

WJEC Eduqas GCE AS in  
**LAW**

Component 1 Section B  
Criminal Process - role of lay  
magistrates  
Suggested Activities



## Component 1 Section B

**EXAM LEVEL: AS and A LEVEL**

**AREA OF STUDY: Criminal Process - role of lay magistrates**

### Key Points:

- Learners should be able to explain the role of magistrates within the criminal justice system.
- Learners should be able to explain the selection, appointment & removal of magistrates.
- Learners should be able to discuss the social, racial and gender composition of the magistracy.
- Learners should be able to evaluate the arguments for and against lay magistrates.
- Learners should be able to discuss reforms to the magistracy.

### Provides an opportunity to develop the following skills:

- Analysis of data by identifying the key issues and applying the law in order to form a legal argument.
- Analysis, application and evaluating the legal rules and principles of public and private areas of law.
- Identification and breaking down into constituent parts the relevant legal rules and principles for each area of law.
- Evaluation of the law in order to reach a reasoned conclusion.
- Construction of concise and logical legal arguments which are substantiated by legal authority, using appropriate legal terminology.

## Suggested Activities:

1. In 1998, the Lord Chancellor set out six key qualities that a Magistrate should possess. In pairs, what do you think they are? Facilitate class discussion.
2. Group activity - As of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, there are 17,552 lay magistrates in England and Wales. In 2012, there were around 25,000 lay magistrates. The steady decline in the overall numbers has been put down to a number of factors, what do you think are the reasons for the decline in numbers? Suggested answers could include: - magistrates no longer hear cases on licensing and anti-social behaviour, crime is falling generally' many crimes are being dealt with using out of court disposals.
3. Diversity statistics currently show the following:

- <b>Gender:</b>	Female: 53%	Male: 47%
- <b>Age:</b>	Under 30: 1%	Over 50: 80% (the average age is 57, due to the minimum time commitment magistrates have to give)
- <b>Ethnicity</b>	White: 89%	BAME: 11%

(Source: [www.judiciary.gov.uk](http://www.judiciary.gov.uk) 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016)

There have been some moves to improve the diversity of the magistracy, in pairs discuss how this could be achieved.