

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT International Issues (Higher)

CODE DV54 12

COURSE Modern Studies (Higher)

SUMMARY

This Unit seeks to develop the candidate's ability to relate the chosen international issue to a wider understanding of world affairs and analyse international issues using relevant data and a variety of perspectives, and to develop the candidate's understanding of the processes of conflict, co-operation and development through the study of contemporary international issues.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a key international issue from the chosen Study Theme.
- 2 Analyse a key international issue from the chosen Study Theme.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry to the Course is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Standard Grade Modern Studies or another social subject at Grade 1, 2 (or possibly 3)
- ◆ an Intermediate 2 Course or Unit(s) in Modern Studies
- ◆ a Course or Units at Intermediate 2 in another social subject

Administrative Information

Superclass: FB

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Higher (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6*).

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

CORE SKILLS

Achievement of this Unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete Core Skill	None
Core Skills component	Critical Thinking at SCQF level 6

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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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.

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a key international issue from the chosen Study Theme.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The issue is described accurately.
- (b) The description makes reference to factors/institutions/examples that are relevant.

OUTCOME 2

Analyse a key international issue from the chosen Study Theme.

Performance Criteria

- (a) The analysis of the issue is made in a balanced way with relevant exemplification.
- (b) Conclusions reached are valid and appropriate.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT

The content for this Unit is specified in Appendix 1 — Statement of Standards.

The assessment evidence for this Unit need cover only one of the Study Themes.

To demonstrate satisfactory attainment in these Outcomes the candidate should answer one structured question assessing both knowledge and understanding (Outcome 1) and analysis (Outcome 2) during or near the end of the Unit. This will include written or equivalent evidence which satisfies both Outcomes for the chosen Study Theme. A maximum time of 35 minutes is allowed.

If reassessment is required, it should consist of a fresh assessment instrument. This may sample another area of the same Study Theme, or content from the second Study Theme taken in the Unit.

The assessment of the Outcomes should be based on a holistic approach. Achievement can be determined by a cut-off score. The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessment for this Unit, it should be of a comparable standard. It is recommended that such an instrument of assessment should be submitted to SQA for prior moderation.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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 THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

The content of this Unit is detailed under Course Content in the Course Details. Expanded descriptions of the Study Themes contained in this Unit are attached as an appendix to this Unit Specification.

GUIDANCE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

The following learning experiences will enrich this Unit: exposure to a wide range of resources, especially official statistics, newspapers, both on paper and electronically, political cartoons, as well as television and radio. Extracts from films can help the understanding of many international issues. International organisations such as the European Union, the United Nations and its associated agencies, and many non-governmental organisations produce and disseminate a variety of relevant information. Group work, discussions and debates can enhance the learning environment. Extended essay writing and report writing need to be developed from an early stage in the Unit. Reading both textbooks and appropriate background materials is encouraged. There is often a close relationship between political, social and economic issues, and these can be taught in an integrated manner.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

The evidence of attainment of both Outcomes for this Unit should be provided in the form of one structured answer for one Study Theme. The evidence can be gathered during or near the end of the Unit and must be completed under controlled conditions, ie without collaboration, the assistance of notes or teacher/lecturer advice. Supervision may be carried out by a teacher/lecturer, invigilator or other responsible person. A maximum time of 35 minutes in total is allowed for assessment of an item covering both Outcomes.

The marking scheme should reflect the standard embodied in the Performance Criteria. This will allow the evidence to be considered as a whole. The level of attainment required for successful completion of the Unit should represent satisfactory attainment of the Outcomes and, by inference, satisfactory coverage of all Performance Criteria.

Care should be taken to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for support and reassessment of candidates if required.

Where suitable tasks can be set which allow candidates to demonstrate competence beyond the minimum standard required, evidence gathered for Unit assessment may also be used for grade prediction and for appeals for the Course assessment. For details of the grade descriptions for Grade C and Grade A in the Course assessment, refer to the Modern Studies Higher Course Specification.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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CANDIDATES WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

This Unit Specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support 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 document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* (SQA, 2004).

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NB: This Appendix is within the statement of standards, ie the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

Study Theme 3A: The Republic of South Africa

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>The South African political system: the role and powers of the South African government at national, provincial and local levels.</p> <p>Political issues: participation and representation. Political parties and support from different groups. Political trends.</p> <p>Social and economic issues: the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities; demands for change; the effectiveness of government responses and the consequences among and within different racial groups.</p>	<p>Background: South Africa’s land, people, economy and ideology. (This area will not be examined specifically.)</p> <p>Relationship between President, National and Provincial assemblies and the Constitutional Court.</p> <p>Recent elections: turnout, outcomes and impact; changing political party support; relationships within and between parties.</p> <p>The role of the media and pressure groups.</p> <p>The Politics of Transformation; the conduct of political parties and the government.</p> <p>Social and economic issues: the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities and their consequences, government responses to the effectiveness of these responses in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ health; HIV/AIDS ◆ education ◆ housing ◆ crime and the law ◆ land distribution ◆ employment; Black economic empowerment ◆ economic development ◆ the creation of a Black elite and the widening gap between rich and poor South Africans ◆ problems of the Afrikaner community <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>

National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont) Appendix 1

UNIT International Issues (Higher)

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Study Theme 3B: The People’s Republic of China

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>The Chinese political system: the role and powers of the Chinese government at national, regional and local levels.</p> <p>Political issues: participation and representation. The role of the Chinese Communist Party and the extent of political opposition. Political trends.</p> <p>Social and economic issues: the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities; demands for change; the effectiveness of government responses and the consequences for different groups.</p>	<p>Background: China’s land, people, economy and ideology. (This area will not be examined specifically.)</p> <p>The structure of the Chinese government and Communist party at national, regional and local levels. The relationship between the CPC and the Chinese government and other political groups.</p> <p>Opportunities for political participation; democratisation.</p> <p>The extent of opposition to the CPC: dissidents, separatist and nationalist movements, middle and business classes, Hong Kong.</p> <p>Freedom of expression, political protest and the media.</p> <p>Progress towards a market economy: the decline of state ownership; the growth of private companies; foreign investment; agricultural reform; the impact on the environment; changing role in the world economy.</p> <p>Social and economic issues: the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities and their consequences, government responses, the effectiveness of these responses in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ urban/rural differences ◆ employment and unemployment ◆ housing and urban overcrowding ◆ health ◆ crime and the law ◆ education <p>Human rights: women, population control, law and order. Minorities.</p> <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>

UNIT International Issues (Higher)

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Study Theme 3C: The United States of America

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>The USA political system: the role and powers of the USA government at federal, state and local levels.</p> <p>Political issues: participation and representation; immigration. Political parties and support from different groups. Political trends.</p> <p>Social and economic issues: (case study: ethnic minorities) the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities; demands for change; the effectiveness of government responses and the consequences for different groups.</p>	<p>Background: the USA’s land, people, economy and ideology. (This area will not be examined specifically.)</p> <p>Role and powers of the President; the separation of powers; relations between the President and the Congress and the Supreme Court (checks and balances). The division of powers between federal and state governments.</p> <p>The Democrat and Republican parties and their electoral support.</p> <p>Voter registration, turnout and representation: factors influencing these.</p> <p>The political debate over immigration.</p> <p>The effectiveness of government responses to inequalities in participation and representation.</p> <p>Social and economic issues – case study of ethnic minorities: the nature and extent of social and economic inequalities and their consequences and the effectiveness of government responses at federal, state and local level in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ employment ◆ income and wealth/poverty ◆ health ◆ education ◆ crime and the law ◆ housing ◆ immigration <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>

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Study Theme 3D: The European Union

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>Aims, growth and achievement of the European Union (EU). The main institutions and their influence within the Union.</p> <p>Co-operation and conflict with reference to political, social and economic issues: constitutional arrangements; enlargement; the single market and single currency; regional and social policy.</p> <p>Case study of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Common Fisheries Policy.</p>	<p>Background: overview of the original aims of the EU, viz., to create a prosperous and peaceful Europe. The early growth of the EU. (This area will not be examined specifically.)</p> <p>Achievements and the current aims of the EU. Decision making in the EU in the context of: the constitution, the Council of Ministers, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Court of Justice.</p> <p>Interactions between institutions and member states.</p> <p>Political issues: democracy; stability; demands for/against further integration; foreign policy.</p> <p>Economic issues: the effects of the single market and single currency; enlargement in relation to new and existing members; the effects of regional policy.</p> <p>Social issues: free movement of citizens; effects of the social policy; concerns over crime; concerns over immigration.</p> <p>CAP: aims; policies and their effects: social, economic, political, environmental reforms.</p> <p>CFP: aims; policies and their effects: social, economic, political, environmental reforms.</p> <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>

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Study Theme 3E: The Politics of Development in Africa (with the exception of the Republic of South Africa)

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>Health and health care issues; access to education, food and safe water. The links between health, education, food and development.</p> <p>Economic, political and social factors affecting development.</p> <p>The respective roles of African governments, African Union, the European Union, Non-Governmental Organisations, the United Kingdom and the United Nations in promoting development.</p>	<p>Background: overview of geographical and historical factors affecting development. (This are will not be examined specifically).</p> <p>Health and development: water supply; availability and accessibility of healthcare; specific health issues: malaria; HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>Education and development: availability and accessibility of primary, secondary and tertiary education. Gender differences.</p> <p>Food and development: the effects of shortages: starvation/malnutrition; food production and distribution.</p> <p>Conflict: examples of recent conflicts and their effect on development.</p> <p>Debt, cash crops, terms of trade and exchange rates.</p> <p>Land tenure: ownership and management; the role of women; links with education.</p> <p>Domestic policies of African Governments: effects on development.</p> <p>The roles and effectiveness of the AU, EU, NGOs, UK government and UN specialist agencies in promoting development.</p> <p><i>Exemplification of the above should relate to a specific African country or countries, with the exception of the Republic of South Africa.</i></p> <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>

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Study Theme 3F: Global Security

Descriptor	Coverage
<p>The organisation and role of the United Nations (UN): aims, membership, institutions, decision making procedures, reforms/changes. The role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO): international role, reforms/changes.</p> <p>Origins and consequences of recent threats to peace and security, including international terrorism, demanding an international response.</p> <p>International responses: the EU, NATO and the UN responses to recent threats to peace and security including international terrorism.</p>	<p>Background: the origins of the UN: the creation of a more peaceful world; the origins of NATO: to contain Soviet Communism. (This area will not be examined specifically.)</p> <p>UN organisation: the Security Council (permanent and non-permanent members) proposed changes: procedures and powers. Membership, procedures and powers of the General Assembly. Dominant role of the USA.</p> <p>The Secretary General’s role as head of the UN bureaucracy; implementation of resolutions; organisation of peace-making and peace-keeping strategies; UN forces.</p> <p>NATO: the implications of changes/growth in membership. Changes in role: peace-making and peace-keeping in Europe and beyond. The Partnership for Peace.</p> <p>Changing forces: reduction in nuclear and large scale armoured forces, emphasis on rapid response, mobility, specialist forces, counter-terrorism.</p> <p>Examples of recent ethnic, religious and/or political conflicts demanding an international response: origins and consequences: open warfare, insurgency and terrorism.</p> <p>Responses to threats by any one or a combination of EU, NATO, UN and USA and its allies: factors which influence these responses; difficulties and successes/failures; issues of peace-making and peace-keeping.</p> <p>The role and influence of the USA.</p> <p>Ongoing issues and proposals for change in respect of all of the above.</p>