Comparative document

(Version 1.0 April 2012 compared with Version 1.1 April 2014)

Higher Modern Studies Course Assessment Specification (C749 76)

The purpose of this document is to give a quick, visual guide to any amendments or clarifications made during the revision process.

Valid from August 2014

This edition: April ~~2012~~2014, version 1.~~0~~1

This specification 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 Assessment Specification can be downloaded from SQA's website: **www.sqa.org.uk**.

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Assessment Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

© Scottish Qualifications Authority ~~2012~~2014

Course outline

Course title:	Higher Modern Studies
SCQF level:	6 (24 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	~~to be advised~~C749 76
Course assessment code:	~~to be advised~~X749 76

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

Course assessment structure

Component 1 — question paper	60 marks
Component 2 — assignment	30 marks
Total marks	**90 marks**

This Course includes six SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge, or application.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the Course
- challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This added value consists of:

- Drawing on, extending and applying the skills, knowledge and understanding the learner has acquired during the Course. This will be assessed by a question paper and an assignment. Over the Course assessment there will be broad parity between the assessment of skills and knowledge and understanding.
- Demonstrating breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding from across the Units of the Course in the question paper. This will sample knowledge and understanding from across all three Units of the Course and will require the application of skills.
- Demonstrating challenge and application related to an appropriate Modern Studies ~~topic or~~ issue in the assignment.

Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A learner's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

Grade description for C
For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Grade description for A
For the award of Grade A, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Credit
To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a grade D or better is achieved.

Structure and coverage of the Course assessment

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a question paper and an assignment.

Component 1 — question paper

The purpose of this question paper is to demonstrate application of skills and breadth of knowledge and understanding from across the three Units of the Course.

This question paper will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following higher-order cognitive skills and knowledge and understanding from the mandatory content of the Course:

- detecting and explaining the degree of objectivity using a range of sources of information
- drawing and supporting complex conclusions using a range of sources of information
- giving detailed explanations ~~and~~, analysis and evaluation of complex issues

The question paper will have 60 marks (66% of the total mark).

This question paper has three Sections.

Section 1, titled 'Democracy in Scotland and the United Kingdom', will have 20 marks. This Section will be made up of ~~limited/~~extended response questions requiring the learner to draw on the knowledge and understanding and apply the skills acquired during the Course. Questions will draw on the knowledge and understanding and skills described in the further mandatory information on Course coverage.

Section 2, titled 'Social Issues in the United Kingdom', will have 20 marks. This Section will be made up of ~~limited/~~extended response questions requiring the candidate to draw on the knowledge and understanding and apply the skills acquired during the Course. Questions will draw on the knowledge and understanding and skills described in the further mandatory information on Course coverage.

Section 3, titled 'International Issues', will have 20 marks. This Section will be made up of ~~limited/~~extended response questions requiring the candidate to draw on the knowledge and understanding and apply the skills acquired during the Course. Questions will draw on the knowledge and understanding and skills described in the further mandatory information on Course coverage.

Candidates will answer one question, out of 20 marks, assessing knowledge and understanding and higher-order skills of analysis **and** evaluation. This question may be set in any Section of the paper and candidates will have a choice of question.

Candidates will answer two questions, out of 12 marks each, assessing knowledge and understanding and higher-order skills of analysis **or** evaluation. These questions may be set in any Section of the paper and candidates will have a choice of question.

Candidates will answer two source-based information-handling skills questions, out of 8 marks each, which assess the skills of: detecting and explaining the degree of objectivity; and drawing and supporting complex conclusions. These questions may be set in any Section of the paper, and candidates will have no choice of question. These

questions will consist of between two and three sources of information at an appropriate level of detail and complexity for this SCQF level. Sources may be written, numerical, graphical or pictorial.

The question paper Component of the Course assessment will have a greater emphasis on the assessment of knowledge and understanding, than the assignment. The other marks will be awarded for the demonstration of skills.

Component 2 — assignment
The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate challenge and application by demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of a contemporary issue.

This assignment will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following higher-order cognitive skills, knowledge and understanding:

- identify a Modern Studies ~~topic or~~ issue about which there are alternative views
- research a Modern Studies ~~topic or~~ issue, using a range of sources of information
- ~~analyse and~~ synthesise and analyse information from a range of sources
- evaluate the usefulness and reliability of a range of sources of information
- reach a decision on the ~~topic or~~ issue studied
- show detailed knowledge and understanding of the ~~topic or~~ issue to support the decision reached
- show an awareness of alternatives to the decision
- communicate information using the conventions of a report

The assignment will have 30 marks (33% of the total mark).

The assignment Component of the Course assessment will have a greater emphasis on the assessment of skills than the question paper. The other marks will be awarded for the demonstration of knowledge and understanding.

Setting, conducting and marking of assessment

Question paper

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Learners will complete this question paper in 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Controlled assessment — assignment

This assignment is:

- set by centres within SQA guidelines
- conducted under a high level of supervision and control

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

Setting the assessment

Set by centres within SQA guidelines.

~~SQA will provide a brief for the generation of evidence to be assessed.~~ Learners will have an open choice of ~~topic or~~ issue to be researched.

Conducting the assessment

Conducted under a high level of supervision and control.

The production of evidence for assessment will be conducted:

- within 1 hour and 30 minutes
- with the use of specified resources
- in time to meet a submission date set by SQA
- independently by the learner
- when the learner is ready

Further mandatory information on Course coverage

~~Course assessment will involve sampling the~~ The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding~~.~~ for the Higher Modern Studies Course. Course assessment will involve sampling the knowledge and understanding.

Component 1: question paper

In the question paper, candidates will demonstrate skills of giving detailed explanations, analysis and evaluation of complex issues as well as the specific Modern Studies skills of:

- detecting and explaining the degree of objectivity using a range of sources of information
- drawing and supporting conclusions using a range of sources of information

Options exist in each ~~section~~Section to allow opportunities for personalisation and choice. The information on mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding below should not be seen as a recommended teaching order, nor as a guide to teaching and learning approaches. The question paper will sample from the skills, knowledge and understanding below but this should not be seen as a guide to the format of the ~~questions~~question paper.

Democracy in Scotland and the United Kingdom ~~Unit~~

Learners will study aspects of the democratic political system in the United Kingdom (UK) including the place of Scotland within this. ~~Throughout this Unit, relevant~~Relevant case studies should be used from either Scotland or the ~~United Kingdom~~UK or both Scotland and the ~~United Kingdom~~UK.

- The ~~United Kingdom~~UK constitutional arrangement, including the role of the Scottish Parliament and other devolved bodies, and the impact of UK membership of the European Union. Ongoing debates about the nature of the political system in the ~~United Kingdom~~UK.
- The study of representative democracy in Scotland ~~and/or the United Kingdom~~/UK.
- The impact of voting systems and a range of factors which affect voting behaviour in Scotland ~~and/or the United Kingdom~~/UK.
- The ways in which citizens are informed about, participate in, and influence the political process in Scotland ~~and/or the United Kingdom~~/UK.

Social Issues in the United Kingdom ~~Unit~~

Learners have a choice of social issue: contexts for study will focus on **either** social inequality **or** crime and the law. In the social inequality context, learners will focus on a contemporary aspect of social inequality in the UK and the impact on a group in society. In the crime and the law context, learners will focus on relevant and contemporary aspects of crime, criminology and the law. In both Social Issues contexts appropriate references should be made to Scotland, the UK or both Scotland and the UK.

♦ Social inequality in the United Kingdom: — the nature of social inequality in the United Kingdom — theories and causes of inequality — the impact of inequality on specific groups in society	♦ Crime and the law in the United Kingdom: — the role of law in society — theories and causes of crime — the impact of crime on society — methods of tackling crime and their effectiveness

— attempts to tackle inequalities and their effectiveness	

International Issues

Learners have a choice of international issue: contexts for study will focus on **either** a political and socio-economic study of a major world power **or** the study of a significant contemporary world issue. World powers may be chosen from members of the G20 group of countries, including the European Union but excluding the United Kingdom. The study of a world issue will focus on ~~a~~any significant recent issue or conflict which extends beyond the boundaries of any single country and has ~~a~~an impact which may be regional or global ~~impact~~.

♦ A political and socio-economic study of a major world power: — political system and processes — recent socio-economic issues — evaluation of the effectiveness of the government in tackling a socio-economic issue — the role of the world power in international relations	♦ A study of a significant world issue: — causes of the issue — consequences of the issue — role of international organisations in attempts to resolve the issue — effectiveness of international organisations in their attempts to resolve the international issue

~~**Modern Studies skills**~~

~~♦ Detecting and explaining the degree of objectivity using a range of sources of information.~~

~~♦ Drawing and supporting complex conclusions using a range of sources of information.~~

Component 2: assignment

Candidates have an open choice of Modern Studies issue. Their choice is not constrained by the mandatory content of Component 1: question paper. The specific Modern Studies skill assessed in this Component is:

♦ Making decisions with justification about ~~complex~~ issues using a range of sources of information.

Administrative information

Published: April ~~2012~~2014 (version 1.~~0~~1)

History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
C74976	1.1	Page 3 and throughout document: Removed 'topic and' in relation to assignment. Pages 5/6: Added further detail of format of question paper. Pages 8/9: Clarification of contexts in information on Course coverage; Clarification of distinction between question paper and assignment.	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2014

This specification 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 Assessment Specification can be downloaded from SQA's website at **www.sqa.org.uk**.

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website (**www.sqa.org.uk**) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Assessment Specification.

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2014