



Course Report 2017

Subject	Modern Studies
Level	Advanced Higher

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any Post Results Services.

This report provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers, lecturers and assessors in their preparation of candidates for future assessment. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

Section 1: Comments on the Assessment

Summary of the Course assessment

Component 1: Question paper

The question paper consists of two sections totalling 90 marks and incorporates a mixture of 30-mark essay questions, where candidates answer two extended-response questions from a choice of three, and two mandatory 15-mark questions: one research methods question and one source-stimulus question.

The question paper largely performed as expected. Feedback indicates that it was positively received by centres, and that it was felt to be fair and accessible for all candidates whether they attempted Section 1 – Political Issues & Research Methods or Section 2 – Law and Order & Research Methods. No candidates attempted questions from Section 3: Social Inequality & Research Methods.

The majority of candidates understood what was required and completed the two required parts of the question paper in the allocated time.

Overall, the quality of candidates was broadly in line with previous years. Section 2: Law & Order continues to remain the most popular area of study by some margin and, within this, 'Understanding Criminal Behaviour' (Question 7) and 'Responses by Society to Crime' (Question 8) are the two most common questions attempted.

Section 1: Political Issues was the second most common area of study. Within Political Issues, 'Power and Influence' (Question 1) and 'Living Political Ideas' (Question 2) were the most common questions attempted.

Extended responses (Questions 1–3, 6–8 and 10–13)

Similar structure and framing of the extended-response questions across all sections allowed candidates to access the questions and apply their knowledge to analyse, synthesise and evaluate the statements within the questions, whilst attempting to also make international comparisons. Most extended responses made reference to international comparisons.

The quality and integration of international comparisons within a coherent line of argument was variable, as expected, and acted as a discriminator between low and high quality extended responses. Several extended responses gained full marks across Questions 1–3 and 6–7. No candidates attempted Questions 11–15 in Section 3: Social Inequality.

Research methods (Questions 4, 9 and 14)

Statistical analysis and average marks showed the 15-mark research methods questions were equitable in terms of difficulty and accessibility across Section 1: Political Issues and Section 2: Law & Order. Questions comprised the same stated research method (covert participation observation) which candidates were required to evaluate in relation to the extent to which this was the best method for researching the given scenario. Candidates

were familiar with the research method and in most cases were able to draw on their knowledge and understanding of social science research to critically evaluate it.

A majority of candidates also attempted to evaluate their own alternative methods of researching the issue and reached a conclusion on the most suitable method. This meant that most candidates' responses could be considered for the full range of marks. The only difference across questions in Section 1, 2 and 3 was the given scenario within each question.

The need to link analysis and evaluation of the research methods to the issue in the scenario distinguished between lower and higher quality responses. The conclusion element also worked well to distinguish between lower and higher quality responses. Concluding remarks that were simply summaries gained minimal credit, whereas high quality responses clearly outlined and justified which of the research methods was preferred and were highly credited as a result.

Source-based questions (Questions 5, 10 and 15)

The 15-mark source-stimulus questions were deemed fair and equitable to all candidates across all three sections. The sources across Sections 1–3 were all in the form of infographics, drawn from the Home Office, DataDial (a Search and Engine Optimisation Social Media Marketing group) and the Trussell Trust, coupled with additional methodological/background information.

Candidates could analyse and evaluate the trustworthiness of the source whilst applying their knowledge of social science research to make an overall judgement on the trustworthiness of the source in question. The source content allowed candidates to analyse, evaluate and comment on key aspects of validity/reliability including provenance, source evidence, source omissions, bias and contemporaneity.

In the analysis criteria for the source-stimulus question, the necessity to include evidence to support the evaluation of the trustworthiness of the source acted as a discriminator between high and low quality responses.

In the evaluation criteria for the source-stimulus question, the requirement for candidates' responses to support evaluations with knowledge of conducting Social Science research, referencing additional research/sources and including consideration of alternative approaches which may increase the trustworthiness of the source, acted as discriminators between adequate responses and those which were considered for full marks.

Component 2: Project-dissertation

This component consists of a 5,000-word maximum project-dissertation undertaken by candidates, totalling 50 marks. The project-dissertation performed as expected.

Analysis of candidate performance indicates a majority of candidates used titles from the Advanced Higher Modern Studies Approved List of Dissertations. However, an increasingly significant number of candidates are now developing their own dissertation titles and making use of the advisory title approval service. This is perfectly acceptable and allows candidates to produce project-dissertations that are distinctive, deal with relevant, contemporary issues, and support a broad range of methodological research.

The vast majority of candidates are familiar with the project-dissertation assessment criteria and developed an approach that fits with this. In presenting their findings, most candidates' project-dissertations attempted to:

- ◆ justify an appropriate, complex, contemporary political/social issue for research
- ◆ evaluate research methodology
- ◆ use a wide range of sources of information
- ◆ analyse the issue
- ◆ evaluate arguments and evidence
- ◆ synthesise information to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument, leading to a conclusion, supported by evidence
- ◆ organise, present and reference findings using appropriate conventions

Section 2: Comments on candidate performance

Areas in which candidates performed well

Component 1: Question paper

A majority of candidates displayed good political and social knowledge and understanding of the issues raised by the extended response questions. Very few candidates were unprepared for the question paper.

Extended responses (Questions 1–3, 6–8 and 11–13)

Analysis: High quality responses identified and analysed key factors in the introduction which were then developed and related to the question throughout the main body of the essay. Contemporary supporting evidence was presented consistently throughout the response, and referenced or attributed.

Analysis of key issues included detailed evidence from an international comparator country or countries which went beyond simple description of the issue in that country in isolation, but went on to integrate the coverage to compare, contrast, analyse and evaluate the issue in the comparator country in relation to the UK/Scotland. Quality responses also referenced, analysed and evaluated ideas/theories or the academic arguments of others.

Comparison: High quality responses compared and contrasted the UK/Scotland with a relevant comparator country or countries throughout the essay. Contemporary supporting evidence from international comparators was accurate and detailed, with comment offered on the extent of difference/similarity between the UK/Scotland and the comparator country or countries.

Evaluation: High quality responses provided implicit as well as explicit conclusions and considered and evaluated alternative views and theories in relation to the question. Overall conclusions were justified and included a reason for rejecting or accepting alternative arguments.

Synthesising information to structure and sustain lines of argument: Quality responses had a clear line of argument that flowed from an organised and logical sequence of ideas. A developed conclusion was offered (not just a summary) which directly related to the question and provided a judgement which flowed from the evidence presented in the essay and responded to counter-arguments raised in the main body of the essay.

Research methods (Questions 4, 9 and 14)

The research methods question responses illustrated that candidates are better prepared for this type of question than previously. The range and quality of contemporary supporting evidence was perceived as being much better than the 2016 exam diet, with focus on the specified scenario in responses much improved, and responses addressing ethical issues associated with the key stated research method much more common. The vast majority of candidates correctly inferred that the question required that they also discuss their own alternative research methods to allow a comparative approach and reach an evaluative conclusion on the most suitable method.

Analysis: Quality analysis in this question showed detailed knowledge of the key method referred to — covert participant observation. Developed points cited supporting evidence from the candidates' own research experience or academic research. Relevant examples included James Patrick's research *A Glasgow Gang Observed*; the Sun newspaper's *Fake Sheikh – Maher Mahmood*; Channel 4's *Dispatches* investigation into cash-for-access, and the Metropolitan Police's *Special Demonstration Squad's* infiltration of political groups.

Evaluation: Responses which gained high marks considered and addressed the effectiveness of the research methods in relation to the scenario outlined in the question. High quality responses commented on ethical issues related to one or more of the research methods raised in their response. Ethical issues commonly commented on included honesty, trust and respondent anonymity. Answers which were awarded full marks referred to an alternative research method that the candidate considered suitable for researching the issue. These included overt participation observation, focus groups and interviews.

Conclusion: Quality conclusions offered a clear judgment which clearly illustrated the candidate's preferred method in relation to the issue. Justification for preferring one method and rejecting the others were clearly stated.

Source-based questions (Questions 5, 10 and 15)

A number of candidates produced high-quality answers which contained the following positive key features:

Analysis of a source: Analysis and comments showed detailed knowledge of several aspects of the source's trustworthiness. Comment was balanced and considered strengths and weaknesses of the source.

Evaluation of trustworthiness: Points of evaluation were developed with supporting evidence drawn from the source as well as the candidates' own knowledge of social science research. Comments on alternative approaches which could increase the trustworthiness of the source were also made.

Conclusion: A clear conclusion was offered which flowed from a coherent line of argument and offered a judgement on the extent to which the source was trustworthy in a balanced manner.

Component 2: Project-dissertation

Justifying an appropriate, complex, contemporary political/social issue: High quality dissertations derived from titles/hypotheses and aims that were logical, linked and allowed the candidate to analyse and evaluate a relevant, contemporary Modern Studies issue. A detailed introduction was included which explained the contemporary political or social relevance of the issue selected; its local, national and/or global significance; and which up-to-date issues or events related to the issue. Part of the introduction included a justification of the aims and an outline of the line of argument and coverage which was to be developed across the main body/chapters.

Evaluating research methodology: High quality evaluation of the research methodologies tended to deal with this in a separate, detailed section. The evaluation being included as a section in the introduction tended to result in a brief, descriptive treatment which earned less of the available marks.

Quality responses offered a balanced evaluation of a range of methods which went beyond simple description. High quality analysis and evaluation included comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the methods rather than generic comments. Where relevant, comment was also made on ethical issues and considerations surrounding the candidates' application of their selected methodologies. Responses that earned full marks in this element also went on to comment on ways in which the methods chosen could be improved upon.

Candidates who critically analysed a selective range of methodologies illustrating benefits and limitations to these tended to score more highly than candidates who attempted to describe the full range the methodologies they employed in constructing their dissertations.

Using a wide range of sources of information: High quality dissertations employed a wide and varied range of primary and secondary sources of information. Primary sources of information were accurately referenced, academically evidenced in the appendices, and integrated into the main body of the dissertation.

Analysing the issue: Key issues and factors were included and used in a way which went beyond simple description. Analysis of key issues led to evaluative comments, which were supported by contemporary statistical, theoretical or illustrative examples.

Evaluating arguments and evidence: Quality dissertations included implicit and explicit evaluations and conclusions. Arguments which supported the stated hypothesis as well as alternative views were presented and evaluated, and it was clear which arguments were accepted and which were discounted.

Synthesising information to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument, leading to a conclusion, supported by evidence: Information from a range of sources was brought together to build arguments and points. Conclusions were made consistently within chapters, in conclusion to each aim/chapter, and also within a detailed, balanced overall conclusion. Points raised within and across aims/chapters were linked in a logical

manner, which built and led to supporting conclusions to each chapter and the overall conclusion.

Organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate conventions:

Dissertations that earned high or full marks in this element had a well-organised bibliography that presented source types in a clear and logical manner. Academic-quality references were present throughout the main body and took the form of footnotes or in-body citations.

Appendices clearly outlined the origin and provenance of the primary or secondary information. Interview transcripts contained full details of the date and interviewee's details, and an accurate, verbatim account of the interview. Where surveys were used, the questions and the results were presented in a structured and accessible format using tables, graphs and charts. Information from appendices was relevant and integrated into the main body of the dissertation to support analysis and evaluation of key issues.

Areas which candidates found demanding

Component 1: Question paper

Extended responses (Questions 1–3, 6–8 and 11–13)

Analysis: A significant differentiator in the quality of essay responses was the regard candidates gave to the 'international comparator country' aspect and the detail they included. Many candidates either failed to refer to any, or made only cursory reference to any international comparator. As a consequence, many essays were only worthy a maximum of 5 out of the 8 marks available in this element. Responses to Question 2 and Question 7 which simply described political or criminological theories did not score well in the analysis of comparison elements.

Comparison: Many essays made only a cursory, descriptive reference to an international comparator and lost valuable marks as a consequence. Weak essay responses disbarred themselves from receiving any marks in the 'Comparison' element (worth a total of 4 marks) if they failed to make any reference to an international comparator country and focused their coverage solely on the UK/Scotland. Responses to Question 2 and Question 7 which did not make explicit reference to an international comparator could gain a maximum of 2 out of 6 marks in this element.

Evaluation: Poorer essays tended to be descriptive and contain points that were under-developed and lacked supporting evidence. Weaker responses often presented a one-sided interpretation of the issues raised in questions. As a result, these lacked any substantive, ongoing evaluation or conclusions. The overall conclusion in weaker responses summarised points already raised, rather than making and supporting judgements.

Synthesising information to structure and sustain lines of argument: Some candidates had difficulty in this element due to the limited understanding of the issue in question. Lower quality responses were descriptive with large sections reliant on singular pieces of information, views or evidence.

Common difficulties or weaknesses in responses to extended response questions included:

Question 1 – Power and influence

'The electoral system is the key factor in encouraging or discouraging multi-party representation.' Discuss

Weaker responses' analysis and evaluation of this question was narrow and focused only on the electoral systems in the UK, Scotland and/or the comparator county/countries. This approach failed to consider other 'key factors' which determine the representation, power and influence, eg ideological cleavage, alignment/de-alignment, political culture, leadership and so forth. Some responses discussed referenda without convincingly relating this to the question.

Question 2 – Living political ideas

'Socialism is an ideology with little relevance in modern political systems.' Discuss

Weaker responses took a narrow, historical and descriptive approach to this question. Poor responses presented historical descriptions of the Labour Party and its relationship with socialism.

Question 3 – Political structures

'Uncodified constitutions are preferable to codified constitutions' Discuss

Weaker responses to this question failed to accurately interpret the question and attempted to turn it to fit a pre-prepared response. Some candidates framed this essay as being about federalism versus devolution, successfully identifying that devolution is an example of a change brought about under the uncodified UK constitution. However, the main focus of the question was not well addressed. Many comments were unrelated to a discussion of the constitution and its impact.

Question 6 – Understanding the criminal justice system

'Recent criminal justice issues show that aspects of current systems are failing.' Discuss

Some candidates answered this question by drawing on and applying their knowledge of penal systems — this may have been better applied to Question 8. In some of these cases this led to a very narrow interpretation of the question.

Question 7 – Understanding criminal behaviour

'Criminal behaviour within societies cannot be explained by one single theory of crime.' Discuss

Weak responses to this question took a narrow, historical and descriptive approach. The poorest responses presented chronological descriptions, detailing the evolution of biological, psychological and sociological theories of crime without any critical evaluation of these or any reference to contemporary evidence to prove or dispute them.

Question 8 – Responses by society to crime

'Penal systems have had no significant impact on reoffending.' Discuss

Weaker responses to this question focused solely on prisons. Poorer responses took a one-sided interpretation and focused on penal systems having a minimal impact on reoffending.

Research methods (Questions 4, 9 and 14)

Poor responses to the research methods questions simply described the advantages and disadvantages of the method highlighted in the question. This resulted in a failure to consider the relevance of the scenario outlined in the question.

Weaker answers failed to discuss an alternative method or comment on ethical issues associated with research methods. Some responses failed to offer an overall conclusion and were not considered for the 3 marks available for this element.

Source-based questions (Questions 5, 10 and 15)

Poor responses to the source-based questions described features and content of the sources rather than offering balanced, critical evaluation of relevant issues. Weak answers lacked supporting evidence taken from the source or the candidates' own knowledge of social science research. Some responses failed to offer any judgement on the extent to which the source was trustworthy and were not considered for the 3 marks available for this element.

Component 2: project: dissertation

Areas of difficulty or poor performance across the dissertation assessable elements included:

Justifying an appropriate, complex, contemporary political/social issue: Poor planning of the hypothesis and aims limited weaker dissertations from the outset. Many candidates develop aims that lead to descriptive rather than analytical and evaluative approaches. Poor aims tend to be phrased as statements or use the prefix, 'To find out ...' Better-phrased aims tend to use stems such as 'To analyse ...', 'To evaluate ...', 'To examine the extent to which ...', or frame their aims or chapter headings as questions, leading candidates into adopting a more analytical and evaluative approach that supports substantive conclusions. A number of candidates' introductions failed to explain and justify the wider relevance of their hypothesis, aims and sub-issues to societal, global or wider ongoing issues.

Evaluating research methodology: For many candidates, the research methodology section was the weakest component of their dissertation. Many did not capitalise on the extensive research they had undertaken. Weak responses simply described the methods they had used or provided generic comment on the advantages and disadvantages of those methods. Many candidates did not discuss ethical issues associated with the methodologies.

Poorer dissertations also failed to discuss potential changes in research approaches that would improve the quality of information gathered. Responses which commented on 'doing more' primary or secondary research were not credited.

Using a wide range of sources of information: A minority of candidates continue to rely on a limited number of websites for their information. Surveys/questionnaires carried out by

the candidate are common, but not always relevant, reliable or valid in supporting analysis of the issue in question. Aims or chapters that are largely or solely focused around a candidate's survey/questionnaire are rarely deemed creditable and should be used with caution.

Analysing the issue: A growing proportion of candidates attempt to 'prove a point' about a particular issue, rather than dispassionately assessing their research evidence. This approach tends to lead to an unbalanced dissertation that fails to acknowledge or analyse alternative viewpoints and theories, which reduces the scope for gaining marks.

Evaluating arguments and evidence: Poorer dissertations failed to offer implicit or explicit evaluations in the main body of the dissertation. Points made did not refer to supporting evidence, arguments, examples or theories.

Synthesising information to develop a sustained and coherent line of argument, leading to a conclusion, supported by evidence: Poorer dissertations contained large sections drawn from, or based on, single sources of information. Poorly organised dissertations also lacked a coherent flow with aims/chapters which were unrelated to each other or which failed to address the title/hypothesis.

Organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate conventions: A significant number of candidates did not use consistent, academic referencing conventions, eg the Harvard or Oxford style. Weak bibliographies did not reflect academic protocols with generalised citations, ie lacking the full website address, origin, author, date of publication, date of access, etc. Many candidates did not include any appendices, particularly those whose dissertations were reliant on secondary research. Where candidates rely on secondary research they may wish to construct appendices around tabular, graphical or extracts from sources.

Exceeding the maximum word count (5000 words with 10% tolerance): A number of candidates incurred a 10% penalty for malpractice/rubric violation of the maximum word count. The majority of these violations occurred within a small handful of centres. This usually occurred where candidates did not include the research method evaluation section in their overall word count. Other cases of word count violations showed candidates/supervisors had not proofed or edited their dissertations adequately.

Advice for the preparation of future candidates

Centres should ensure all candidates have access to, and are familiar with, the relevant supporting documentation for Advanced Higher Modern Studies. Centres should also ensure that all candidates are fully informed and familiar with the assessable criteria used across the question paper and the project-dissertation.

Component 1: Question paper

Extended responses

Centres should ensure that teaching and course coverage involves adequate coverage of an international comparator country or countries. Careful consideration should be given by

centres as to how courses are constructed to best support candidates in adapting to this comparative element.

The majority of candidates are knowledgeable about the issues studied. However, weaker candidates still have a tendency to offer descriptive responses. Candidates should focus on answering the questions that is set in the paper rather than turning it to a pre-prepared essay.

Extended responses should also address both sides of the argument with in-depth analysis and synthesis, drawing a variety of information together in support of points. Essays can be improved further with relevant, current and in-depth evidence/exemplification. Candidates should ensure their essays offer a conclusion, rather than a summary, which relates to the question that is set.

Research methods questions

Centres should aim to prepare candidates adequately by ensuring that the key research methods outlined in the course assessment specification are covered in their courses. Candidates should have practical opportunities to apply methods as part of their project-dissertation research, or as part of the course, to gain greater insight into the benefits, limitations and considerations that must be given to their use. Any study of research methods should aim to familiarise candidates with examples of application in academic studies, as this will support candidates' ability to offer exemplification in their exam responses.

Source-based questions

Centres can support candidates by ensuring they are familiar with the assessable criteria for the source-based questions, and that they have ample opportunity to practise these types of questions. Assessing sources of complex political or social information should form a routine part of any course.

Candidates should ensure their responses go beyond simple description of the source content. Source information should be used to support points and arguments. Candidates should also be aware that they can offer comment on errors and omissions from the source, if relevant. All responses must offer a conclusion which offers a clear judgement on the extent of the sources' trustworthiness.

Component 2: Project-Dissertation

Centres can assist candidates in the planning stage by ensuring they adopt an appropriate hypothesis and aims. Many centres make use of the Approved List of Dissertations available on the Advanced Higher Modern Studies SQA page. It is perfectly valid for candidates to adapt or modify these as it relates to their issue of study. Candidates should also be supported in selecting their own dissertation titles if they wish to do so. Where centres are unsure about a candidate's adapted or self-developed hypothesis/title/aims, they can submit an Advanced Higher Modern Studies Approval of Titles for Dissertations form.

Centres should advise candidates to avoid framing aims in a manner that leads to a descriptive treatment of the issue. Higher quality aims tend to use evaluative or analytical

stems such as 'To analyse ...', 'To examine ...', 'To examine the extent to which ...' or frame aims or chapter headings as questions.

Centres should encourage candidates to ensure that their research methods are justified and evaluated as a natural part of the process of carrying out the dissertation research. Candidates should be directed to provide an evaluation of the methods' usefulness, make comment on the ethical considerations, and the ways in which the use of the method could have been improved on. The most important skill here is the evaluation of the method. Centres should emphasise that a simplistic description of the application of the methodology will receive no credit at this level.

Candidates should aim to use a wide and varied range of sources of information. This may involve primary as well as secondary research. Although primary research is not a pre-requisite for the project-dissertation, it can often enhance research and offer further opportunities to acquire knowledge and insight into the issue. Secondary resources can involve a wide range of sources, including academic texts, journals, newspapers, websites, documentaries and other audio/visual sources etc.

Synthesis and balanced analysis are crucial to the dissertation. Centres should ensure candidates are given support and opportunities to practise and develop these skills. Candidates should be encouraged to discuss and critically evaluate alternative views and theories as part of their dissertation. This will naturally enhance the analysis and evaluation.

Candidates should be taught to distinguish between a summary and a conclusion, and ensure their dissertation's line of argument builds to the latter.

Consistent academic referencing is essential. Centres may wish to adopt a preferred 'house' style which candidates can apply to ensure a consistent approach.

Appendices are crucial evidence of the candidate's research process. Interview transcripts, letters/e-mails sent and received, survey results, etc, can be included. Candidates who rely on secondary research alone could be encouraged to include appendices that detail information they refer to in the main body of their dissertation, eg statistical or graphical information. Centres should ensure candidates are aware that appendices will only be creditable if evidence from them is cited and used appropriately in the main body of the dissertation.

Centres should ensure their candidates are aware of the maximum word count for the dissertation (5000 words with 10% tolerance). Centres can assist candidates in this process by checking dissertations do not exceed the maximum word count before submission. Centres may wish to encourage their candidates to include a word count per page, a total word count per chapter, as well as an overall word count, which should appear on the front cover.

Grade Boundary and Statistical information:

Statistical information: update on Courses

Number of resulted entries in 2016	851
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Number of resulted entries in 2017	861
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Statistical information: Performance of candidates

Distribution of Course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of Course awards	%	Cum. %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum Mark -				
A	27.8%	27.8%	239	98
B	26.9%	54.7%	232	84
C	25.3%	80.0%	218	70
D	8.7%	88.7%	75	63
No award	11.3%	-	97	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

- ◆ While SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions which will allow a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary) and a well prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary), it is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.
- ◆ Each year, SQA therefore holds a grade boundary meeting for each subject at each level where it brings together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The Principal Assessor and SQA Qualifications Manager meet with the relevant SQA Business Manager and Statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. The meetings are chaired by members of the management team at SQA.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the exam is more challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual, allowing the pass rate to be unaffected by this circumstance.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.
- ◆ An exam paper at a particular level in a subject in one year tends to have a marginally different set of grade boundaries from exam papers in that subject at that level in other years. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for exams set in centres. If SQA has already altered a boundary in a particular year in, say, Higher Chemistry, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter boundaries in their prelim exam in Higher Chemistry. The two are not that closely related, as they do not contain identical questions.
- ◆ SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.