GCSE

WJEC GCSE
SOCIAL STUDIES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Made for Wales.
Ready for the world.

Q: Will there be sample assessments for teachers to see how the exams will be structured, and how questions will be phrased?
A: Yes, the assessment pack with the sample assessment materials was published on 17th December 2025. GCSE Social Studies - Teaching from 2026. These sample assessments reflect the structure and question phrasing that will be used in all exams for this qualification.

Q: Is there an order in which the units should be taught?
A: Centres may structure the course in any order, but it is recommended that Unit 1 is taught as an introductory unit in the first year and Unit 4 in the final year. Unit 4 is the last unit candidates should be entered for. Year 11 learners are generally better prepared to complete Unit 4 in the second year as it requires higher level analytical skills. Centres must be reminded to also allow sufficient time for candidates to review their Unit 4 NEA marks before submission. Units 2 and 3 can be completed at any point across the two-year programme.

Q: When will resources such as textbooks and online blended learning be published.
A: We are not producing a textbook for this specification. Instead, we are producing Blended Learning Resources which are available in Welsh and English. The Blended Learning resources are editable so that centres can tailor them to their individual settings. For each topic area there are also knowledge organisers, however these are not editable. (Social Studies - Educational Resources - WJEC). The Guidance for teaching documents also contains links to a variety of sources and materials.

Q: Will questions have more than one assessment objective?
A: Each question on the examination papers (Unit 1 and Unit 3) will assess a single assessment objective. If a question has more than one part then the different parts may assess different assessment objectives, so, part (a) may assess 3 marks of AO1, but part (b) might assess 6 marks of AO3. Some tasks in the NEA (Unit 2 and Unit 4) do include more than one assessment objective, but marks for each assessment objective are awarded separately.

Q. What do candidates have to know about the 13 features of diversity named in '1.1.5 Understanding diversity in Wales'?
The specification notes that 'Learners should know features of…' so learners should be able to briefly define each of the 13 features listed beneath this. You could include delivery of the 13 features within your delivery of the bottom two bullet points of 1.1.5:

Learners should understand diversity in Wales, including:
• *patterns within contemporary Wales*
• *trends within Wales over the last 100 years.*

So, if a candidate was aware of some basic ideas about patterns and trends (what are they, why might they exist) for each of the characteristics this would be useful for the sort of AO2 question seen in the SAMS (Unit 1, question 12) and also any possible AO1 or AO3 questions relating to patterns in contemporary Wales or trends within Wales over the last 100 years.

An idea might be to use the features of diversity in a series of short lesson starters, where data (such as that seen in the Unit 1 SAMS question 12) is presented to your learners, they can practise their data analysis skills (1.1.2) in detecting patterns and/or trends and then consider and discuss why these sorts of patterns and/or trends may exist.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd 2026.

NEA Questions

Q: Will the Unit 2 NEA tasks be the same each year?
A: The tasks in the Unit 2 NEA will be the same each year, however, the social issue the Unit 2 NEA relates to will change every academic year. Candidates **must** use the relevant NEA brief from the year in which the work will be submitted to WJEC. For example, the Unit 2 NEA brief will be released in early September, and it will need to be submitted the following May.

Q: Will the Unit 4 NEA tasks be the same each year?
A: The tasks in the Unit 4 NEA will be the same each year. Candidates select the social issue. Learners will not be expected to execute a chosen legal, non-violent social action but instead plan for one.

Q: Can I tell learners which social issue to investigate in Unit 4?
A: One of the aims of Unit 4 is to give learners the freedom to examine a social issue that is important to them and for them to develop confidence in articulating and reflecting on their own views. As such it would not be appropriate for teachers to tell learners which social issue they should investigate. It would be considered acceptable practice for teachers to provide some examples of possible topic areas to inspire learners who may be having difficulty in identifying their own social issue to examine, however, it should be noted that candidates must complete all the tasks by themselves.

Q: When are the Unit 2 and Unit 4 NEA submission deadlines?
A**:** The submission deadlines for Unit 2 and Unit 4 NEA will be May 5th.

Q: When will the NEA brief for Unit 2 available and where can this be found?
A: The NEA brief for Unit 2 will be available by September 5th of the academic year in which it will be submitted. The brief can be found on the secure WJEC Portal (Portal by WJEC).

Q: Should the NEAs be conducted under high controlled conditions?
A: The Assessment Packs set out the necessary controls for each NEA, however most of the NEA tasks will be completed under high control conditions. See the NEA handbooks on Portal for further guidance.

Q: Will teachers be trained on how to mark Unit 4, the internally assessed NEA?
A: Unit 4 NEA will be available to be submitted from May 2028. This is set by WJEC, marked by the centre and then moderated by the WJEC. The Professional Learning planned for 2026-2027 will prepare teachers to assess the Unit 4 NEA.

Q: Does digital submission mean the candidates need to complete work digitally?
A: No, candidates don't have to complete all work digitally. Hand drawn graphs and tables, for example, can be scanned in. The final submission will need to be submitted as one digital document, e.g., a pdf., though the IAMIS system.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd 2026.

Q: Can learners use software to collect and display the data they collect in Unit 2?
Collecting data using software such as Microsoft Forms or Google Forms would be acceptable. However, this sort of software should not be used when displaying collected data in Task 3(a) in Unit 2 as it removes a candidate's ability to explain their choice of display methods (specific to their data) required in Task 3(b). Candidates can use features such as ‘Charts’ in Microsoft Excel or ‘Chart’ in Google Sheets to display their data - if these features are part of your centre’s IT system and completed offline - as the candidate still has the ability to make choices as to which display method would be appropriate for the data they’ve collected, which can then be explained in Task 3(b). Candidates are also able to display their data using hand drawn graphs and charts which can be scanned and added into their project at the appropriate point.

© WJEC CBAC Ltd 2026.