

**MODERN STUDIES**  
**Advanced Higher**

**Fourth edition – published June 2002**

**NOTE OF CHANGES TO ARRANGEMENTS  
FOURTH EDITION PUBLISHED JUNE 2002**

**COURSE TITLE:** Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

**COURSE NUMBER:** C064 13

**National Course Specification**

Course Assessment:

A flat penalty of 10% of the available marks on over-long dissertations.

**National Unit Specification:**

Unit D348 13 (Practical Research): Evidence requirements are reduced.

## National Course Specification

### MODERN STUDIES (ADVANCED HIGHER)

**COURSE NUMBER** C064 13

#### COURSE STRUCTURE

The course comprises two mandatory units, one of 80 hours and one of 40 hours.

|                |                                                |                             |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>D347 13</i> | <i>Political and Social Issues (AH)</i>        | <i>2 credits (80 hours)</i> |
| <i>D348 13</i> | <i>Modern Studies: Practical Research (AH)</i> | <i>1 credit (40 hours)</i>  |

Within the Political and Social Issues unit candidates must choose one of three study themes. The study themes available are:

|                      |                                                  |                             |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Study theme 1</i> | <i>Comparative Politics and Research Methods</i> | <i>2 credits (80 hours)</i> |
| <i>Study theme 2</i> | <i>Law and Order and Research Methods</i>        | <i>2 credits (80 hours)</i> |
| <i>Study theme 3</i> | <i>The European Union and Research Methods</i>   | <i>2 credits (80 hours)</i> |

In common with all courses, this course includes 40 hours over and above the 120 hours for the component units. This is for induction, extending the range of learning and teaching approaches, support, consolidation, integration of learning and preparation for external assessment. This time is an important element of the course and advice on its use is included in the course details. In particular, some of this 40 hours' flexible time should be used by the candidate to present their research findings as a dissertation for the Modern Studies: Practical Research unit course assessment.

#### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the course is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained a course or component unit(s) at Higher in Modern Studies, or a course or component unit(s) at Higher or Advanced Higher in another social subject.

---

#### Administrative Information

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Publication date:</b> | June 2002                         |
| <b>Source:</b>           | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| <b>Version:</b>          | 04                                |

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2002

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this course specification (including unit specifications) can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority for £7.50. **Note:** Unit specifications can be purchased individually for £2.50 (minimum order £5).

## **National Course Specification: general information (cont)**

**COURSE**            Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

### **CORE SKILLS**

Core skills for this qualification remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

## **National Course Specification: course details**

**COURSE**            Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

### **RATIONALE**

Advanced Higher Modern Studies is concerned with developing the candidate's knowledge and understanding, evaluative and investigative skills in relation to Modern Studies topics. Candidates will have the opportunity to study further the political system in the United Kingdom and that of another democratic country (USA or Germany) or to undertake a study of issues concerning Law and Order, or to study the issue of power and representation in the European Union. Candidates undertaking Advanced Higher Modern Studies should develop an understanding of the importance of sound evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, gathered in a disciplined and ordered way, as the basis of their work. Whichever study theme they choose, they will also assess critically a variety of political and social science research methods, and they will carry out independent research to develop their investigative skills (planning, researching, analysing and presenting) with reference to one of the study themes in the Higher or Advanced Higher syllabus. Opportunities exist within Advanced Higher to use IT.

Important skills are developed and enhanced through the study of Advanced Higher Modern Studies. These skills include:

- organising and analysing complex data
- adopting a structured approach to research of a contemporary topic
- constructing and sustaining lines of argument which reflect the complexity of the issues they address
- presenting conclusions in a clear way, while reflecting the complexity of the topic under consideration
- critical analysis of political and social science research, including evaluating evidence and detecting and explaining a lack of objectivity
- participating in debate and discussion, through which attitudes of open-mindedness and tolerance are fostered

Modern Studies also contributes to personal and social development. In particular, the course addresses the area of rights and responsibilities. This includes the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic society and the moral and ethical responsibilities of individuals.

Candidates should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. They should make use of generic learning skills appropriate to other courses and the skills developed in Advanced Higher Modern Studies will make a contribution to learning in many other subject areas.

Advanced Higher Modern Studies makes a contribution to a well-balanced individual curriculum with appropriate emphasis given to the skills of communicating, independent learning, creative thinking and critical appreciation of the media.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE** Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

### COURSE CONTENT

The course is divided into two units: Political and Social Issues, and Modern Studies: Practical Research. All of the course content will be subject to sampling in the external assessment.

#### Unit 1: Political and Social Issues

Candidates study one of three study themes: **either** Comparative Politics and Research Methods, **or** Law and Order and Research Methods **or** The European Union and Research Methods.

##### *Study theme 1: Comparative Politics and Research Methods*

This study theme will be based on a study of at least **two** from the following four contexts, with reference to the UK (including, where appropriate, Scotland) and **either** the USA **or** Germany:

##### *Context A: Functions of Political Parties*

- a. Understand the nature, role, organisation, ideologies and electoral success of the main political parties within the political systems.
- b. Analyse the role of and the advantages/disadvantages of two-party and multi-party systems.
- c. Understand the importance of sectional interests within the systems.

##### *Context B: Functions of Elections*

- a. Understand how the electoral systems function and their advantages and disadvantages.
- b. Explain how the electoral systems interact with political parties in forming governments.
- c. Analyse the major influences on electoral behaviour - main theories and trends in recent elections.

##### *Context C: Decision-making in Central Government*

- a. Understand the role of the main institutions within the structure of central government and the process of decision-making.
- b. Analyse the main influences on decision-making in central government including links with pressure groups, the media and public opinion.
- c. Examine key issues in decision-making and demands for change, such as the need for a written constitution, demands for change to political structures and the role of a Bill of Rights for the individual.

##### *Context D: Central and Devolved/State Government*

- a. Understand the structures of central and devolved/state governments in the UK and **either** the USA **or** Germany.
- b. Analyse the main influences on policy-making and its implementation in devolved governments in the UK and state governments in **either** the USA **or** Germany.
- c. Examine the differences in the relationships between the central and devolved governments in the UK and the federal state governments in **either** the USA **or** Germany.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

In addition, candidates should examine case studies from within their chosen contexts, and/or wider political studies, to illustrate political and social science research methods. The content listed below indicates the range of research methods which can be studied:

- methods of observation; participant and non-participant observation
- in-depth interviewing methods
- surveys and questionnaires, including postal questionnaires and structured interviews
- use of official statistics; methods of presentation, interpretation
- methods of analysing media representation of information and opinions

Candidates should also be aware of the ethical issues concerning research, the principles involved in sampling and the importance of objectivity. They should also be aware of the relevance and application of statistical techniques, and be familiar with the terminology involved (ie mean/median/mode; reliability; correlating data/comparing trends and patterns; significance). Where appropriate, the relevance of new technology should be emphasised.

This unit is not intended to develop in-depth competence in applying quantitative techniques to political and/or social research. There are other units in other frameworks that would be more appropriate for this purpose.

Examples of case studies through which research methods could be studied include:

- political opinion polls
- studies into the correlation between voting behaviour and various factors such as age, gender, social class, geographical location
- influence of the media on political behaviour
- analysis of media for evidence of bias

#### ***Study theme 2: Law and Order and Research Methods***

This study theme will be based on a study of at least **two** from the following four contexts.

##### *Context A: Theories of Law and Order*

- Understand the nature and role of laws and values underpinning laws.
- Analyse the nature and limits of individual rights in the UK.
- Explain the concept of responsibility and duty within the framework of law and order.

##### *Context B: Crime and Public Disorder in the UK*

- Understand the causes of different types of crime.
- Explain the relationship between crime rates and factors such as location, social class, poverty, unemployment.
- Analyse the social and economic effects of crime on individuals and groups.

##### *Context C: Responses to Crime and Public Disorder in the UK*

- Understand the role of the police, specific approaches to policing and the justice system in dealing with crime.
- Analyse the response of government to issues concerning law and order.
- Examine the policies of the main political parties with regard to law and order issues.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

#### *Context D: The Penal System*

- a. Understand the main theories of deterrence, punishment and rehabilitation.
- b. Analyse the effectiveness of the penal system and its different forms of treatment and punishment of offenders, in the UK.
- c. Examine the arguments for and against reform of the UK penal system, making comparisons with the system in at least one other country.

In addition, candidates should examine case studies from within their chosen contexts, and/or other issues related to law and order, to illustrate political and social science research methods. The content listed below indicates the range of research methods which can be studied:

- methods of observation; participant and non-participant observation
- in-depth interviewing methods
- surveys and questionnaires, including postal questionnaires and structured interviews
- use of official statistics; methods of presentation, interpretation
- methods of analysing media representation of information and opinions

Candidates should also be aware of the ethical issues concerning research, the principles involved in sampling and the importance of objectivity. They should also be aware of the relevance and application of statistical techniques, and be familiar with the terminology involved (ie mean/median/mode; reliability; correlating data/comparing trends and patterns; significance). Where appropriate the relevance of new technology should be emphasised.

This unit is not intended to develop in-depth competence in applying quantitative techniques to political and/or social research. There are other units in other frameworks that would be more appropriate for this purpose.

Examples of case studies through which research methods could be studied include:

- reliability of official statistics
- correlation between criminal behaviour and various factors such as age, race, gender, social class, geographical location
- influence of the media on criminal behaviour
- patterns of sentencing
- effectiveness of sentencing; recidivism

#### ***Study theme 3: The European Union and Research Methods***

This study theme will be based on a study of at least **two** from the following four contexts, with reference to power and representation in the European Union:

#### *Context A: The United Kingdom and the European Decision-making Process*

With reference to the UK and the EU:

- a. Understand the policies of the major political parties in the UK towards the EU and the UK's involvement.
- b. Understand the attitudes of the governments of major EU members towards UK and UK membership of the EU.
- c. Analyse the causes and consequences of conflict between the UK and the EU.

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

#### *Context B: Representation in the European Parliament*

- a. Explain the processes involved in elections to the European Parliament in the UK and other member states.
- b. Understand the nature of political groupings within the functional structure and organisation of the European Parliament.
- c. Analyse the role of the European Parliament in the wider EU decision-making process.

#### *Context C: Decision-making in the European Union*

- a. Understand the functions and relative powers of the Council of Ministers and the Commission, and their relationship with the European Parliament.
- b. Analyse the importance of Inter-Governmental Conferences and Summit Meetings.
- c. Examine the nature of the main groupings of states within the EU and the purpose of these groupings.

#### *Context D: The European Union and the Wider World*

- a. Understand the arguments for and against expansion of the EU.
- b. Explain the relationship between the EU and other major economic blocs and the developing world.
- c. Analyse the function and organisation of the Western European Union.

In addition, candidates should examine case studies from within their chosen contexts, and/or wider political studies, to illustrate political and social science research methods. The content listed below indicates the range of research methods which can be studied:

- methods of observation; participant and non-participant observation
- in-depth interviewing methods
- surveys and questionnaires, including postal questionnaires and structured interviews
- use of official statistics: methods of presentation, interpretation
- methods of analysing media representation of information and opinions

Candidates should also be aware of the ethical issues concerning research, the principles involved in sampling and the importance of objectivity. They should also be aware of the relevance and application of statistical techniques, and be familiar with the terminology involved (ie mean/median/mode; reliability; correlating data/comparing trends and patterns; significance). Where appropriate, the relevance of new technology should be emphasised.

This unit is not intended to develop in-depth competence in applying quantitative techniques to political and/or social research. There are other units in other frameworks that would be more appropriate for this purpose.

Examples of case studies through which research methods could be studied include:

- political opinion polls
- studies into the correlation between voting behaviour and various factors such as age, gender, social class, geographical location
- influence of the media on political behaviour
- analysis of media for evidence of bias

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

**COURSE**            Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

### Unit 2: Modern Studies: Practical Research

This unit will allow the candidate to carry out independent research on the content of a unit studied at either Higher or Advanced Higher Modern Studies. The candidate will develop the investigative skills of planning, researching, analysing and presenting. This part of the course will be assessed through the production of a dissertation. Where appropriate the research should involve a primary source.

### ASSESSMENT

To gain the award of the course, the candidate must achieve all the component units of the course as well as the external assessment. External assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the course award.

When units are taken as components of a course, candidates will have the opportunity to demonstrate achievement beyond that required to attain each of the unit outcomes. This attainment may, where appropriate, be recorded and used to contribute towards course estimates, and to provide evidence for appeals. Additional details are provided, where appropriate, with the exemplar assessment materials. Further information on the key principles of assessment is provided in the paper *Assessment*, published by HSDU in May 1996.

The course assessment will require candidates to:

- demonstrate the ability to retain and integrate knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in the units
- apply critically the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in the units to less familiar and more complex contexts
- synthesise a large volume of complex information to produce a detailed and reasoned report on the conclusions of research findings

### DETAILS OF THE INSTRUMENTS FOR EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment of the course will comprise the following:

- an externally set and assessed question paper
- a dissertation

These two components will be weighted two-thirds: one-third, respectively.

The externally set question paper will be a single three-hour paper, assessing contexts included in the unit Political and Social Issues.

Candidates will answer **either**:

- Section A - Comparative Politics and Research Methods **or**
- Section B - Law and Order and Research Methods **or**
- Section C - The European Union and Research Methods

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE                    Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

Each of the four contexts within the Comparative Politics, Law and Order and European Union study themes will have one question set. Each question will be worth 30 marks. Candidates will answer two questions from the study theme they have studied. The questions set will require analysis as well as knowledge and understanding in the answers. Candidates will be expected to make reference to relevant examples to substantiate their analysis.

In addition, candidates will be required to answer two questions on research methods. Separate questions will be set for Comparative Politics, Law and Order and the European Union. Within each study theme there will be no choice of questions. The first question, worth a total of 15 marks, will focus on the limitations of political or social research methods through a series of short and/or extended responses. The second question, worth a total of 15 marks, will require the critical review of a given social or political research source (graph/text/statistics/questionnaire). A series of short and/or extended response items will elicit the candidate's understanding of the research and presentation methods illustrated, their advantages/disadvantages and the implications for drawing valid, reliable conclusions from the research.

There will be a total of 90 marks available for the whole question paper.

The dissertation will be assessed in terms of the validity and critical appraisal of its aims, methodology, evidence and conclusions. The dissertation should be between 4,000 and 5,000 words in length, excluding footnotes and bibliography. A flat penalty of 10% of the marks available will be deducted once the stated word limit has been exceeded. Some of the 40 hours additional time in the Advanced Higher course should be available for the preparation of the final presentation in dissertation form.

## GRADE DESCRIPTIONS

**For a grade C**, the candidate will be able to:

- explain political/social issues in a way that is:
  - relevant
  - accurate
  - detailed
  - relevant reference to comparisons/different perspectives
- analyse political/social issues in a way that is:
  - sustained
  - balanced
  - effective use of relevant exemplification
- describe research methods:
  - clearly
  - accurately

## National Course Specification: course details (cont)

### COURSE            Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

- evaluate research methods:
  - accurately
- plan and research a dissertation that:
  - identifies appropriate aims and methods
  - gathers relevant information
- analyse the information/data:
  - accurately
- draw developed conclusions that are:
  - valid
  - relevant
  - supported by evidence

**For a grade A**, the candidate will be able to:

- explain in depth political/social issues in a way that is:
  - relevant
  - accurate
  - detailed
  - makes detailed and relevant reference to comparisons/different perspectives
- analyse in depth political/social issues in a way that is:
  - sustained
  - balanced
  - effective in its use of relevant exemplification
- describe in depth research methods:
  - clearly
  - accurately
- evaluate in depth research methods:
  - accurately
- plan and research in depth a dissertation that:
  - identifies appropriate aims and methods
  - gathers relevant and accurate information

## **National Course Specification: course details (cont)**

### **COURSE**                    Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

- analyse in depth the information/data:
  - accurately
- draw developed conclusions that are:
  - valid
  - relevant
  - supported by evidence
  - detailed

### **APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND TEACHING**

Learning throughout the Advanced Higher course involves the study of contemporary sources including the mass media and government statistics. In addition, there is the requirement at Advanced Higher to develop the candidate's understanding of research methods and the ability to analyse critically examples of research. The candidate will then be able to apply these skills in their individual research task.

It is expected that throughout the Advanced Higher course the candidate will use sources from the mass media such as documentary/current affairs TV and radio programmes. The candidate should also have access to a wide range of views through the range of Scottish and British quality newspapers, as well as articles and cartoons from journals and news magazines. They should also use a wide range of statistical data derived from government departments, surveys and, where relevant, from international organisations, their associated agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and pressure groups.

Learning and teaching approaches at Advanced Higher Modern Studies rely heavily on these current sources for individualised work. There should still be opportunities for groupwork, discussion and debate, and the detailed examination of case studies and examples in written work based on knowledge and understanding, evaluation, analysis and investigative skills. Candidates should also be encouraged to reflect upon and share their experiences in the Higher course and their individual work at Advanced Higher with one another.

While the usual sources of information may form the basis for the knowledge and understanding of the political and social content at Advanced Higher, it is anticipated that developing the expertise of candidates on research methods will require additional sources. In order to assess the validity and reliability of research methods, candidates will require knowledge and understanding of the research methods that are widely used in political and social science research and their advantages and disadvantages in particular research situations. An approach to the methodology of social and/or political research is included in many advanced textbooks.

In the Modern Studies: Practical Research unit the candidate will draw on a range of different sources and methodologies used in Modern Studies. Candidates will be expected to apply the critical skills developed elsewhere in the Advanced Higher course to assess the reliability and validity of their own research methods and those of the other sources used in the research process for this unit.

## **National Course Specification: course details (cont)**

**COURSE**            Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This course specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## National Unit Specification: general information

|               |                                               |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>UNIT</b>   | Political and Social Issues (Advanced Higher) |
| <b>NUMBER</b> | D347 13                                       |
| <b>COURSE</b> | Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)              |

### SUMMARY

This unit requires candidates to analyse issues using relevant data and a variety of perspectives. This unit is also concerned with developing the candidate's research skills through the critical evaluation of social science research methods. The unit will help the candidate to assess the validity of research findings through the context of political or social issues. This more theoretical view of the research process, in the context of Modern Studies topics, will help to enhance the candidate's own critical thinking and investigative skills.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Explain an issue from each of the two chosen contexts.
- 2 Analyse an issue from each of the two chosen contexts.
- 3 Evaluate the methods used and conclusions drawn in a piece of research.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained a course or component unit(s) at Higher in Modern Studies, or a course or component unit(s) at Higher or Advanced Higher in another social subject.

---

#### Administrative Information

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Superclass:</b>       | FB                                |
| <b>Publication date:</b> | March 2001                        |
| <b>Source:</b>           | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| <b>Version:</b>          | 03                                |

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2001

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each unit specification is £2.50 (minimum order £5).

## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT** Political and Social Issues (Advanced Higher)

### **CREDIT VALUE**

2 credits at Advanced Higher.

### **CORE SKILLS**

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

|                                            |                     |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Complete core skills for the unit</b>   | None                |
| <b>Core skills components for the unit</b> | Critical Thinking H |

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT**                      Political and Social Issues (Advanced Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

#### **NOTE ON RANGE FOR THE UNIT**

Choose one study theme from:

- Comparative Politics and Research Methods
- Law and Order and Research Methods
- The European Union and Research Methods

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Explain an issue from each of the two chosen contexts.

##### **Performance criteria**

- (a) The explanation of the issue is relevant, accurate and detailed.
- (b) The explanation makes relevant reference to comparisons/different perspectives.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Analyse an issue from each of the two chosen contexts.

##### **Performance criteria**

- (a) The analysis of the issue is made in a sustained and balanced way, making effective use of relevant exemplification.
- (b) A relevant and developed conclusion is reached on the issue.

##### **Evidence requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2**

Evidence should relate to one of the three study themes.

To demonstrate satisfactory attainment in these outcomes, the candidate should produce an extended response to a structured question testing the ability to explain and analyse issues. Two extended responses are required, each relating to a different context from within the study theme.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **UNIT**                      Political and Social Issues (Advanced Higher)

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Evaluate the methods used and conclusions drawn in a piece of research.

##### **Performance criteria**

- (a) The description of the methods used is clear and accurate.
- (b) The appropriateness, validity and reliability of the methods and conclusions are accurately assessed.

##### **Evidence requirements**

The appropriateness and validity of research methods will be assessed through a series of restricted response questions relating to at least two different research methods.

The specified research methods are:

- methods of observation: participant and non-participant observation
- in-depth interviewing methods
- surveys and questionnaires
- use of official statistics
- methods of analysing media representation of information and opinions

Additionally, candidates will critically appraise at least two different examples of research chosen from list below:

- written text (quality news magazine/journal; article from quality newspaper; extract from sociological journal or book)
- documentary programme on radio, television or video
- detailed statistical tables from government sources (eg Social Trends)
- detailed graphs and diagrams
- results of questionnaire, survey or interview schedule

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT Political and Social Issues (Advanced Higher)**

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

The content and context for this unit are fully described in the course details documentation for Advanced Higher Modern Studies.

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

This unit is not intended to include a detailed study of research methods. The part of the unit dealing with research has the following aims:

- to develop skills of critical evaluation, looking at examples of research and data from within Modern Studies contexts
- to develop research skills which would support the candidate in undertaking the Modern Studies: Practical Research unit within Advanced Higher Modern Studies
- to develop an awareness of the ethical issues concerning research, and the problems of interpreting data and information gathered

It is hoped that, in addition to these three aims, candidates will also acquire skills that will be of value to them in higher and further education, particularly for courses in social studies and humanities.

The application of statistical and quantitative methods should not play a large part in this unit, although it is anticipated that candidates will have an awareness of the problems of interpreting such methods. Modern Studies candidates will concentrate on the qualitative evaluation of data and basic skills of presentation. There are other units in other frameworks which would allow the development of greater competence in and awareness of quantitative techniques.

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

Candidates are expected to produce extended responses to single questions which require explanation and analysis. Research Methods are assessed through a series of restricted response questions.

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).

## National Unit Specification: general information

|               |                                                      |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>UNIT</b>   | Modern Studies: Practical Research (Advanced Higher) |
| <b>NUMBER</b> | D348 13                                              |
| <b>COURSE</b> | Modern Studies (Advanced Higher)                     |

### SUMMARY

This unit will allow the candidate to carry out independent research based on a unit from either Higher or Advanced Higher in Modern Studies. The candidate will develop further the investigative skills of planning, research, analysis and presenting evidence that form an integral part of Modern Studies courses.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Plan and research a Modern Studies investigation.
- 2 Evaluate the learning gained through the process of investigating and support this with evidence.

### RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained a course or component unit(s) at Higher in Modern Studies, or a course or component unit(s) at Higher or Advanced Higher in another social subject.

### CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

---

### Administrative Information

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Superclass:</b>       | FB                                |
| <b>Publication date:</b> | June 2002                         |
| <b>Source:</b>           | Scottish Qualifications Authority |
| <b>Version:</b>          | 04                                |

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2002

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this unit specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The cost for each unit specification is £2.50 (minimum order £5).

## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT**                      Modern Studies: Practical Research (Advanced Higher)

### **CORE SKILLS**

Core skills for this qualification remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in the *Catalogue of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 2001).

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT**                      Modern Studies: Practical Research (Advanced Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

#### **NOTE ON RANGE FOR THE UNIT**

The context for the investigation must be one of the study themes from the Higher or Advanced Higher Modern Studies courses.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Plan and research a Modern Studies investigation.

##### **Performance criteria**

- (a) The plan identifies appropriate aims and methods.
- (b) The information gathered is relevant to the investigation

##### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate completes a checklist, which the teacher/lecturer confirms by observation and discussion.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Evaluate the learning gained through the process of investigating and support this with evidence.

##### **Performance criteria**

- (a) The data is analysed accurately and the conclusion(s) drawn are valid, relevant and supported with evidence in terms of the aims of the investigation.
- (b) The candidate reviews the process of investigating.

##### **Evidence requirements**

The candidate must demonstrate that they understand the conclusions they have reached through the investigating process. The candidate reviews the process of investigating using relevant criteria. The teacher/lecturer confirms the review and checklist by observation and discussion.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes**

### **UNIT**                      Modern Studies: Practical Research (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

#### **GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT**

The candidate can choose any study theme from the Higher or Advanced Higher courses as the basis for investigation. It is anticipated that some may elect to base their investigation within the study theme chosen from the Political and Social Issues unit of the Advanced Higher course, although this is not a mandatory requirement.

#### **GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT**

Candidates may require considerable teacher/lecturer guidance when choosing the area of investigation. While encouraging independent learning and allowing the candidate to take responsibility for their own work, it is expected that the teacher/lecturer will monitor the work of each candidate closely.

Skills acquired in the Political and Social Issues unit will prove useful to candidates undertaking this unit.

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

This unit requires the candidate to complete an investigation. The investigation will lead to the production of a dissertation which is not itself assessed in the unit assessment, but forms part of the external course assessment. The unit assessment focuses on the processes involved in planning, undertaking and reviewing of work which leads to the dissertation. However, Outcome 2 requires that the candidate uses evidence from the dissertation to support their review of the outcomes of the process.

Evidence for this unit will be collated in the form of teacher/lecturer checklist(s), which will be based on interview(s).

#### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment Arrangements* (SQA, 2001).