

# Scottish Qualifications Authority

## History at Higher level

### Consultation questionnaire (summer 2007)

206 responses to the consultation questionnaire were received. These responses represented the views of principal teachers/heads of faculty and/or subject departments (approximately 50% responses), classroom teachers (approximately 40% responses), other interested parties such as senior managers, Support for Learning teachers, local authority subject groups, and the Scottish Association of Teachers of History (SATH).

#### 1. **Scottish History should be assessed in paper 2 along the lines of the current Special Topics.**

There is strong support both for an increased role for Scottish History at Higher History level, **and** for the favoured model that emerged from the focus group, ie Scottish History to be assessed in paper 2 along the lines of the current Special Topics. This support is reflected both in the responses from principal teachers/department or faculty heads, and from History teachers, in general.

Strongly agree (20%); agree (42%)	Total who agree	62%
Strongly disagree (13%); disagree (21%)	Total who disagree	34%
No choice (4%)	No choice	4%

Principal teachers/heads of department or faculty: 65 in favour (26 strongly agree; 39 agree); History teachers: 44 in favour (13 strongly agree; 31 agree).

#### *Representative comments in favour of the proposals*

- ◆ Only way to ensure specifically Scottish History is taught at Higher is to make it compulsory
- ◆ Logical move and with a source-based focus could prove to be highly stimulating Unit for pupils with appropriate sources and field work
- ◆ Appears to be most logical way to ensure that everyone does at least one third of Higher as Scottish
- ◆ Allows retention of existing Scottish-based topics plus additional Units
- ◆ Paper 2 would provide an excellent forum for a compulsory Scottish element (if we have to have one)
- ◆ Essential since we study too much German History currently
- ◆ Higher History provides an excellent opportunity to further develop confident individuals in line with the Curriculum for Excellence project
- ◆ Fully support compulsory element for Scottish History and the greater proportion of marks to be allocated to Scottish History
- ◆ Opportunity to introduce a much needed element of 'genuine' Scottish History
- ◆ It is important that Scottish pupils know something, in depth, of their own history at senior level

- ◆ (Will) reflect the work on Scottish History which has been growing over the past 25-30 years — source-based Scottish topics would allow us to mine a wealth of current research and fascinating historiography in place of some topics that are now better suited to being examined by discursive essays, eg Appeasement
- ◆ Current time limits restricts teaching ‘Scottish topics’ for paper 1 and are often omitted completely
- ◆ Would ensure that all centres studied at least one Unit of Scottish History which in turn would lead to more resources being provided. Currently only small amount of Scottish History resources available due to limited market for text books, etc
- ◆ Many modern Scottish topics do not provide adequate variety of essay questions
- ◆ Would free up paper 1 for more non-British History

*Representative comments against the proposals*

- ◆ Scottish History should be compulsory but not in paper 2
- ◆ Would welcome more Scottish History within Higher but wary of major changes that will unravel the whole Higher
- ◆ It is covered adequately in the exam as it is
- ◆ There is already an option for Scottish History in paper 1; there is the opportunity to teach Scottish History in the present Higher paper 2 topics
- ◆ There is still a job to be done to convince the ‘silent majority’ that the Scottish History proposal is desirable. This will be the real issue, not whether it is assessed by essays or source-based questions
- ◆ (Would) prefer to extend the Scottish element in paper 1, Scottish and British, where a Scottish element already exists, eg by including Immigrants and Exiles
- ◆ Current topics work well, particularly Appeasement
- ◆ Scottish History should be encouraged as an option and not be mandatory
- ◆ Scottish History is already studied lower down the school. At Higher a wider/more international outlook would be better preparation for FE study
- ◆ Concerned about possible charge of parochialism if made mandatory — candidates could end up doing 60% Scottish — a swing too far
- ◆ Teachers are already aware of cultural heritage and its importance and make reference to it regularly (eg Liberal Reforms, Suffragettes, Democracy)
- ◆ The fact that Scottish topics are not at present popular at Higher suggests that neither pupils nor teachers are very keen to choose them
- ◆ Would create a disproportionate focus on the study of a country which has not been independent since 1707
- ◆ Fear too much Scottish History would narrow the curriculum rather than broaden it
- ◆ As a nation we have to work as part of Britain, Europe and the world as a whole and we learn from the past. Therefore we should be wary of being too ‘insular’
- ◆ Could we be accused of altering the syllabus to reflect the ‘flavour of the month’?

- ◆ Driven by political rather than academic agenda. The views of candidates should be taken into account
- ◆ Concern that there is a pro-Scottish Nationalist agenda being pursued here. Also, academics making recommendations for curricular change, eg Tom Devine do not face the challenge of trying to enthuse candidates about topics they find dull and overly political, eg 1707. If Scottish History is so important make it a compulsory Unit in S.1/ S.2 when it is studied by all

**2. If you think Scottish History should be assessed in another way, please give details below.**

Overall, those who support an increased role for Scottish History at Higher History level but do not favour the model outlined in question 1 either support making Scottish History a compulsory element of paper 1, or favour increasing the emphasis on Scottish History in the Later Modern option, but this second group tends to be against making the study of Scottish History compulsory. There were several responses suggesting that we make Scottish and/or British History topics compulsory for the Extended Essay. Those who are opposed in principle to increasing the role of Scottish History at Higher level tend to favour the status quo. Also, almost everyone who opposes the proposals focuses on the implications of the proposals for the Later Modern syllabus alone.

*Representative comments in response to question 2*

- ◆ Consider giving more choice to include Scottish History in paper 1 and paper 2 — perhaps offering different topics may make it more appealing
- ◆ Some input of specific Scottish History would be valuable in Changing Britain 1850-1979, eg Scottish Women’s Movement, Scottish Politics
- ◆ Later Modern (Option C) should have a stronger Scottish element than at present
- ◆ Amend paper 1 to make the British History section more Scottish in nature — emphasise Scottish History within British context
- ◆ Scottish and British should simply become Scottish
- ◆ Should appear as an option to be assessed in paper 1 but with no element of compulsion
- ◆ Compulsory essay in paper 1 covering a range of more stimulating and accessible Scottish History topics
- ◆ Would prefer Scottish History to be assessed in essay form. The use of source material for certain topics would increase the difficulty of paper 2
- ◆ Retain Extended Essay but require it to be a Scottish topic
- ◆ Focus Extended Essay on British History — perhaps removing it from paper 1 and paper 2
- ◆ Optional essay in paper 1 is perfectly adequate as is

**3. If paper 2 comprises Scottish History, some existing Special Topics could remain, while other topics may transfer to paper 1. Some new topics may have to be added. The following Scottish topics have been suggested. Centres would be able to study any one of these topics.**

There is very strong support for the following topics being assessed in paper 2:

The Wars of Independence 1286-1329 (for 73; against 26)  
Scotland, Migration and the Empire (for 66; against 11)  
Scotland at War and Peace 1914-1945 (for 66; against 26)

There is strong support for the following topic being assessed in paper 2:

Scotland 1689-1715 (for 43; against 15)

There is support from the majority of those who responded for the following topics being assessed in paper 2:

The Making of the Kingdom 1066-1153 (for 37; against 26)  
Scotland in the Age of the Reformation (for 34; against 16)  
The Changing Identity of Scotland 1945-2000 (for 46; against 37)

*Issues raised that relate to these topics*

The Making of the Kingdom 1066-1153

Issues raised: availability of resources (15 responses); possible lack of teacher/candidate interest (7 responses); starting date could be moved away from 1066 for various reasons to 1000 AD or even earlier (7 responses).

The Wars of Independence 1286-1329

Issues: overlap with Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Advanced Higher (28 responses).

Scotland in the Age of the Reformation

Issues: possible lack of teacher/candidate interest (7 responses).

Scotland 1689-1715

Issues: possible lack of teacher/candidate interest (6 responses); dates could be adjusted to include more content on the Jacobites (9 responses).

Scotland, Migration and the Empire

Issues: overlap with Standard Grade, Intermediate 1 and Intermediate 2 (13 responses); not enough depth for Higher (2 responses).

Scotland at War and Peace 1914-1945

Issues: overlap with Standard Grade (7 responses); syllabus needs to be 'fleshed out' and/or possibly pruned, eg cut inter-war years and/or cut WW2 (14 responses); topic more relevant in a British context (5 responses).

The Changing Identity of Scotland 1945-2000

Issues: need to reduce content (10 responses); possible clash with Modern Studies (13 responses).

**4. If you have other suggestions for Scottish topics, please describe them below.**

There is some support for a Scottish topic covering social, economic and/or cultural developments in the period from 1750-1850 (17 responses).

There is limited support for one or two other topics: the making of the kingdom, from Caledonia to Scotland (2 responses); Scotland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (3 responses); Jacobites (2 responses); Scotland and the Slave Trade (2 responses)

**5. The following topics are currently Special Topics but under the proposal would move to paper 1 and be assessed by extended writing. Please indicate whether these areas should be omitted or amended (please give details).**

There is very strong support for these areas being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content:

Appeasement & the Road to War: move — 48; move & amend — 35; omit — 14.  
The Cold War: move — 52; move & amend — 19; omit — 8.

There is strong support for these areas being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content:

The Atlantic Slave Trade: move — 41; move & amend — 16; omit — 19.  
Ireland 1900-1923: move — 39; move & amend — 16; omit — 18.

There is support for this area being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content:

The American Revolution: move — 33; move & amend — 8; omit — 23.

On balance, there is support for this area being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to the Course content:

The Crusades: move — 36; move & amend — 7; omit — 35.

**Note:** The Norman Conquest will be dropped as indicated in a previous communication.

**6. The following topics would relate to paper 1 under the proposal. Please indicate whether these areas should be omitted or amended (please give details).**

There is strong support for these areas being included, with or without amendment:

USA: include — 42; amend — 18; omit — 5.  
Russia: include — 37; amend — 14; omit — 8.

There is strong support for these areas being included but amended:

Britain 1850s-1979: include — 31; amend — 50; omit — 10.  
Germany: Nationalism: include — 30; amend — 40; omit — 13.

There is support for these areas being included but amended:

Medieval Society: include — 23; amend — 13; omit — 18.

Nation and King: include — 17; amend — 16; omit — 17.

The French Revolution: include — 18; amend — 15; omit — 21.

Italy: Nationalism: include — 24; amend — 4; omit — 26.

There is strong support for these areas being omitted — those who responded gave lack of numbers taking these Early Modern options as the reason for omitting these areas:

Crisis of Authority: include — 12; amend — 7; omit — 42.

The Age of Revolutions: include — 13; amend — 9; omit — 30.

Royal Authority in C17 and C18 Europe: include — 12; amend — 6; omit — 46.

**7. A world history topic comprising a study of a non-western culture for its own sake should be included in the Higher History syllabus.**

There is some support for the study of a non-western culture for its own sake in the Higher History syllabus, but most of those who responded were opposed to the idea for a number of reasons.

Strongly agree (6 responses); agree (32 responses)

Total who agree: 38 responses

Strongly disagree (17 responses); disagree (36 responses)

Total who disagree: 53 responses

Only the study of China received any significant support as a possible topic.

Possible topic(s):

China (21 responses); likelihood that you would teach this topic: yes — 6 responses; possibly — 8 responses.

India (4 responses); likelihood that you would teach this topic: possibly — 4 responses.

Arab-Israeli Conflict (3 responses); likelihood that you would teach it: possibly — 3 responses.

**8. If Unit 1 remains as British History, it should also include topics, amended as necessary, that deal with relations between Britain and other parts of Europe or the world**

ie:

*Aspects of Medieval Society and Nation and King*

*The Century of Revolutions*

*The Atlantic Slave Trade*

*The American Revolution*

*Britain 1850-1979*

*Appeasement and the Road to War*

*Ireland — A Divided Identity*

There is very strong support for Unit 1 remaining as British History and including topics that deal with relations between Britain and other parts of Europe and/or the world.

Strongly agree (32%); agree (46%)	Total who agree	78%
Strongly disagree (9%); disagree (13%)	Total who disagree	22%

**9. Please indicate your preference for the following configurations of paper 1 of the Higher examination.**

There is very strong support for candidates being asked to write 2 x 20 mark essays in paper 1.

2 x 20 mark essays	78%	1 x 20 mark essay + 2 x 10 mark essays	22%
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**10. The structure of paper 2 should be amended to make it articulate more closely with other levels.**

There is strong support for the structure of paper 2 being amended to make it articulate more closely with other levels.

Strongly agree (22%); agree (41%):	Total who agree	63%
Strongly disagree (11%); disagree (27%)	Total who disagree	37%

**11. The time allocation of paper 2 should be reduced to give more time to paper 1.**

There is some support for reducing the time allocation of paper 2 to give more time to paper 1, but a majority of those who responded wanted the time allocation for paper 2 either to remain the same, or time to be found to increase the time allocation for paper 1 without reducing the time allocation for paper 2.

Strongly agree (18%); agree (25%)	Total who agree	43%
Strongly disagree (15%); disagree (42%)	Total who disagree	57%

**12. The Extended Essay should be retained at Higher.**

There is very strong support for the Extended Essay being retained at Higher.

Strongly agree (55%); agree (32%):	Total who agree	87%
Strongly disagree (5%); disagree (8%):	Total who disagree	13%

## Summary

1. There is strong support both for an increased role for Scottish History at Higher History level **and** for the favoured model that emerged from the focus group, ie Scottish History to be assessed in paper 2 along the lines of the current Special Topics.
2. There is very strong support for the following topics being assessed in paper 2: The Wars of Independence 1286-1329, Scotland, Migration and the Empire and Scotland at War and Peace 1914-1945; there is strong support for the following

topic being assessed in paper 2: Scotland 1689-1715; the majority of those who responded supported the following topics being assessed in paper 2: The Making of the Kingdom 1066-1153; Scotland in the Age of the Reformation and The Changing Identity of Scotland 1945-2000

3. There is some support for a Scottish topic covering social, economic and/or cultural developments in the period from 1750-1850.
4. There is very strong support for these areas being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content: Appeasement & the Road to War and The Cold War; there is strong support for these areas being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content: The Atlantic Slave Trade and Ireland 1900-1923; there is support for this area being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content: The American Revolution; on balance, there is support for this area being moved to paper 1, with some amendments to Course content: The Crusades.
5. There is strong support for these areas being included in a revised paper 1, with or without amendment: USA and Russia; there is strong support for these areas being included in paper 1 but amended: Britain 1850s-1979 and Germany: Nationalism; there is support for these areas being included but amended: Medieval Society, Nation and King, The French Revolution and Italy: Nationalism.
6. There is some support for the study of a non-western culture for its own sake in the Higher History syllabus, but most of those who responded were opposed to the idea.
7. There is very strong support for Unit 1 remaining as British History and including topics that deal with relations between Britain and other parts of Europe and/or the world.
8. There is very strong support for candidates being asked to write 2 x 20 mark essays in paper 1.
9. There is strong support for the structure of paper 2 being amended to make it articulate more closely with other levels.
10. A majority of those who responded wanted the time allocation for paper 2 either to remain the same, or time to be found to increase the time allocation for paper 1 without reducing the time allocation for paper 2.
11. There is very strong support for the Extended Essay being retained at Higher.