge and skills
- it is difficult to judge whether or not the volunteering placement provides opportunities to develop active citizenship knowledge and skills OR we cannot agree.

One member of the group should act as a scribe noting down the main reasons why they placed each card in a particular pile. Allow the groups 15 minutes to work through the task.

Debriefing and follow up

Refer to the facilitator's notes (page 11) for an explanation for placing the volunteering activity in each pile. The intention is for some of these to be controversial in order to encourage debate.

Begin the debrief by asking one group to say which cards they put in the pile that was pure volunteering with little or no opportunities to develop active citizenship. Ask other groups if they disagree with any examples on the list giving their reasons. Ask another group for their 'undecided' list giving their reasons and invite other groups to agree or disagree. Then ask a third group for the examples which they did not consider to be volunteering at all, with their reasons. Finally, ask a fourth group to give a couple of examples from their volunteering and active citizenship pile giving their reasons.

Ask students if they have engaged in any of the examples of volunteering included on the cards and what active citizenship knowledge and skills they developed through the experience. Ask students who have engaged in volunteering if there were any ways they can think of in which the experience could have been changed in order to develop their knowledge and skills for active citizenship.

Volunteering and citizenship – Facilitator’s notes

Based on the application of key principles from the QCA guidance *Play your part: post-16 citizenship* (2004), and with the limited information available, the following cards would be in each pile.

Just volunteering

3. A spare time volunteering activity using their skills but no citizenship learning mentioned.
4. Fund raising for good causes does not constitute citizenship learning unless they also find out more about the Make Poverty History campaign.
5. This could be active citizenship if themes included politics in the 1950s and 1960s.
7. This would be active citizenship if they develop their understanding of the culture and society of their ‘friend’ and explain to them the issues of citizenship in British society.
8. This is a form of community service but could be active citizenship if they also learnt about the problems of homeless people in Britain today and how they can be tackled.
15. This is voluntary action around a health issue, but they would need to be widening their views on the causes of and solutions for childhood obesity for it to involve active citizenship.

Volunteering and active citizenship

6. They are taking on a representative function on a body focusing on issues of real importance to local people.
9. This could be seen as part of the course, but they are likely to explore issues concerning what makes young people offend and their reaction to the criminal justice system – raising wider issues.
10. Many youth-led projects such as sports-related activities have little citizenship content. However, it is likely that the YouthBank members will need to discuss strategic priorities for youth projects in their area.
11. Definitely active citizenship as they are acting as representatives and will have to address a range of citizenship issues.
12. Students are leading on the training and management of consultative bodies in their schools – learning practical democratic skills.
13. These students are civically engaged and are prepared to take direct action to support a cause they believe in.
14. This is an example of youth-led community action to tackle an issue of local importance.
16. They are improving their citizenship knowledge through investigating these questions.
17. The joint community project is where the citizenship learning should occur but not in the peer mentoring.
18. This is an example of a youth-led research project on services for young people.
20. The debates are about local issues and they are engaging with local politicians.

Hard to say or we cannot agree

19. This might involve citizenship if they discuss the senior citizens’ views on political and social questions over the past 50 years.

Not volunteering

1. This is work experience and an essential part of the course – but in the USA it would be called service learning.
2. This is really unpaid work experience to help their career.

Volunteering and citizenship – cards



Just volunteering

**Volunteering
and
active citizenship**

**Hard to say
or
we cannot agree**

Not volunteering

1

A young person studying health and social care has a work experience placement in a care home for the elderly. While there, they collect evidence for their portfolio of coursework.

2

A group of construction students at a college helped to renovate a local community centre in their spare time.

3

A young person who wants a career in the theatre volunteers to work for no wages with a community theatre group. The group perform in schools, community groups and care homes.

4

A group of young people raise money for the Make Poverty History campaign by organising a boot fair.

5

A group of young people organise a social event for senior citizens on the theme of life in the 1950s and 1960s.

6

A young person represents their youth centre on a Community Safety Partnership that looks at ways of improving safety on an estate.

7

A young person acts as a 'befriender' to a young refugee from an African state to help them learn English and settle into life in Britain.

8

A group of students work with a homeless charity to provide a soup kitchen for people living rough.



9

Students taking a media studies course make a short promotional video for a charity which helps young offenders.

10

A group of students have set up a YouthBank in their area and receive a grant of £5,000 to fund youth-led projects many of which are sports-related.

11

A young person is elected to serve as a Member of the Youth Parliament.

12

Sixth formers manage the School and Year Councils at a school, and lead on the training of newly elected councillors.

13

A group of students attend a demonstration in London to protest against a rise in university tuition fees.

14

A group of students develop a campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour in their local area.

15

Young people set up regular exercise classes to combat obesity and ill health.

16

A student volunteering to work in the office of a charity investigates how decisions are made and how funding raised is spent.

17

A sixth-form student acts as a mentor to a year 10 student at the same school advising them on academic work but also planning a joint community project with them.

18

A group decide to consult with young people in an area to find out their views about how services for them could be improved.

19

Students on a modern history course take part in an inter-generational project with local senior citizens teaching them internet skills and discussing their views on key events of the past 50 years.

20

A group of young people organise a series of debates on a range of local issues involving local community leaders and councillors, including one on planning permission for a new supermarket and the development of a youth café.

Activity A2: Why volunteer?

Background, organisation and resources

Research for the Russell Commission found that while young people are particularly motivated by the desire to gain experience, skills, references and qualifications, altruistic motives are also important to them. The Commission concluded that more could be done to make young people aware of the benefits of volunteering. Clearly, unless young people understand the benefits to themselves and others, then they are unlikely to want to volunteer. This activity allows participants to discuss the benefits of volunteering. In the first task they discuss in small groups a list of potential benefits of youth volunteering using copies of the handout 'Why volunteer?' (page 16). There should be enough copies for at least one between two people. The activity ends with a role-play exercise on selling the benefits of two common volunteering opportunities.

Aims of the activity

- To raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering
- To reflect on the main benefits that would encourage them to volunteer
- To consider the wider benefits to society from volunteering.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others.

Tasks

Stage 1

Explain that the aim of the exercise is to think about why people volunteer to give up some of their time regularly to help organisations or individuals. But it is also to encourage reflection on what might motivate them as individuals to volunteer and how that might benefit society.

Ask the young people to work in groups of four or six. Distribute the handout 'Why volunteer?' (page 16), so that there is at least enough for one between two. The first task is to ask them to discuss which of three benefits or motivating factors on the handout are most important to young people and which three are least important. They should try to reach a consensus on their two lists.

The second task is to review the list of benefits and to note the ones which are essentially about 'What's in it for me?' and those that are about more altruistic motives, that is 'What's in it for others?'

Stage 2

The next stage is a two-person, role-play exercise. Research for the Russell Commission showed that young people prefer one-on-one, word-of-mouth recruitment methods when thinking about taking up a volunteering opportunity. For this exercise they can work in pairs, A and B. Ask everyone to find a partner for the two-person role play, and then to decide who will be A and who will be B. Tell them that they will take it in turns to sell a volunteering opportunity to the other. Explain to the As their task and tell the Bs that they should consider what might motivate or deter them from taking up such an opportunity.

Role play 1: A selling to B

A has to sell the benefits of this volunteering opportunity to B. B will have to volunteer to act as a mentor to a school pupil aged 14 to help them with their studies, but also to do a joint citizenship project with them to benefit their local community.

Give the As two or three minutes to think about the situation and what benefits they think they can sell to the would-be volunteer. The interested potential volunteers (Bs) need to have some questions about how they and others would benefit if they agreed to mentor. Allow two or three minutes only for the role-play and then switch around so that B has to sell the benefits to A.

Role play 2: B selling to A

B has to sell the benefits to A of working for a local environmental charity aimed at promoting recycling and taking action to improve local public spaces.

Again give Bs two or three minutes to think through what they are going to say. Meanwhile As should be thinking of some questions they want to put to Bs when they have finished their initial 'sales pitch'.

You can substitute other examples to fit in with your own volunteering programmes.

Debriefing

The activity is best debriefed after each task. For the first task ask groups for their top three and bottom three benefits. Put these up on a flip chart and record the number of groups listing each benefit. Looking at the top three benefits and the bottom three benefits – is there a consensus on what motivates or does not motivate young people to volunteer?

The second task was about categorising the benefits into those which were about benefits for the volunteers themselves, as opposed to the difference they were making to society. On balance how important are the wider benefits to society a motivating factor for young volunteers? Do they think that it is important to have a balance of motivations combining benefits to themselves and benefits to others?

In the role play they took on the role of volunteer recruiters making a selling pitch. The key debriefing questions here are:

- *What were the main benefits used in each of the two examples?*
- *To what extent were they selling benefits to the individual or the wider altruistic benefits?*
- *Were any of the would-be volunteers more persuaded by the altruistic benefits to society and other people?*
- *Is anybody more inclined to consider volunteering now than they were at the beginning of the exercise?*

Why volunteer?

A

You can develop key skills in an interesting and enjoyable way

B

You can gain valuable work experience in a charity or voluntary sector organisation

C

You can do something different and worthwhile in your college enrichment time

D

You can develop your self-esteem and self-confidence by succeeding in helping others

E

You can gain experience of the skills and situations you may face in your chosen career

F

You can make new friends among fellow volunteers and the people you are helping

G

You can make links with other people who may come from different communities from your own – so strengthening our diverse society

H

You can make a real difference to people in need

I

You can develop the can-do attitude in the face of new challenges which is essential for an entrepreneur, social entrepreneur or 'apprentice'

J

You can develop leadership, team-building and problem-solving skills

K

You can use your volunteering experience to develop material for your personal development record or for some academic courses

L

You can provide work which has a monetary value to struggling charities who would otherwise have to employ people to do what volunteers do

M

You can do something different and worthwhile in your college enrichment time

N

You can become part of a community of volunteers and people who are helped by the volunteers

O

You can add new skills and experiences to your CV which will impress future employers

P

You can act as a role model and advocate earning the respect of other people.

Activity A3:

How engaged are you in your local community?

Background, organisation and resources

There is a debate about the extent to which people are and can be more engaged with civil society, including the political system. This is usually known as ‘civic engagement’. A US study (Zukin *et al* (2006) *A New Engagement? Political Participation, Civic life, and the Changing American Citizen*, Oxford University Press) has identified 19 indicators of civic engagement which are divided into three categories:

- **Civic** activities which focus on helping the local community and individuals
- **Electoral** activities which focus on the political process
- **Political voice** which focuses on expressing a political or social viewpoint.

The indicators of civic engagement are important because they provide an area where there is a clear overlap between volunteering and citizenship. At least 14 of the 19 civic engagement indicators involve volunteering in some form. This activity involves a modification of the civic engagement indicators focusing on those that are particularly relevant to young people. The materials can be used as a workshop exercise to assess the extent of civic engagement among young people and adults in the room. Alternatively, it can be used as the basis for a survey of civic engagement among young people and/or the adult population in the institution or local area.

Aims of the activity

- To develop understanding of the role of volunteering in civic engagement
- To reflect on the extent to which individuals, the group and wider society are engaged with political and social issues.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others.

Tasks

Explain the purpose of the activity which is to find out to what extent young people are engaged in the social and political life of their community. Civic engagement is held to be one of the signs of a healthy society because it shows that people want to be involved with others in changing their communities for the better. All the activities listed on the handout ‘How engaged are you in your local community?’ (page 19) involve people giving their time freely to an activity with the goal of social improvement, that is they all involve volunteering or voluntary action.

Ask young people to work in groups of six. Distribute copies of the handout enough for one each. Explain that they should reflect on which of the activities listed they have done in the last 12 months. Make sure that they understand all the different categories of activity. They should work through the questions indicating with a tick in the ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ columns whether or not they have undertaken any of those activities. When they have finished, they should add up the total in the ‘Yes’ column. The number of activities they have undertaken in the last 12 months gives one measure of their civic engagement.

Debriefing and follow up

As a group they should then discuss the following questions:

- *What are the most common activities?*
- *What are the activities that no one has taken part in?*
- *What is the average number of activities that members of the group have taken part in?*

You can begin the debriefing by explaining that activities 1–4 concern civic engagement, because they improve the local community and help individuals. Activities 5–14 are about expressing their political voice. They may fall into one of the following categories:

- Disengaged – no involvement in any activities
- Civically engaged – involved in two or more activities 1–4
- Politically engaged – involved in two or more activities 5–14
- Politically and civically engaged – involved in at least four activities, including two from each broad category
- Hyper engaged – involved in eight or more activities.

Ask for a show of hands for the different categories. Then ask the group whether they think the survey is a fair reflection of their engagement with their local community.

- *Do they believe there are other activities which are not reflected in the list?*
- *Having reflected on the list, are there some things that they might now consider doing?*

Follow-up activity and assessment opportunities

As a follow-up activity the group could undertake a wider survey of civic engagement. The first task is to decide on the target audience which could be a sample of the whole 16–19 cohort in the school, college or training provider. They could consult the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme's publication, *A case for action: Skills for active citizenship research* when planning the research. The second task would be to modify the survey form for use with a wider audience. The outcome of the survey would be to provide evidence for young people and the institution on the extent of civic and political engagement. They could then consider ways of trying to increase the amount of engagement in these activities among their own peer group. The report of their research could be used as a basis for assessment.

How engaged are you in your local community?

Which of these activities have you taken part in during the last 12 months?	Yes	No
1. Community problem solving – Have you worked in a group to solve a problem in the community where you live?		
2. Regular volunteering – Have you regularly given up time to work for a charity or other voluntary organisation for no pay?		
3. Active membership of a group – Are you an active member (e.g. attending meetings) of any groups or associations locally or nationally?		
4. Fund-raising events – Have you taken part in any fund-raising activities for a charitable cause (e.g. cycling, walking, running)?		
5. Contacting officials – Have you contacted (e.g. by telephone or email) or visited a public official in local or national government to ask for help or to express your opinions?		
6. Contacting the press – Have you contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion about an issue?		
7. Contacting radio or TV – Have you contacted radio or television talk shows or news programmes to express your views on a political issue, even if you did not get on air?		
8. Protest – Have you taken part in a protest march or demonstration about a political or social issue?		
9. E-mail petitions – Have you signed an email petition about a political or social issue?		
10. Written petitions – Have you signed a written petition about a political or social issue?		
11. Boycott – Have you decided not to buy a product or service because of either the conditions under which it was made (e.g. child labour) or because you dislike the values or conduct of the company or country involved?		
12. 'Buycott' – Have you decided to buy a particular good or service because you like the political or social values of the company that provides it?		
13. Canvassing – Have you worked as a canvasser going door to door to support a charity, association or political party?		
14. Voting – Have you voted in any elections in your institution, for example for student council reps or in mock elections?		
TOTALS:		

Activity A4: Citizenship questions

Background, organisation and resources

On the face of it many volunteering opportunities do not provide obvious ways to develop active citizenship knowledge and skills. However, there are ways in which young people can be guided to develop active citizenship through investigation and reflection. This activity consists of a set of generic questions that can be applied to all or most forms of formal volunteering. By addressing some or all of these questions young people can develop active citizenship before, during and after their volunteering. A post-volunteering debriefing session can lead to recommendations and action by communicating ideas for improving the voluntary organisation in which they have been volunteering. The handouts 'Citizenship questions 1' (page 21) and 'Citizenship questions 2' (page 22) can be used as the basis for *individual* investigation and reflection, or by *groups* of volunteers before they go on their placements and after they return.

Aims of the activity

- To identify, investigate and think critically about the citizenship issues associated with particular volunteering opportunities
- To reflect on, recognise and review citizenship learning from volunteering experiences.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

Tasks

The handout 'Citizenship questions 1' can be used with young people before they embark on a volunteering placement with an organisation. The follow-up handout 'Citizenship questions 2' can be used when they have completed their placements or in group sessions during the placement. Young people can work in groups of three to decide which of the citizenship questions are important to them or their group. These are the questions they can investigate before and during their placement. If a number of people are interested in the same questions, then this will allow comparisons to be made between voluntary organisations during reflection.

Debriefing and follow up

Individual volunteers could be given 'Citizenship questions 2' as an aid to reflection following their volunteering placement. The handout asks a series of reflective questions mirroring some of those on 'Citizenship questions 1'. If a group of volunteers are returning at the same time from their volunteering experience, they then can discuss their responses to a selection of the questions in small groups. The main points can then be fed back in a plenary session. The reflection questions can be followed with small- or whole-group discussions about what recommendations they can make to the managers of the voluntary organisation as a result of their experiences. The final issue is whether they are motivated to act by communicating their recommendations to the managers or the organisation.

Assessment opportunities

Young people could write a report with recommendations based on the questions for investigation.

Citizenship questions 1 – investigation

Before you start your volunteering placement think about the following questions to help you investigate the citizenship issues.

Legal status

- What is the legal status of the organisation?
- What does it mean to have charitable status?

Funding

- Where does the funding for the organisation come from?
- What proportion of the funding is spent on administration?
- What proportion is actually spent for the benefit of the people, animals, buildings or environment it aims to help?
- What is the organisation's policy on using charity fund-raising companies, that is those that use young people to persuade people in the street or by knocking on doors to fill in direct debit forms to give money every month?

Business sponsorship

- What kinds of things do business sponsors want in return for their money?

Government

- What relationships does the organisation have with government?
- Does the government give grants to the organisation and why?
- What strings are attached to government funding?
- What are the benefits for the government from supporting the organisation?
- How does the organisation try to influence government?

Marketing

- How does the organisation market itself and its volunteering opportunities?
- To what extent does the marketing match the reality for the volunteers?

Beneficiaries

- To what extent are people benefiting from the work of the organisation consulted about its work?
- To what extent are people benefiting encouraged to work or volunteer for the organisation?

Decision making

- Who runs the organisation and how were they chosen?
- How are policies and decisions made?
- How can volunteers and ordinary employees influence decisions or change policies?

Equal opportunities and diversity

- What are the organisation's policies on equal opportunities and diversity?
- How does it try to make sure that volunteers recruited reflect the diversity of the local population?

Campaigning

- What campaigns does the organisation have and how are they run?
- How is the success of a campaign judged?

Citizenship questions 2 – reflection to action

You have experienced volunteering with a voluntary sector organisation – but what citizenship learning have you gained?

1. Reflection

What have you found out about the organisation you have been working for?

- *How does its legal status affect what it can and cannot do?*
- *How much money is raised each year and how is that money spent?*
- *What campaigns has it run and what methods were used to get the message across?*
- *What government grants did it win this year and for what activities?*
- *Is the organisation helping the government to achieve its objectives?*
- *What methods does it use to raise money?*
- *How effective are its money-raising methods?*
- *How good is the organisation at involving local people or people who benefit from its services?*
- *How diverse are the people and volunteers working for the organisation?*
- *Can volunteers influence management decisions, and if so, how?*

2. What recommendations can you make about how the organisation can:

- better achieve its goals
- raise more money
- help more people
- recruit more volunteers
- train and support volunteers
- develop new projects or services.

3. Action

If you feel strongly about your recommendations, what are you going to do about making your ideas known to the managers at the organisation:

- write a letter
- send them a copy of your report
- ask for a meeting to explain your recommendations
- send an email message?

Section B:

Volunteering opportunities

Activity B1: Volunteers wanted

Background, organisation and resources

Some of the most interesting volunteering opportunities can be found in the Wednesday edition of the *Guardian* in the Society section. This activity is based around advertisements for volunteers posted by charities. Young people take on the role either of a panel of assessors interviewing people for volunteer posts or of young people interested in taking up one of the opportunities on offer. The purpose is to encourage young people to think through what appeals to them about different volunteering opportunities, what skills they think are required and what citizenship skills could be developed. The activity can work with small groups of 12 up to groups of 24. It is helpful if there are several small tables arranged in a semi-circle. The handout 'Volunteers wanted' (page 26) can be used for the volunteering opportunities or the facilitator could use recent advertisements from *Society Guardian* (www.societyguardian.co.uk).

Aims of the activity

- To raise awareness of the skills required to apply successfully for challenging volunteering opportunities
- To develop interview skills
- To understand how citizenship knowledge and skills can be developed through volunteering.

QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others.

Tasks

Stage 1

Explain the aims of the activity. Ask if any students have looked at the Society section of the *Guardian* or similar newspapers/websites where volunteering opportunities are advertised. Give out copies of the handout 'Volunteers wanted' (page 26) which has five advertisements for volunteers. Explain that the task is undertaken in groups with one group taking on the role of the interview panel or assessors with all other groups taking on the role of potential volunteers applying for one of the opportunities. It is helpful if there are tables for each group and that they are arranged in a semi-circle facing the interview panel so that everyone can see everyone else. Tables are helpful for writing answers and add an air of formality to the role of the interview panel.

First, ask for volunteers to take on the role of assessors (2–4 students depending on the size of the group). Then ask the others to form groups of three potential volunteers. Given the age of the young people, it is important to let them have a choice in which opportunity they apply for. Ideally there would be at least one group for each opportunity, but it is fun if there is a bit of healthy competition between groups. This could mean identifying three advertisements with two groups applying for each one.

Depending on the context in which the activity is being run, there are several ways in which groups could be allocated their opportunity.

The first stage of the activity involves preparation. The panel will be interviewing people about three questions:

- *What appeals to them about the opportunity?*
- *What skills can they bring to the post? What skills are essential and desirable for the post?*
- *What opportunities do they think there are or could be to develop citizenship knowledge and skills?*

For each post that is being applied for (if the potential volunteers choose not to go for a particular post, then they should not use up time considering that post) they should consider the kinds of things they will be looking for in the interview presentations and answers. These can be recorded on an easily devised recording sheet for the interview panel. Allow about 15–20 minutes for this task.

Meanwhile the task for each group of potential volunteers is to choose the volunteer post they would like to apply for. They then need to consider their answers to the three sets of questions posted above. Allow about 15–20 minutes for this stage. One member of the group should act as a scribe and note down the main points they want to make. Then each member of the group should prepare to respond to one of the sets of questions above. They should also be prepared to answer follow-up questions that members of the panel might ask following their presentations. Each presentation covering all three questions should not last more than three or four minutes.

Stage 2

Make sure that every group is as ready as possible for the next stage of the task. The chair of the interview panel should start the proceedings by asking the first group to make their presentation, which must not last longer than the three or four minutes. The panel members should score the response to each question in one of three categories using their recording sheets:

- 1 = the answer was good and met the criteria they were looking for
- 2 = the answer met some of the criteria they were looking for
- 3 = the answer was poor and met none or little of what was required.

It is best if all the teams going for the same post follow on from each other as this makes for easier comparisons. It also means that later teams can borrow ideas from earlier teams, but they will need to think on their feet to do this and cannot go over time. After each presentation, members of the panel can ask two follow-up questions for clarification or further investigation. Members of the panel should make notes for use during the feedback session. Follow-up questions can be addressed to particular team members who have responded to particular sets of questions. This stage continues until all the teams have had their opportunity to present. The role of the facilitator is to ensure things run smoothly and that teams do not have too much time compared to others.

Feedback and debriefing

If the timing of the sessions allows, there is an opportunity to give the volunteer teams a 20-minute break while the panel discusses what they have heard. As in an actual interview panel they should discuss each team's presentation and agree some constructive points to feed back. These should include positive points first followed by any criticisms. If all participants need to be occupied, ask pairs of volunteer teams to combine for the first part of the debriefing. They should discuss what was good and less good about their own and each other's presentations.

Begin the second stage of the debriefing by asking the first team to evaluate their own presentation covering the key points: why the position appealed to them; what skills will be required; and what citizenship knowledge and skills could be developed. Then ask the panel to feed back their main points endorsing rather than repeating the team's own points. They should conclude by saying whether or not they would offer the vacancy to that team. When there is more than one team for each vacancy, the panel should feed back to each team first and then say who got the position. Continue until all the teams have received feedback.

Assessment opportunities

The activity should demonstrate areas of weakness in the preparation, knowledge and presentation style of young people in interview situations. In a sense, therefore, there is the potential for assessment for learning. The panel, other group members and another group has offered them feedback on their presentation and response to panel questions. Once these weaknesses have been noted, they should be able to develop a more effective interview style in future situations.

Volunteers wanted

The following advertisements are based on those in Wednesday's *Society Guardian*, but they are fictional and email and web addresses are invented.

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children in crisis **Do you want to help the most vulnerable young people in Britain?**

The Children in Crisis Society is looking for young volunteers to help with young refugees from war zones and children from homeless families to fulfil their potential and act as advocates to ensure access to services.

In return for your commitment, you will get expenses, training, support, experience new cultures and make new friends.

For application pack contact Jose at info@cics.org

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OVAN

Volunteer Overseas

Live abroad and help local people in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The OVAN charity has a wide range of projects from 3 months to 12 months including working with street children, teaching HIV/Aids prevention and human-rights work. You will need to raise funds in order to take part and we can advise you on how to do this.

To apply contact Laura at ovan@tiscali.net

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LifeLine

Life Line

Could you befriend someone who is on Death Row in the USA? Bring some humanity into the lives of some of the most desperate people on the planet who have little contact with the outside world.

Rejected by friends, deserted by their families, hated by the public, more than 3,600 men and women from many backgrounds are on American death rows. Life Line is a charity that seeks to bring some humanity to these people through letters from people across the world.

For information on how to get involved contact John at john@lifeline.com

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PEACE makers

Interested in Arts and Citizenship?

Do you have an interest in the arts such as drama, arts and crafts, photography or music? Our charity Peace Makers uses community arts events to develop positive relations between the police and local communities. The aim is to bring greater safety to local neighbourhoods. Workshops focus on youth-on-youth crime and what local people can do to reduce and prevent such problems. Young people are engaged through performance and exhibitions developed by our volunteers.

To find out more about Peace Makers contact Luis at luis@bluedemon.net

.....

summer-camps.org

Have you got what it takes to be a youth leader?

We are a charity running residential summer camps for young people aged 10–17 from Britain's inner cities. We are looking for 18–19 year olds who can act as team leaders for a range of group activities. Training is provided in July on team leadership and group facilitation skills. The camps last for three weeks in August.

To apply online visit www.summer-camps.org

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Activity B2:

Negative opinions, positive opportunities

Background, organisation and resources

Research for the Russell Commission found evidence of negative stereotypes of volunteers and volunteering among many young people who were interviewed. This activity involves putting forward arguments for or against volunteering, and for others to respond with counter arguments to what has been said. The first stage of the activity involves working in groups of three and it can work within groups of up to 30. In the second stage young people are asked to investigate the main websites offering volunteering opportunities for young people in the UK. The aim is to increase their knowledge of real opportunities and to challenge stereotypes they may have identified in the first stage. The final part of the activity involves reflection on their opinions in the light of greater knowledge and evidence of the reality of volunteering opportunities in the UK. Each group will need a set of cards cut up from the handout 'Volunteering opinions' (page 30). Assuming that the web-search activity will involve individuals working from the internet, they will each need copies of the handouts 'Volunteering options' (page 31) and 'Volunteering opportunities for young people in the UK' (page 32).

Aims of the activity

- To identify and challenge stereotyped views of volunteers and volunteering
- To consider the parameters of their ideal volunteering opportunity
- To explore the main opportunities for youth volunteering in the UK.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

Tasks

Stage 1

Explain the aim of the activity, which is to discuss opinions about volunteers and volunteering by responding to arguments. Ask young people to work in groups of three. Tell them that they are going to play three roles in rotation until all three have taken on each of the roles A, B and C:

Role A – Putting forward an opinion they have been given

Role B – Making an argument to counter that opinion

Role C – Observer.

Give each group a set of the 'Volunteering opinions' cards cut up from the handout (page 30). Give out the cards face down in a pack in the middle of the table. Ask them to decide who will be A, B and C for the first round. Explain that the role of A is to state the opinion expressed on the top card which they can add to as long as they stick to the main point. B must then, as quickly as possible, put a counter argument to that opinion giving reasons. C listens and scores the response as follows:

- 1 mark for a relevant point
- 2 marks when there is a good reason to support the point
- A brief comment as to whether it was a good, OK or a poor response.

Example:

'Volunteering is about giving your time for nothing.'

'Yes you may only get expenses, but there are many other benefits that add up to a lot of other things that you can gain, for example work experience, new friends or skills.'

After A has turned over three cards and B has had three turns at responding, it is time to switch roles, so that C expresses the opinion and A must respond with B the observer. In the final three rounds A is the observer, B expresses the opinions and C must respond.

Debriefing (stage 1)

Ask the groups to discuss the outcomes of the exercise:

- *How well did the respondents do?*
- *How effective and quick were their responses?*
- *How persuasive were their arguments?*
- *What skills did they practise?*

Read out some of the negative statements and ask them who actually agrees with these statements about volunteers and volunteering. Then ask what arguments were put to counter the opinion and ask how persuasive those arguments were. End with a discussion about what are the most strongly held negative opinions about volunteering. This is important as the ultimate aim of the activity is to see if any of these have changed as a result of finding out more about volunteering.

Stage 2

The second stage of the activity can be linked to the first as described above or they could both be discrete. The overall aim is to motivate young people to find out more about the range of volunteering opportunities in the UK. In order to do this, they first need to assume that they have a time slot of six months during which they could take up a volunteering opportunity should a suitable one be available. Then working in pairs so that they can discuss their options with another person, ask them to complete the handout – 'Volunteering options' (page 31). This sets out some of the main parameters of volunteering. This task forms a prelude to the main web-based activity which involves looking at the main youth-focused volunteering websites at the range of opportunities that are currently available in the UK.

The young people should be given a period of time to visit the sites listed on resource sheet – 'Volunteering opportunities for young people in the UK' (page 32). They should aim to have answers to the following questions:

- *What volunteering opportunities met their preferred options?*
- *Which sites did they find most and least interesting?*
- *What did they find out about the range of volunteering opportunities?*
- *What did they find out about the benefits of volunteering?*
- *Which of the negative opinions they agreed with in stage 1 were challenged by what they have read?*

Debriefing (stage 2)

This will depend on the size of the group. With small groups, work through the questions allowing individuals the opportunity to respond to each question. With larger groups, post the questions so all can see them and ask groups of five or six to discuss the questions. Ask each group to appoint a spokesperson to report back and work through the questions in turn.

Stage 3

The final stage of the activity involves a return to examine the stereotyped opinions found on the nine cards in stage 1 of the activity. Distribute copies of the handout 'Volunteering opinions'. Ask individuals to identify any opinions that they did agree with that have been challenged by what they have learnt from visiting the volunteering websites. Debrief by identifying the main stereotypes that individuals still have. Ask other members of the group that disagree with that stereotype to persuade those individuals to change their minds. End on a positive note by stressing the increasing range and diversity of volunteering opportunities for young people in England. Young people can also create their own volunteering opportunities that meet the needs and address the issues that they think are important through community citizenship projects (see Activity C1, pages 37–45).

Volunteering opinions



<p>Opinion 1</p> <p>‘Volunteering is for middle-aged housewives with nothing better to do’</p>	<p>Opinion 2</p> <p>‘Volunteering is all right for posh kids with rich parents – my friends could not afford to pay for a volunteering opportunity’</p>	<p>Opinion 3</p> <p>‘Volunteering is mostly about older people selling smelly clothes and old videos in charity shops’</p>
<p>Opinion 4</p> <p>‘Volunteering organisations are all run by white, middle class people’</p>	<p>Opinion 5</p> <p>‘Volunteers are pressured into working harder and they take the place of people who should be paid employees for the work they put in’</p>	<p>Opinion 6</p> <p>‘Volunteering is a mug’s game – who wants to work hard for no money’</p>
<p>Opinion 7</p> <p>‘Volunteering is seriously uncool – I would be a laughing stock with my mates’</p>	<p>Opinion 8</p> <p>‘I can’t see what’s in it for me. It’s all about helping other people’</p>	<p>Opinion 9</p> <p>‘Volunteering is a way of cutting public services and taxes for the rich so that poor people have to rely on charity’</p>

Volunteering options

Assume that you have a six-month period of time when you could take up a UK-based volunteering opportunity. What would your preferences be?

Options	My preferences
<p>What kind of volunteering would you prefer? What is the main field? e.g. environment, animals or homelessness</p>	
<p>Which would be your preferred main tasks? e.g. fund raising, organising, providing a service</p>	
<p>What are the main skills you would like to learn? e.g. leadership, practical, team working</p>	
<p>What is your preferred location? Within travel distance of home, or residential, or living away from home</p>	
<p>How long would it last? What minimum and maximum time periods would you prefer?</p>	
<p>Will you need all expenses such as travel costs, accommodation and food to be covered?</p>	
<p>Would you be prepared to make a contribution or pay a fee and to what maximum amount?</p>	

Volunteering opportunities for young people in the UK

Visit all the following websites to see if you can find three opportunities that meet your preferences as set out on your 'Volunteering options' form. Alternatively you may see something which does not but which sounds really interesting anyway!

www.vinspired.com

This is the main volunteering site for 16–25 year olds which includes Millennium Volunteers. V is the name of the organisation managed by young people for young people. As a good starting point for finding out about youth volunteering opportunities, the site includes advanced search facilities by area, activity and type of volunteering opportunity.

www.do-it.org.uk

Here you can find details of thousands of volunteering vacancies from volunteer bureaux not just aimed at young people. Using the quick-search facility, you can enter your postcode, maximum travel distance and choose from over 20 volunteering fields. You can also find details of residential placements.

www.csv.org.uk/volunteer

This organisation provides full- and part-time volunteering opportunities for young people around the country. There are also several Millennium Volunteers projects specifically aimed at young people. CSV also runs 'Make A Difference' days and 'Action Earth' days for local, one-day environmental projects.

www.princes-trust.org.uk

You can find opportunities for volunteering in every region of the country. The Trust offers volunteers options for personal development including acting as a trainer, mentor or fund raiser, usually in three- or sixth-month programmes.

www.volunteering.org.uk

The site of Volunteering England which has a menu of opportunities divided into animal welfare, arts/heritage, campaigning, environment and conservation, residential, sports, and health and social care.

www.society.guardian.co.uk

The *Guardian* newspaper has jobs and volunteering opportunities in its regular Wednesday supplement which is called *Society Guardian*. The latest opportunities can be found in the Volunteers part of the Jobs section.

Activity B3: Overseas volunteering

Background, organisation and resources

Gap years are often associated with young people leaving school and taking time out before going to university. Increasingly they are seen as a way of seeing the world and becoming a global citizen. However, they are not just the preserve of future university students since other young people and older people are increasingly taking a gap year. Recently gap years were attacked as a form of ‘charity tourism’ which constitutes a new form of ‘colonialism’. This activity provides some stimulus material to encourage a formal debate among young people about the wider implications of volunteering overseas on the motion *‘We believe that overseas volunteering does more harm than good’*. The handout ‘Volunteering overseas and gap years – evidence’ (pages 35–36) can be given to the group in advance of the session so that they can prepare their own arguments and undertake some preliminary web investigations.

Aims of the activity

- To consider the pros and cons of gap year volunteering overseas
- To reflect on the wider implications of volunteering overseas.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others.

Tasks

Stage 1

The activity takes the form of preparatory research followed by a formal, mini-debate. The subject of the debate is the motion – *‘We believe that overseas volunteering does more harm than good’*.

They should work in groups of five. The first task is to decide on the roles:

- Chairperson – whose role is to control the debate and make sure people keep to time.
- Speaker 1 – the main person speaking for the motion will have up to three minutes to make their main points
- Speaker 2 – the main person speaking against the motion also has three minutes
- Speaker 3 – is also for the motion but should make some different points in their allotted two minutes
- Speaker 4 – is against the motion and also needs to make different points in their two minutes.

Distribute the handout ‘Volunteering overseas and the gap year – evidence’ (pages 35–36) enough for one copy each. This is designed to provide a stimulus to further investigation of the arguments. You may want to discuss the idea of ‘colonialism’ where especially in the 19th century white Europeans saw their mission as bringing Christianity and civilisation to heathen, native peoples across the world. Although the activity is about voluntary work overseas, much of the debate surrounds the student ‘gap year’. However, source G is a reminder that it is not only students between school and university who travel abroad for voluntary work in gap years. The sources and case studies illustrate the main issues, but to find further evidence for their arguments they should visit the main gap year and overseas volunteering websites listed, as well as use an internet search engine. The Chairperson should investigate both sides of the argument whereas the people involved in the debate will want to collect evidence to support their own arguments.

Stage 2

Everyone can be involved if debates take place in groups of five. This will make sure that everybody has a role rather than most of the group listening as members of the audience. The facilitator will need to remind people of how long they have to speak. Allow ten minutes for the two speakers for and against to meet with each other to compare notes and to agree who will say what. Then ask the chairs to manage the time and to listen carefully as they have a casting vote at the end as to who has 'won' the argument.

When everyone has had their say, the chairs can allow cross-questioning and argument about the points made. After a few minutes they should be asked to vote for or against the motion based on the strength of the arguments they have heard. It is likely under these circumstances that most people will tend to vote for themselves. In the event of a tie, then the chair has the casting vote.

This stage can also be run as one large debate involving the whole group using volunteers to act in the five main roles (listed on page 33). After the four main speakers, the chair can throw the debate open to the floor and people can indicate that they have new points to make. At the end a vote can be taken for and against the motion or people can abstain.

Debriefing

Ask the group whether their research and the debate has influenced their views on gap years and volunteering overseas. What advice would they give to young people considering a gap year volunteering opportunity overseas? How can they make sure that the volunteering they participate in is not a form of colonialism that makes the people being helped feel worse about their circumstances?

Assessment opportunities

Young people could write an essay on the theme of the debate – '*Overseas volunteering does more harm than good? Discuss*'.

Volunteering overseas and the gap year – evidence

Here are a number of facts, quotations and websites to visit about volunteering overseas and gap years.

A. Pros and cons of the gap year

Pros

- You have a year to think about your future when you are not sure about what direction to take
- You get the opportunity to travel and do something worthwhile becoming a true global citizen
- You can gain in maturity, confidence, personal skills and learn new practical skills as well as enhancing your employability
- You can learn a language and experience another culture.

Cons

- If going on to university, you will be a year behind your school/college friends
- Some university courses prefer people straight after A levels
- An unplanned year where all you improved was your sun tan will not impress anyone
- You may find it difficult to focus on academic work after a year out
- The year out could add to your debt unless well managed.

B. Who goes on gap years?

- Nearly 50% of private school students go on gap years
- Overall 20% of all students take a gap year
- Overall 80% of young people travelling abroad during a gap year are from state schools.

C. What about the ethics of the volunteering opportunity?

www.ethicalvolunteering.org

A site that offers guidance on making sure that overseas volunteering projects offered by companies meet standards including:

- *Are local people involved in running projects?*
- *What consultation with local people has taken place?*
- *What proportion of fees charged goes to local people?*

D. Overseas volunteering opportunities

Check out what is on offer at the following sites:

www.vso.org.uk

www.oneworld.net

www.volunteerafrica.org

www.ivsgbn.demon.co.uk

www.raleighinternational.org

www.www.org.uk

www.wse.org.uk

www.gapyear.com

www.yearoutgroup.org

www.realgap.co.uk

www.gapadvice.org

www.bunac.org

www.gap.org.uk

www.statravel.co.uk/gapyear

Volunteering overseas and the gap year – evidence

E. New colonialists – Yes and No

'It's dangerous to think that digging borehole wells or teaching children English will help a community, without questioning whether local people would prefer piped water to their homes or if speaking English will be of practical use. Some gap year companies promote these opportunities as real contributions to development, when the lasting difference they will make is questionable. These providers reinforce a colonial attitude that development is something that educated people from rich countries do to poor people who know no better. They perpetuate the notion that Africa, Asia and Latin America are playgrounds for young people to experience 'real life', take photos of impoverished locals and marvel at how they live in such dire conditions.'

(Judith Brodie, VSO UK, the Guardian, 26/8/06)

'Admittedly your average "Joe Gapper" is not going to have an impact that benefits thousands. That's what we expect from Medecins Sans Frontieres or Oxfam when they arrive at a disaster zone... That doesn't mean that their presence is worthless or patronising though. Volunteers have been returning from their projects with a better understanding of how others live and far greater tolerance of other cultures. If one gapper can help even three people find employment by improving their English pronunciation, or can lend their energy and enthusiasm unpacking blankets to support a disaster relief effort, then everyone benefits.'

(Tom Griffiths of gapyear.com, the Guardian, 26/8/07)

F. Case studies – teaching English in South America

'I can see some evidence for the theory that gap-year people are the new colonialists. Volunteers bring iPods and cameras to schools, so the gulf in wealth is quite visible... There is also the question of whether we should be teaching them English in the first place. The native language here, Kitchwa, has already been squeezed out by Spanish. These children learn that their lives are crap where they are and it makes them want to move out.'

(Tom, 22, working at a school in Ecuador)

'Tourism, good and bad, supports economies of developing nations. (Gap year) tourists genuinely wish to give something back and gap-year companies exist for this reason. A proportion of the money each volunteer pays these companies does go to fund essential projects in the host country. The unskilled students volunteering have willingness as a qualification.'

(Luke, 25, helping at a school in Bolivia)

G. Not just for students

'I got into trouble with the police; my mum kicked me out and I ended up in hostels. Then I decided to travel, signing up for three months with Raleigh International in Belize. It was such a change and I loved it. Belize is just such a mixture of cultures and the people were so friendly. We built a school that doubled up as a hurricane shelter and I worked on an agriculture project. That opened my eyes. Back home I took myself into a bookshop and found books that helped me see things in a different way. I wanted to do more positive things. I got involved in a sports course and began teaching life skills to young people who had been kicked out of school.'

('Louis' – We all came here from somewhere: Diversity, identities and citizenship, QIA, 2006)

Section C:

Youth-led volunteering

Activity C1: Community citizenship project action plan

Background, organisation and resources

This activity is a planning exercise for a group of young people that want to undertake community citizenship projects to make a difference in their own communities. In effect, they are setting up their small-scale voluntary sector organisations using volunteers to achieve desirable goals. In order to focus on citizenship outcomes for the students and their volunteers, it is important that they have a good understanding of what active citizenship means. This will be helped if they have worked through some of the earlier activities in this pack especially ‘Activity A1: Volunteering and citizenship’ (pages 9–13). In this activity the focus is on groups of young people thinking through their community citizenship project by developing an action plan. The main resource required is copies of the ‘Community citizenship project action plan’ (pages 39–45).

Aims of the activity

- To plan a community citizenship project
- To consider the main issues, considerations and options in developing and implementing a youth-led community citizenship project.

Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Demonstrate understanding of respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

Tasks

The ‘Community citizenship project action plan’ can be used flexibly to help in the planning of volunteering projects run by the student’s union in a college or as part of enrichment activities. The most important point is that young people are able to work together on a collaborative project that meets the following criteria:

- It develops the citizenship learning of them and their volunteers
- It involves volunteers
- It meets a real community need.

The role of the facilitator is to allow the groups of young people the time to come up with their creative ideas, but then to make sure that they have addressed all the relevant issues in the action plan. The activity of completing the action plan can be just a planning exercise. The teams can complete the action plan by responding to all the questions and instructions in the plan.

Debriefing and follow up

The next stage is actually implementing the plan or plans. Depending on the time, resources, purpose and context it may be appropriate for all the projects to be implemented. Alternatively all the teams could present their plans and then could be asked to vote on the project that they would most like to work on. The action plan is similar to bidding forms used by government departments and other funding bodies. In that sense the activity gives students experience of one of the important skills needed for people who want to work in the voluntary sector.

Assessment opportunities

The completed action plan could be assessed by a teacher or peers. The action plan allows for self-assessment in reflecting on the citizenship learning outcomes for the planning team and volunteers.

Community citizenship project action plan

A Community Citizenship Project is one where:

- *a group of young people*
- *work as a team*
- *to create a project*
- *involving other young volunteers*
- *to meet a local community need or problem*
- *with a focus on developing the knowledge and skills for active citizenship.*

1. Your team

- *Who are the members of your team?*
- *What relevant skills, experience and resources can they bring to the project?*

2. What is the problem or need in the local community that you want to do something about?

- *What evidence is there about the scale of the problem?*
- *What evidence is there that this is a real local need?*
- *What do local people, local officials or local councillors say about the problem or need?*
- *What do young people think about the problem?*
- *Who has a stake in solving the problem?*
- *What if anything is already being done about the problem?*
- *What would make a difference to the problem?*

3. What is your project proposal?

N.B. This should require volunteers to take some action and involve opportunities for your team and other volunteers to develop their citizenship knowledge and skills

- *Describe what you plan to do about the problem or need through the activity of your team and volunteers.*

4. What are the aims and objectives of your project?

What are the broad aims – which might be aspirations or what you hope will be achieved? (e.g. 'We want to improve representation by young people on council advisory bodies').

What are the objectives? These should be SMART which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time limited (e.g. 'We want to have at least one youth member on at least two council advisory bodies by the end of the year').

5. What is the name of your project?

You are setting up a short-term voluntary group to plan and deliver a particular community citizenship project.

- *What is the name of your group?*
- *What is the name of your project (if different)?*

6. How many volunteers will you need to deliver the project?

- *How many volunteers are needed and what skills will they need?*
- *What benefits will volunteers gain from being involved?*
- *How will you recruit volunteers?*
- *How will you market the volunteering opportunity?*
- *How will you ensure equal opportunities for people wanting to volunteer?*
- *How will you decide whether or not volunteers are suitable?*
- *What training or briefing will you provide for the volunteers so they are clear about what they have to do?*

7. What money, tools, equipment or other resources will be needed for your project and how can you obtain them?

- *Do you need to include fund raising as part of your project?*
- *Can you borrow tools and equipment free of charge?*
- *How will your project be affected if you do not raise enough money – can it be scaled down?*

8. Who needs to be consulted about your project?

- *Which people and organisations need to be consulted about the project?*
- *How should you consult with them?*
- *Who is likely to object to the project and how will you respond?*

9. How will you market the project?

- *How will you make people aware of your project?*
- *How will people know how they can access your project?*
- *Can you use the local media to get your message across, if so, how?*

11. What are the main risks involved in the project?

- *What are the main health and safety risks to volunteers and the public?*
- *What action can you take to reduce or eliminate these risks?*
- *What insurance policies cover people involved in the project?*
- *Are there any consequences of your project that you may not have first thought of?*

12. What citizenship knowledge and skills will your team and volunteers gain from being involved in the project?

- *What citizenship knowledge can you gain from researching the problem or need?*
- *What citizenship skills can you develop or practise from planning, delivering and reflecting on the project?*
- *What citizenship knowledge and skills can the volunteers gain from the project?*

13. How will you evaluate the success of the project?

- *What will count as success? How will you measure the success of your project?*
- *How will you gain feedback from volunteers and people you aimed to help through the project?*
- *How do you plan to reflect on your experiences to review what you learnt from the project?*
- *How do you plan to reflect on the citizenship knowledge and skills that you and volunteers gained from the project?*
- *How will you celebrate and publicise the success of the project?*



Resources from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

- 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*, QIA, 2006
- For the sake of argument: discussion and debating skills in citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- 'We all came here from somewhere': diversity, identities and citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- Getting started with post-16 citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- A case for action? Skills for active citizenship research*, QIA, 2007
- More than profit: work, social enterprise and citizenship*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in school sixth forms: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in colleges: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in youth and community groups: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in work-based learning: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship: a guide for leaders and coordinators*, QIA, 2007
- Six Approaches to Post-16 Citizenship*, QIA, 2007
- 1. *Citizenship through learner voice and representation*
 - 2. *Citizenship through qualifications and personalised programmes*
 - 3. *Citizenship through group tutorial and enrichment programmes*
 - 4. *Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities*
 - 5. *Citizenship through single events*
 - 6. *Citizenship through research projects*

Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme website www.post16citizenship.org

