

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN COLLEGES

Activating the Learner Voice Resource Pack



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fbfe
NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF FAITHS AND BELIEFS
IN FURTHER EDUCATION

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Social, Moral, Social, Cultural and Citizenship Education in Colleges

Activating the Learner Voice

Section 1: Introduction

This project is a collaborative partnership between the National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe)¹ and Active Citizens FE (ACFE)² and was undertaken in the context of fbfe's continuing work on curriculum development and associated family of publications³, and ACFE's mission as the new national network for post-16 citizenship education.

The project's central aim has been to produce a pack of resources which examines and illustrates the close links between Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural (SMSC) and Citizenship Education, with a particular emphasis given to guidance and practical ideas for *activating the learner voice* and developing learner-led activities across a range of issues.

These resources are designed for use by staff and students across the whole range of provision for 14–19 year olds in Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges. Accordingly, our approach to the development of the materials was to engage staff and students in several colleges in individual and focus group discussions about the SMSC and Citizenship issues of most concern to them. We also talked with staff and learners about the best ways to explore and take action on such issues, together with the types of resources that would be most helpful in supporting these activities.

¹ <http://www.fbfe.org.uk>

² www.activecitizensfe.org.uk

³ This includes 'Challenging Voices' (fbfe, 2012) and 'Emerging Voices' (fbfe, 2011)

In these discussions many students expressed a keen interest in pursuing a range of issues linked with SMSC and Citizenship, including opportunities for dialogue with people from different faiths and cultures. There was also strong support for the value of learner led approaches to issues of interest. This reinforces much of the recent experience in post-16 citizenship education where the opportunity for students to lead, along with active learning methods, have consistently proved to be key success factors for engaging young people in social and political issues and action for change.

Valuable insights about the project were also gained from contributions at two workshops on this project held at the fbfe national conference in London in January 2013.

SMSC and Citizenship

We strongly believe that an understanding of the common interests between these respective curriculum areas, as well as their distinctive characteristics, underlines the large and necessary contribution that SMSC and Citizenship education – working together and sharing approaches – can make to the personal and social development of young people in further education.

The two areas, clearly, are not synonymous. SMSC development is concerned with a broad spectrum of issues embracing both the private and public worlds learners inhabit and help to form. Citizenship on the other hand has a more specific focus on the political dimension of young peoples' development, including their understanding of public policy issues and the promotion of effective participation in democratic processes.

In terms of common ground, on subject content both SMSC and Citizenship have central concerns with social and cultural issues, including questions of identity, diversity and equality. It is also widely recognised that responsible active citizenship is founded partly on effective moral and social development. Also there is a religious or more broadly spiritual or ethical basis to many of the contemporary political and social issues that Citizenship education deals with – current or recent wars, gay marriage and the wearing of religious symbols in public to name only a few. This just hints at the ways in which the spiritual and moral domains, through to the social, cultural and political can be inter-related in complex ways – and which it is so valuable for learners to understand.

Beyond these matters of curriculum content, and just as importantly, the affinity and complementary relationship between SMSC and Citizenship

extends more broadly to questions of subject status, philosophy and pedagogy.

Regarding place in the curriculum there is considerable variation between colleges in the status afforded to such work and the staff designated to take responsibility for it. SMSC and Citizenship can often be seen as 'add-ons', confined to a small range of optional 'enrichment' activities; neither area, of course, is compulsory in post-16 education. However in some colleges there is a big commitment and the effort is made to provide elements of SMSC and Citizenship education for all learners, with dedicated staff roles and, often, provision through the group tutorial curriculum. Many providers, too, have subject or course options within the mainstream curriculum featuring these areas – A Levels in Citizenship Studies and Religious Studies and Personal and Social Development within Foundational Learning and other vocational courses all being important examples.

As to educational philosophy, both SMSC and Citizenship education have an interest in developing the *whole* person and with promoting a broad vision of education which goes beyond links with qualifications and employment to a consideration of priorities which include shared values, social purpose, making a difference, equality, community and global awareness and humanity.

SMSC and Citizenship: benefits and outcomes for learners⁴

Spiritual development gives learners a strong sense of personal ownership of their thoughts and actions. They can develop a carefully considered understanding of the world in which they live, of the choices that are available to them, their own attitudes towards the opinions and actions of others and how they wish to conduct their own lives. This can build strong self-worth.

Moral development allows learners a sense of right and wrong, of the impact their actions will have upon themselves and others, and the ability to stand by their decisions in the face of criticism, ridicule or opposition, or to adjust them in changing contexts. This can build self-confidence and determination.

Social development offers learners an understanding of their roles in an interactive and complex society and the ability to build and maintain sound relationships. It prompts and enables learners to work with others to take action on issues of concern. This can build a strong sense of responsibility.

Cultural development gives learners an understanding of traditions and values in different communities and society as a whole. It fosters the ability to participate in groups and enjoy leisure pursuits and can contribute to a sense of belonging.

Citizenship enables young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities, about power and how society and political systems work. It also enables them to discuss and develop knowledge and understanding of topical and controversial social, political, environmental and economic issues. It encourages learners to express their views and have a voice in democratic processes, for example within their schools and colleges and other places of learning. It enables them to work with others to take action for change on issues of concern and to make a difference locally and more widely in a variety of contexts.

⁴ Adapted from SMSC Report: Planning and delivering spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) support in the learning and skills sector (LSIS, 2010) and Getting Started with Post-16 Citizenship (LSIS, 2009)

Links with Learner Voice

SMSC and Citizenship education also share strong links with active learning methods and learner voice, offering learners opportunities for experiential learning and the chance to shape and lead activities of most relevance and concern to themselves.

The guidance for 14-19 SMSC⁵ development puts considerable emphasis on the importance of learner voice. It recommends that colleges involve learners in consultations about the nature of SMSC development activities, and that learners have opportunities to explore their own views, and the views of others, on faith, belief, moral issues and culture in a safe but challenging environment.

Citizenship education also enables young people to use their voice, both within their own college and more widely, not just because they have been given permission to do so by those in authority, but because they have been truly 'empowered' and to want to speak out and bring about change.

Citizenship and learner voice therefore are closely aligned and can be mutually reinforcing. Both put emphasis on learner autonomy, the skills of negotiation, advocacy and responsible action, an interest in improving things and understanding decision-making processes. Effective, active citizenship learning is not possible without good learner voice and opportunities for appropriate action. In turn citizenship knowledge and skills can help to build a strong basis for learners' understanding of, and involvement in, learner voice structures and processes. Both – and this again extends very much to SMSC development - depend for full effectiveness on a wider institutional culture of inclusion and democracy.

⁵ SMSC Report (LSIS, 2010)

Activating the Learner Voice – 10 ways

The many structures and processes that can encourage and support expression of, and response to, the voice of learners include:

- Student councils and parliaments, with course or class reps
- Students' unions
- Student advisory panels or shadow leadership groups
- Working groups or fora on specific issues – including faith groups
- Classroom discussions within tutor groups and mainstream classes
- Debates and debating societies
- Student conferences and special events
- Use of mobile technology and creative media to gather views
- Involving learners in lesson observation
- Learner researcher programmes

Shifting policy contexts and opportunities

Over the last decade SMSC and Citizenship education have made major strides towards an established presence in the post-16 sector, helped considerably in each case by recognition in official guidance documents for providers and practitioners.

Based on the successful work of the government funded Post-16 Citizenship Development Programme, *Play your part: post-16 citizenship guidance* was published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in 2004 while in 2010 the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) produced *SMSC Report: Planning and delivering spiritual, moral, social and cultural support in the learning and skills sector*. This publication reflected in particular the pioneering work of the National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe) and was a welcome addition to the earlier *Post-16 Religious Education Non-Statutory Guidance (2004)*.

In other ways too SMSC and Citizenship education post-16 have received much support from government and the key national institutions of the learning and skills sector. Through support provided by LSIS, and its predecessor organisations, providers, their staff, and indirectly learners, have benefited from a wide range of training opportunities, networking events, conferences and staff development and curriculum resources. Also, these curriculum areas received considerable encouragement from Ofsted with, for example, the 2009 Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CIF) for the Learning and Skills sector containing a number of significant references to the importance of Equality and Diversity and SMSC education.

Furthermore, SMSC and Citizenship education, during the years of the Labour Government, also gained traction from support for closely related policy initiatives – including community cohesion and equality and diversity broadly and also learner voice, both in schools and the further education sector. For example, further education providers were required to adopt learner involvement strategies and evaluations suggested that by 2008 65% of providers had these fully in place.

However, since the 2010 General Election there has been more uncertainty for SMSC and Citizenship education post-16, with conflicting indicators about support for these curriculum areas, especially outside a formal curriculum framework.

For example, compared with the Ofsted framework referred to above, the CIF for further education and skills introduced in 2012 removed explicit references to SMSC and ended the limiting grade for Equality and Diversity. Nonetheless further clarification from Ofsted does suggest that in relation to the three areas of 'Teaching and Learning', 'Outcomes for Learners' and 'Leadership and Management' inspectors will be required to take into account relevant issues in relation to SMSC development. Accordingly, there is still considerable scope for providers to secure credit

from inspectors by demonstrating evidence of good practice in the provision of chaplaincy services and SMSC education, particularly if this contributes to successful outcomes for learners.

For Citizenship the ending in 2011 of the government funded Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme represented a loss of free staff training, resources and policy direction for Citizenship in further education. There is no longer an explicit endorsement of the value of Citizenship education in the post-compulsory sector to encourage and support those making decisions about the offer to students and the allocation of resources in colleges and other providers.

Further, to compound this difficult policy context, the impact of funding cuts is being felt in further education. One immediate concern has been a large cut in 'Entitlement' funding, which all further education providers have received for each full-time learner, and which explicitly focused on tutorial support and 'extra-curricular' enrichment activities. As indicated above, these are important 'spaces' where many colleges and other providers have located SMSC and Citizenship programmes and activities.

Set against these points of difficulty, some policy agendas continue to be positively conducive to the development of our curriculum areas. SMSC and Citizenship in post-16 education, for example, both have significant foundations to build on from secondary education.

Citizenship has been a statutory subject at key stages 3 and 4 in secondary schools since 2002 and one of three overarching aims of the National Curriculum is 'to develop responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society'. Furthermore, recent government announcements suggest that Citizenship is set, subject to final consultation outcomes, to emerge from the current curriculum review with its statutory place in the secondary curriculum maintained.

In the meanwhile the role of SMSC in schools has been further enhanced with the latest Ofsted Framework for Schools giving considerable prominence to SMSC as a focus for whole school judgements made by inspectors.

In a broader policy area SMSC and Citizenship activities can make an important contribution to the way further education providers fulfill their public duties under the 2010 Equality Act. This extended previous duties to promote equality and prevent discrimination by gender, race and disability to cover: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty requires public bodies to pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations across all these protected characteristics.

Funding changes and implications⁶

Notwithstanding the funding issues referred to above, the 16-19 Funding Formula, introduced by the Education Funding Agency for the first time from 2013/14, may have favourable implications for Tutorial, Enrichment and Learner support in colleges, areas within which SMSC and Citizenship are likely to find space.

This new funding system involves a major shift – away from funding by individual qualification aims (plus ring-fenced funding for other areas including Tutorial, Enrichment and Learner Support) and across to overall funding per student. This will apply to all 16-19 year olds who (for full time funding) follow a whole Programme of Study of 540 hours (minimum), with students taking 'either an academic programme or a substantial vocational qualification'. As part of the Programme of Study students may

⁶ <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a00210755/16-19-study-programmes>

also take part in work experience and participate in 'value added non-qualification activity'.

This last, important element means that, although Tutorial, Enrichment and Learner Support will no longer receive dedicated funding, these areas including SMSC and Citizenship activity can at the discretion of the provider form part of a fully funded Programme of Study. An important caveat here is that for this to be the case all activities must be timetabled, logged and organised directly by the provider.

Within the new funding system itself no limit is imposed on the extent of 'non-qualification activity' included in Programmes of Study, and this represents an opportunity for our curriculum areas. However, the extent to which this opportunity is exploited will of course depend on how far each provider values SMSC and Citizenship development for their 16 -19 learners.

Activating the Learner Voice - The curriculum resources in this pack

In illustrating the value of shared approaches between SMSC and Citizenship with the learning activities in this pack our aim is to stress in particular the value to all 14-19 college learners of taking part in programmes and activities which offer opportunities for them to **take a lead, to voice their views and ideas on issues of interest and concern and to work together on action for improvement**. We advocate that students are, with appropriate levels of staff support and leadership for particular groups, **placed in the forefront of planning and organising activities and events** and have **varied opportunities for discussion and debate**, both within and beyond the classroom.

The materials here are designed for use with students working at a range of educational levels, up to and including Level 3, and can be used selectively or adapted to meet the needs of particular cohorts and groups.

In **Section 2** the theme of **Peace, Conflict and Respect** is approached through the vehicle of **student led conferences**.

Section 3 explores the theme of **Diversity, Equality and Identity** through a college **diversity poster competition and calendar** and **debates and discussions** about same-sex marriage.

In **Section 4** the theme of **Human Rights, Responsibilities and Justice** is approached through activities for designated **national and international days**, including **Holocaust Memorial Day**.

Acknowledgements

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Section 2: Peace, conflict, respect - student conferences

Activating the Learner Voice

This section begins with a case study of an inter-faith student conference and goes on to include other suggestions and activities which provide opportunities for students to:

- Shape the content and organisation of student conferences
- Take a lead with hosting and facilitation roles at student conferences
- Exchange views and practice public speaking skills at student conferences

Peacethread is an inter-faith project, based in Dorset, which threads together young people, faith and peace. The project creates opportunities and spaces for students from various faiths and cultures to enter into dialogue with each other and representatives from inter-faith groups. It was initiated in response to a need to deepen understanding of how faith links with action and to develop tolerance of the diversity of faith and culture in local communities.

The first Peacethread project was a conference for students from three schools and a college in Dorset on Peace and Reconciliation in Israel and Palestine, held at Poole Lighthouse in 2010. The project also involved inter-faith representatives from the local mosque, synagogue, Quaker meeting house, the Poole Lighthouse chaplaincy and a representative from the Ecumenical Accompanier movement. Although the conference focused on peace there was also a need to explore the conflict in Israel and Palestine and at times this resulted in high levels of tension between faith representatives - problems which were addressed by including all representatives in the preparatory dialogue and by working hard to give all voices an equal opportunity for expression.

Alongside the conference Peacethread also ran seminars in schools to enable young people to deepen their understanding of how faith links to action. Also, during the conference and seminars participants were encouraged to set up student led 'Peacethread Movements' (action groups) in order to continue to raise awareness of global issues and build relationships between young people from different faith and cultural backgrounds. At the end of the conference students presented the results of their Peacethread investigations in the form of strategies for peace in the Middle East.

The teaching and learning ethos of Peacethread is based on a 'cooperative and conative' approach – with students encouraged to participate as equal partners, able to reflect, contribute and act on the issues being considered. The work of Peacethread has continued with a website blog <http://peacethread.blogspot.co.uk> and further events, including a conference for students from five schools at the Bovington Tank Museum (see page 18/19).

Friday 2 March 2012

The Tank Museum, Bovington



10.00-10.20	Welcome and introductions
10.20-10.50	Peacethread Briefing Notes
10.50-11.20	Battlegroup Afghanistan
11.20-11.35	Break
11.35-12.05	Peacethread Investigates 1
12.05-12.35	Peacethread Investigates 2
12.35-13.00	Lunch
13.00-13.30	Peacethread Investigates 3
13.30-14.40	Think Tank
14.40-15.00	Peacethread Reflects

Extract from Conference Programme (continued)

The aim of the conference is for us to explore the role of the soldier in peacemaking and debate the concept of JustWar. We will meet soldiers from the army camp in Bovington and representatives from different faith and belief perspectives. Your role is to thread together different thoughts and opinions and to explore questions relating to the role of the soldier, peacemaking and Just War.



As with all good investigations, you must develop skills:

Listening

Teamwork

Criticality

Reflection

Questioning

Independence

Communication

**THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE DEEP, REFLECTIVE
AND CHALLENGE**

Activity 1 – Opinion finder on peace, conflict, respect

Background

This activity – to elicit opinions on peace, conflict and respect – can be valuable in the early planning stages of a student conference on this theme to canvass views and identify particular aspects for inclusion. It could be used with the conference planning group itself, or for consultation purposes with several tutor groups or other groups of students around the college. The activity could also be adapted, with questions around the specific focus of the conference, and used as one activity at the event itself.

This activity works well with groups of about 15 or more – up to as many as 30 or 40. For larger groups, and if desired, more questions can be added to the list.

Task 1

Give each participant a copy of the sheet 'Opinion finder – peace, conflict, respect', copied from page 22, with one of the questions circled (for the group as a whole circle roughly equal numbers of the questions listed). It helps in the running of this activity if the sheets are printed on different coloured paper depending on the question circled (e.g. all those with Question 1 circled on blue, all those with Question 2 circled on pink and so on.)

Explain that everyone should get up, move around the room and become an opinion finder for their circled question. They should speak to as many people as possible and make a note in the box on the sheet of the responses to the question. They will also be asked other people's questions at the same time. They should avoid people who have the same question (and colour of sheet) as theirs.

Task 2

After 15 minutes, stop the activity and ask all those with the same question circled to gather together in a group. Each group should share and discuss their findings on that question, and record the key points. Invite a spokesperson from each group to report findings to the whole group.

Opinion finder – peace, conflict, respect

Ask other people the question circled and record answers to your question in the box below.

1. Which wars or other conflicts in the world concern you most – and why?
2. How should conflicts be resolved?
3. Can war ever be justified? Please explain or give examples.
4. What is respect?
5. What does a lack of respect involve?



Activity 2 - Planning: stages involved in running a student conference⁷

Background

This card sort provides an opportunity for students to consider the different stages involved in running an event, and the order in which the stages should be tackled. Participants work in groups of three or four. They sort sets of cards, copied and cut up from page 25, into the order in which they think the stages should occur. They may suggest that some of the stages run simultaneously. You will need a set of cards for each small group.

Task 1

Ask participants to work in small groups of three or four. Give each group a set of cards, copied and cut up from page 25. Tell participants that on the cards are written some of the different stages in planning and running an event. Ask them to put the stages into the most logical order, if the event were to be a conference for 100 students. Draw attention to the blank card, asking participants to consider whether any stages have been omitted. They should write their suggestions on the blank card.

Task 2

Ask each small group to join up with another group, to discuss the order in which they have organised the cards. They should agree a final order, write it on flipchart paper and display it on the wall.

Task 3

Discuss the flipcharts with the whole group, especially focusing on suggestions they have made for additional stages. Look for differences of opinion in the order of stages and ask participants to explain and justify their decisions.

⁷ Adapted from 'Getting the show on the road' (LSIS, 2008), by Julia Fiehn for the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

Task 4

Ask participants to reflect individually on which stages of planning and running an event they would enjoy most and why.

Stages involved in running a student led conference

Doing paperwork: folders, badges, participant lists etc.	Deciding on the audience
Negotiating with staff about timing and purpose	Choosing a theme
Identifying tasks that need to be done	Monitoring and evaluating the process
Allocating tasks and agreeing responsibilities	Planning the programme
Chairing/hosting the event	Contacting speakers and visitors
Deciding on the aims and objectives	Setting up a planning group
Assessing the learning from the event	Thanking everyone involved
Planning component parts	Other

Conferences – 12 tips for a student led approach

1. Form a conference student planning group well in advance of the event (at least several months) and hold regular meetings of the group
2. Identify key roles and responsibilities that each planning group member will take on, for tasks related to planning, preparation and running the conference on the day
3. Identify the skills that those involved need to have and devote time to discussing and practicing those skills – may include skills for planning, negotiation, persuasion, public speaking, critical thinking, problem solving etc
4. Make planning, preparation and practice key watch-words for the planning group
5. With the planning group create a detailed action plan for the project
6. Ensure plenty of student input – from the planning group and more widely – on the conference theme and key components of the event programme
7. Book a venue early and get college personnel on board from the start
8. Think early on about the audience for the conference and plan carefully to ensure their attendance and active involvement on the day – have an active and varied programme
9. Consider setting up or draw in existing small scale research or other projects which link with the chosen theme and which can be fed into the conference programme
10. What will come out of the conference? What learning experiences should participants have? Can the conference be a catalyst for ongoing activity – e.g. action or campaigning groups on particular issues?
11. Will you work with partners from outside the college? Who and how?
12. If possible video the conference – as a lasting record, for dissemination and the opportunity for participants to reflect on their contributions and learning.

Section 3: Equality, diversity, identity⁸ - posters and debates

Activating the Learner Voice

Starting with a case study of a college poster competition this section goes on to offer a further main debating activity. Together these enable students to:

- Use their creative abilities to express ideas about diversity in their own college and more widely
- Contribute to a published calendar which celebrates and informs a wide audience about the diverse nature of the College community
- Debate the controversial issue of same-sex marriage as an example of discussion about equality and diversity in society

⁸ Elements of this theme are also explored in a companion publication from FBFE, 'Challenging Voices' (FBFE, 2012).

Case Study: Bournemouth and Poole College – Diversity Poster Competition



The aim of the competition is to promote awareness and education for local and global diversity issues throughout Bournemouth and Poole College. Students are encouraged to use their artistic creativity to represent in a poster their own reflections on diversity. Posters can be designed in small teams or individually and tutor groups can submit more than one entry. All entries are displayed around the several College sites until the winning poster is decided.

Entries have to be submitted by a set deadline date in October and are judged on the following criteria: **creativity; expression of ideas; originality; visual appeal; message appeal.**

The winning poster is reproduced and adopted as The College's equality and diversity poster for the academic year. This poster, along with the other 11 best competition entries are included in a corporate diversity calendar which is displayed across all College sites and on the website to serve as a visual representation of The College and its students' commitment to diversity. A prize is awarded for the winning entry.

A resource pack is provided with examples of diversity posters, useful activities and discussion ideas and a list of websites and resources that may be helpful to support students in beginning to think about diversity (This includes a reference to the interesting and useful Aberdeen diversity poster with accompanying activities⁹).

⁹ See http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/posteraberdean_tcm4-197603.pdf

Bournemouth and Poole College - Diversity Poster Competition
winning entry



Activity 3 - Debating same-sex marriage

Background

Same-sex marriage is an important example of current debate in the UK about equality and diversity and one of considerable interest to young people. The debate prompts a wide range of SMSC and Citizenship issues, with proposed legislation offering the prospect of a major social change which is likely to have a profound impact on the personal lives of numerous people over many years ahead. This activity offers participants the opportunity, through different types of discussion, to gain knowledge about same-sex marriage debate, and to express their own views and consider the views of others on this topical and controversial issue.

Task 1

Introduce the discussion of same-sex marriage by asking students what they know about this issue, including the earlier introduction of civil partnerships, and the further developments taking place in the UK and other countries. Utilise as appropriate the information sheet on page 32 and supplement with updated material from various websites. The BBC News site at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-18407568> is one useful example. There are also numerous YouTube clips which can be used as stimulus material on different sides of this debate.

Task 2

Ask students to work in twos or threes and give each group a set of the statements for and against same-sex marriage cut up from the table on page 33. Each group should first sort the statements into those for and against same-sex marriage and then go on to discuss the statements, identifying those they agree with and those they disagree with. Then bring the students together as a whole group and hold a plenary session where each small group feeds back on its initial discussion, and the particular arguments they thought most important. Ensure everyone has plenty of opportunity to express their views for or against or undecided about same-sex marriage. Finally hold a vote for and against.

Task 3

Drawing on the guidance points about 'How debates work' on page 34, hold a formal debate on the following resolution:

“This House approves of changes in the law to allow same-sex couples to get married”

This can be a class or tutor group debate which builds on the discussions suggested in Task 2. Equally, it could be a special event which a group of students, including the principal speakers on each side, organise for a larger, department or college wide audience, or if there is one this could be a topic for the college debating society.

Developments in same-sex marriage

Civil partnerships

Civil partnerships for gay couples in the UK were introduced in 2005 following an Act of Parliament the previous year. Civil partnerships give same-sex couples the same legal rights and responsibilities as those in a civil marriage. However, campaigners have continued to argue that, for full equality, gay couples should be able to get married in the same way as opposite-sex couples. The issue is a controversial one with strong views held on both sides of the argument.

Same-sex marriage in England and Wales

Legislation under consideration in Parliament¹⁰ proposes that couples of the same sex can get married, although the change would not be forced on religious organisations. They would have the choice to hold marriage ceremonies for same-sex couples if they wish to do so. However, the Church of England and (Anglican) Church in Wales would be banned by law from offering same-sex marriages. The Church of England and the Church in Wales, along with some other churches, have stated their strong opposition to same-sex marriages. However, further than this, it is considered that the Church of England needs to be protected from legal claims that as the Established Church it is bound to marry anyone who requests it.

Scotland and Northern Ireland

There are also plans to introduce a law allowing same-sex marriage in Scotland, but no plans so far for Northern Ireland.

Around the World

The following countries have changed their marriage laws to allow same-sex couples to marry: Netherlands (2001); Belgium (2003); Spain (2005); Canada (2005); South Africa (2006); Norway (2009); Sweden (2009); Portugal (2010); Iceland (2010); Argentina (2010); France (2013).¹¹

¹⁰ The position as of June 2013

¹¹ Sources: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-21321731> and <http://www.channel4.com/news/gay-marriage-bill-the-key-questions>

Same-sex marriage – for and against statements

<p>1. It is no one else's business if two men or two women want to get married. Two people of the same sex should be allowed to publicly celebrate their commitment to each other and receive the benefits of marriage on an equal basis with opposite sex couples</p>	<p>2. Marriage is essentially a religious institution, and although religious views do vary many of the major religions and religious groups are opposed to gay marriage and some oppose homosexuality entirely</p>
<p>3. Denying same-sex couples the right to marry stigmatises gay and lesbian couples sending the message that their partnerships are less valid and important</p>	<p>4. Homosexuality is widely accepted nowadays and it is discriminatory to refuse gay couples the right to marry</p>
<p>5. There is evidence of widespread public support for same-sex marriage – with opinion polls showing up to 70% of people in favour</p>	<p>6. The only thing that should matter in marriage is love and commitment – the ability or desire to have children has never been a qualification for marriage</p>
<p>7. Marriage should be between a man and a woman – this is how it has traditionally been defined, uniquely involving the procreation and rearing of children within a family</p>	<p>8. There is no such thing as traditional marriage: numerous modern & ancient examples of family arrangements based on polygamy & communal child-rearing as well as monogamy</p>
<p>9. Same-sex marriage may undermine respect for the institution of marriage and family values, and may lead to an increase in out of wedlock births and divorce rates</p>	<p>10. Gay marriage will lead to more children being raised in same-sex households which are not the best environment for raising children because children need both a mother and father</p>
<p>11. Expanding marriage to include same-sex couples may lead to churches being forced to marry couples and children being taught in school that same-sex marriage is the same as opposite-sex marriage</p>	<p>12. Gay couples can already have a civil partnership with the same legal rights as married couples, so same-sex marriage is not necessary</p>

How Debates Work¹²

The role of the chairperson

A debate is run by a chairperson. Their job is to keep order and ensure fairness, with as many people as possible getting a chance to speak. The chairperson calls people to speak and ensures they stick to the time allocated. Participants in the debate must accept the control of the chairperson.

The resolution

A debate focuses on a resolution worded in a particular way. In this case: *"This House approves of changes in the law to allow same-sex couples to marry"*.

Structure of the debate

- Two people speak 'for' the resolution. Each speaker has a set amount of time, say 5 minutes. the second speaker should add something new, not just repeat what the first speaker has said.
- Two people also speak 'against' the resolution & again are limited to set time.
- Usually, the order is: Speaker 1 'for the resolution', Speaker 1 'against the resolution', then Speaker 2 'for' followed by Speaker 2 'against'.
- Speakers set out their argument making points supported by evidence or further explanation.
- When the four main speakers have finished, the debate is 'opened to the floor'. This means anyone can speak, but they have to get the attention of the chairperson. Only the chairperson can decide who speaks. The new speakers may make new points or reinforce what the other speakers on their side of the argument have said. Also, they may make points which counter the arguments put forward by the speakers on the opposing side.
- At the end of an agreed time, the debate is halted and it is time to vote. You can vote 'for' the resolution, 'against' the resolution or you can 'abstain' (not vote for either side). The votes are counted and the resolution is 'carried' or 'defeated'.
- Sometimes there are suggested amendments to the resolution that may be discussed and voted on. Taking the example above, someone might propose that a change in the law to allow same-sex couples to marry should include the right of religious organisations not to perform such marriages. If there is a vote in favour of a specific amendment it becomes part of the main resolution for the final vote at the end of the debate.

¹² For more on debating and a national debating competition for 16-18 years olds see <http://www.debatingmatters.com>

8 tips for making a speech

1. Be yourself

Focus on your views, what you think about the resolution in question and your interpretation of the arguments and evidence

2. Plan your speech

Do your research on the debate topic, make some clear notes on cards you can refer to easily during the debate

3. Go for a clear structure with a beginning, middle and end

Opening: a strong start to attract audience attention

Main body: make no more than 3 main points

Conclusion: finish confidently and ask for their support on the resolution

4. Speak with passion

Real conviction breeds enthusiasm. They need to hear, see and feel what you are telling them

5. Keep it simple

Tailor your speech to your audience. It is about what they need or want to know and not about how much you can tell them

6. Use your voice and body language

Gestures and vocal variety (pitch, pace, pause and volume) enhance your performance. Stand up, look confident and maintain eye contact with your audience as much as possible

7. Speak to time

Prepare for your allocated time. Don't go on for too long. Make your points – and then sit down

8. Practise, practise, practise

Try it out for a friend or in front of the mirror, or record and listen back – it definitely helps.

Section 4: Human rights, responsibilities, justice – through activities for National and International days¹³

Activating the Learner Voice

In this section, through the medium of National and International days, and activities for Holocaust Memorial Day in particular, students have the opportunity to:

- Investigate and debate the purpose of Holocaust Memorial Day
- Help shape class or college wide activities to take place on Holocaust Memorial Day
- Take part in discussions about how they may respond in situations where others may face discrimination.

National and International Days - Background

The purpose of National and International days or weeks is usually to remember and raise awareness of important events, causes or issues.

These dedicated occasions in the calendar can provide an excellent focus for discussing, sharing views, extending knowledge and, where appropriate, taking follow-up action on the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and citizenship dimensions of a very wide range of issues. This includes some prominent opportunities in relation to human rights, responsibilities and justice.

Such designated days and weeks can also provide the chance for students to take a lead, for example by helping to choose and organise activities for particular occasions and leading follow up actions. Activities for themed days or weeks can take place within teaching or tutor groups, but could also be organised on a cross college basis, with students

¹³ Based on an idea developed by Andrew Miller for the LSIS Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

coming forward to lead and/or take part in particular events, perhaps in liaison with members of the College's SU Executive Committee or Student Council.

Examples of designated days and weeks which can be valuable in relation to a focus on human rights, responsibilities and justice include:

- **Holocaust Memorial Day – 27 January**
- **World Refugee Day - 20 June**
- **Anti-Slavery Day – 18 October**
- **Human Rights Day – 10 December**

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust



The Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) is the charity which promotes and supports Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). 27 January is the day for everyone to remember the millions of people killed in the Holocaust, Nazi Persecution and in subsequent genocides including those in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur. HMDT suggests that 27 January is a time when we can learn the lessons of the past and recognise that genocide does not just take place on its own, but is a steady process which can begin if discrimination, racism and hatred are not checked and prevented.

The HMDT now offer a **Youth Champion Programme**, which includes the opportunity to prepare for the Champion's role by taking part in a youth workshop. This is for young people aged 13-24 who are passionate about making a difference by organising HMD activity in their youth group, college, community or school. Youth Champions are at the forefront of encouraging other people to commemorate HMD; they can be role models to others and can pass on their knowledge and understanding of why learning from the past is still relevant to our lives today.

HMDT also offer a **Campaign Pack** which helps HMD organisers with activities and campaigning work.

Activity 4 - Planning for Holocaust Memorial Day, 27 January

Background

This exercise involves students in deciding what they would like to do for Holocaust Memorial Day. Before using the exercise you should decide if any of the activities suggested are unrealistic or impracticable for the group. The activity focuses on a priorities exercise in which small groups decide what they would like to do.

Task 1

Introduce Holocaust Memorial Day well ahead of 27 January by holding a short discussion to establish what students already know about the Holocaust and other genocides, and what these mean to them. This might include a short video from the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust (HMDT) website (www.hmd.org.uk) or the BBC's *Newsround* (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/16700242>)

Task 2

Begin students' involvement in planning activities for 27 January by asking them to consider the list of possibilities below (see page 41). Ask them to put their top three choices in rank order 1, 2 and 3. Then, organised in small groups, ask them to discuss and defend their chosen options, but also to listen to what other people have to say.

Then ask them to decide on the group's top three activities. Record these on a board/flipchart and then hold a final vote to see which choices the group as a whole will support.

Students can investigate and find out more about the books, films and other activities mentioned in the list below by visiting the HMDT website

In choosing activities ask students to think about how you can all ensure the activity has the most impact.

Task 3

Draw attention to the HMDT's **Youth Champion Programme**, discussing the opportunities it presents and whether any students in the group would like to consider getting involved.

Choosing activities for Holocaust Memorial Day

	My choice	Group choice	
1. Speaker			Invite a speaker who has been a victim of hate crime to visit on 27 January – for example a refugee who has escaped genocide or violence
2. Film show			Show a film about the Holocaust or other example of genocides with a post-film discussion, e.g. <i>Hotel Rwanda</i> , <i>The Killing Fields</i> , <i>The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas</i>
3. Poetry reading			Organise a poetry reading event when young people will read a selection of poems about the Holocaust/genocides, e.g. the <i>Suitcase</i> poems from people fleeing the Bosnian/Croatian wars
4. Exhibition			Create and hold an exhibition of photos, poems and stories to illustrate issues relating to genocide and hate crime
5. Campaign			Support a campaign to raise awareness about genocide in Darfur or another global conflict and raise funds to support charities working in the regions concerned
6. Drama			Create and perform a drama to illustrate aspects of hate crime or perform scenes from a published drama
7. Art show			Create and exhibit young people's art work in response to the Holocaust/genocide/hate crime
8. Workshop			Develop and deliver a workshop to raise the awareness of younger people about the Holocaust/genocide/hate crime

Activity 5 - What would we do? What should we do?

Background

This activity offers learning opportunities including the exercise of responsible action towards and on behalf of others and a consideration of the social, moral and ethical issues applying to particular situations.

Through small group discussions learners are invited to put themselves 'in the shoes' of someone encountering people and situations which are 'uncomfortable' in that they involve discrimination and dislike of particular groups in society. The theme for a recent Holocaust Memorial Day was 'Stand Up to Hatred' and the word 'hatred' is a strong one. However, the exercise with the situations described below (see page 44) is based on the argument that small acts of hatred may be the 'thin of the wedge' that can, in extreme cases, build up to such an extent that it leads to violence and even genocide when groups of people are dehumanised and exterminated.

The activity asks students to discuss 'What **would** you do?' Faced with the situation and knowing yourself, what would your most likely reaction and actions be? They are also asked to discuss 'What **should** you do?'. In other words, what is the socially and morally 'correct' thing to do in the situation or is there no 'right' or 'best' response? In these types of situations the options include:

- Taking immediate direct action to confront the person involved
- Showing sympathy and support for the person who is suffering at the hands of others
- Discussing the situation and possible action with friends and family
- Sharing the situation with others who may be in a better position to take action within your institution – or outside if more appropriate

Task 1

Copy and cut up the 'HMD Activity 2 Would/should' cards (page 42) into packs, enough for one per group.

Task 2

Organise students into small groups and explain the background to, and purpose of, the activity. Distribute the sets of cards and ask students to keep the cards face down on the table. They should turn over each card in turn and discuss what they would do/should do in the situation. One member of the group should make a note of the discussions and thinking of the group.

Task 3

Debrief taking one situation at a time and asking a different group each time to start the feedback. Then invite others to add their comments.

‘What would/should you do?’ activity – cut into sets of cards

<p>Would/should card 1</p> <p>A student in your class who is gay confides in you that he is being bullied and called horrible names by a group of other young people in your college.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>	<p>Would/should card 2</p> <p>You are invited to join an informal discussion group by some students from the same religious group as you. During the meeting some express sympathy for terrorist acts as a way of supporting ‘their people and religion’.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>
<p>Would/should card 3</p> <p>You find that there is an outbreak of racist graffiti attacking a refugee group in your community. The graffiti also uses the swastika symbol.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>	<p>Would/should card 4</p> <p>Some neighbours who are new arrivals in the UK from a war zone are being harassed by some local youths at night and in the street. There has been verbal abuse, threats and graffiti on the side of their house.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>
<p>Would/should card 5</p> <p>In a discussion session in your group some young people express the view that all Muslims sympathise with al Qaeda and should be deported.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>	<p>Would/should card 6</p> <p>You notice that someone in your group has a number of English Defence League (EDL) leaflets among their papers.</p> <p><i>What would you do? What should you do?</i></p>

References and resources

Active Citizens FE www.activecitizensfe.org.uk

All Faiths And None (AFAN) <http://www.afan.uk.net>

Challenging Voices: A resource for FE colleges in handling contentious issues with students (fbfe, 2012) <http://www.fbfe.org.uk>

Citizenship through tutorial: A staff manual with activities for personal and social learning (LSIS, 2010)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Common inspection framework for further education and skills (Ofsted, 2012) (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/common-inspection-framework-for-further-education-and-skills-2012>)

Department for Education: 16-19 study programmes
(<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a00210755/16-19-study-programmes>)

Debating Matters <http://www.debatingmatters.com>

Education Scotland
http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/posteraberdeen_tcm4-197603.pdf

Emerging Voices: Breathing spaces for Values, Beliefs and Faiths in the Further Education Curriculum (fbfe, 2011) <http://www.fbfe.org.uk>

Foundations of citizenship: Activities for learners at Entry Level (LSIS, 2009)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Getting Started with Post-16 Citizenship (LSIS, 2009)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Getting the show on the road: Skills for planning and running citizenship events (LSIS, 2006)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Listening to learners? Citizenship and learner voice (LSIS, 2009)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Moving forward together: Citizenship learning for community cohesion (LSIS, 2009) <http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

National Council of Faiths and Beliefs in Further Education (fbfe)
<http://www.fbfe.org.uk>

Play your part: post-16 citizenship guidance (QCA, 2004)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

Post-16 Religious Education Non- Statutory Guidance (QCA, 2004)
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/QCA-04-1336.pdf>

SMSC Report: Planning and delivering spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) support in the learning and skills sector (LSIS, 2010)
<http://www.fbfe.org.uk>

The language of citizenship: Activities for ESOL learners (LSIS, 2008)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>

We all came here from somewhere: Diversity, identities and active citizenship (LSIS, 2010)
<http://www.activecitizensfe.org.uk/prods/resources.html>