Higher Modern Studies



Course Handbook

Welcome to higher Modern Studies. This is an exciting course where you will further develop your knowledge of political, social and economic issues in the UK and, explore China as a world power. You will develop your ability to write about, discuss and analyse in relation to these topics and, understand different sources of information. You will also improve literacy and numeracy skills essential to your future beyond school. Finally, being interested in current events and the news is a must so be prepared to have regular discussions about what’s going on in the world!

What topics will I study?

You will study **three** units over the course of the year: social issues in the UK; democracy in Scotland and the UK and, China as a world power.

In the **social issues** unit you will study what we mean by social and economic inequality, evidence of inequality, responses to tackle inequality by different groups and how effective these responses have been.

In the **democracy in Scotland and the UK** unit you will study the make-up of the UK political system, the relationship between different parts of parliament and how our country is run, voting systems and voting behaviour and, the impact of outside influence on our representatives.

In the **China** unit you will study China’s political system and how democratic China is, social and economic issues and responses to tackle inequality and, China’s place in the international community.

There are detailed content lists at the back for each topic. Use the check-list columns to help you revise for unit assessments, prelims and exams.

How will I be assessed?

You will have **unit assessments** to pass for all three units studied. These assessments have no time restrictions and they are also open-book. These are marked simply pass or fail. A pass in each unit is a mandatory part of the course however, you can be re-assessed. Different skills and knowledge will be tested in each of the three units; the democracy unit will assess knowledge, analysis and your ability to assess bias in sources, the social issues unit will assess knowledge, analysis and your ability to use evidence to back up a decision and, the China unit will assess knowledge, analysis and your ability to support conclusions.

We will also carry out an **interim assessment** under timed conditions in class. This will be made up of a combination of essay and source based questions. This will be in preparation for the interim report in November and will also give us a very good indication of how well you are coping with the course.

You will also have to choose, research and write-up **an assignment** based on what we have studied. This will be an individual piece of work. You will be given support and some time in class to work on this however, an element of homework will be also required. You will be allowed to take two A4 sides of research notes into the write-up; it will be carried out over 1 hour 30 minutes under exam conditions and sent away to the SQA before the final exam. The assignment is worth 30 marks.

Your **final exam** will last two hours and fifteen minutes and, you will sit only one paper. The paper will be made up of three sections; one for each unit you have studied. It is worth a total of 60 marks; 20 marks per section. Two of the sections will be made up of a 12 mark knowledge response and an 8 mark source question. One section will involve writing a 20 mark essay in response to a given question. You will not know in advance which section the 20 mark essay will appear in.

What will be expected of me?

Higher Modern Studies is a great course that offers opportunities to develop your knowledge, research, essay writing, discussion and analytical skills. It is hard work but very rewarding.

We will expect **regular homework** handed in on time and done to a high standard. The normal discipline will be applied for not complying and if this happens on more than three occasions we will inform guidance and contact home. However, if you need extra support then there will be a weekly lunchtime study club that you can come along to.

We will also expect you to **catch up on missed work** as this is your responsibility. You will have your textbooks and resources saved on the pupil shared drive to help you do this. There will also be a weekly study club that you can come along to.

We will expect you to **come prepared to class** and to keep your own work organised. We will issue a lot of important information and resources over the course of the year and it is vital that you keep track of everything. However, you may print off extra copies from the pupil shared drive if things get lost.

We will expect you to **keep up-to-date with current events** and the news relating to the topics we study. You will be asked to complete mandatory weekly homework regarding this and you will be expected to work on your general knowledge of what we study. We can provide you with access to the internet or radio if you need extra support with this.

It can be a stressful course at times and we are happy to provide **extra help** with essays or assessments. However, you must also be prepared to take the initiative and approach us if you need that extra support and, our weekly study club is the perfect way to get extra tuition. You have chosen this course and it is up to you to work hard and take responsibility.

Finally, if you are issued **textbooks** to use over this year, they are your responsibility and we will send a bill to replace them should they get lost or damaged.



Get yourself organised with poly pockets and a good folder as you will be given a lot of materials. We also save most things on the pupil shared drive so you can print things off for yourself.

What will my classwork involve?

In class you can expect to take part in **different types of activities**: group and paired tasks; plenty of discussion; presentations; using ICT; individual tasks; peer assessment; research tasks; timed work and, assessment preparation.

**Knowledge and Understanding** is an important part of the course. In Modern Studies you will learn how to write short **12 mark response** knowledge answers and also **20 mark essays**. Each is structured in a slightly different way and it is very important that you learn the difference. To help you do this we will attach grids like the ones below. These grids outline the essential elements of the different types of response and you should use them to help you improve.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| /**12** | ***Have I … ?*** |  | ***How can I improve my work?*** |
| Short Introduction | 1. Set the scene  2. Used the wording of the question  3. Made brief reference to key points  4. Outlined a judgement |  |  |
| Knowledge and Understanding  /4 | 1. A range of relevant points addressed  2. Detailed and accurate description given on each point |  |
| /4 | 3. Up-to-date examples used  4. Explanation of each point focused on the question |  |
| Analysis and Evaluation    /4 | 1. Key phrases of analysis used 2. Made links within or between points 3. Referred to the question in each point   4. A judgement made backed up by discussion/ examples |  |
| Conclusion | 1. A judgement made 2. A summary of the points that back up the judgement 3. Directly answers the question |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| /**20** | ***Have I … ?*** |  | ***How can I improve my work?*** |
| Introduction | 1. Set the scene  2. Used the wording of the question  3. Made reference to key points  4. Outlined a line of argument |  |  |
| Knowledge and Understanding  /4 | 1. A range of relevant points addressed  2. Detailed and accurate description given on each point |  |
| /4 | 3. Up-to-date examples used  4. Explanation of each point focused on the question |  |
| Analysis    /6 | 1. Key phrases of analysis used in each paragraph 2. Made links within or between points 3. Referred to the question in each paragraph 4. Up-to-dates examples used |  |
| Structure  /2 | 1. Presented as an argument and not as a story 2. A judgement has been applied to each point 3. There is an overall line of argument focused on the question 4. The overall argument is supported by examples |  |
| Conclusion  /4 | 1. Detail of each point is used to discuss the question 2. Conclusion is balanced 3. Answers the question |  |

**Source Questions** involve reading, understanding and using evidence and, then using that evidence to support decisions, conclusions or assess bias. It is important that you practice using different types of source evidence and that you understand what is expected for each of the **three types** of source question.

**Assessing objectivity and bias (8 marks)**

* Use the sources to make judgements on the accuracy of parts of a given statement (**6 marks**, up to 3 marks per paragraph)
* Make an overall judgement of the extent of the accuracy of the whole statement

(**2 marks**)

* Use all of the sources provided
* Make links between or within sources

**Making conclusions (8 marks)**

* Make conclusions about the prompts provided in the question using the sources (up to 3 marks per paragraph)
* For full marks you must also make an overall conclusion about the issue in the question (**8 marks**)
* Use all of the sources provided
* Make links between and within sources

**Supporting a decision (8 marks)**

* Support a decision between two options using the sources (up to 3 marks per paragraph)
* For full marks you must also support the decision of why you did not choose the other option (**8 marks**)
* Use all of the sources provided
* Make links between and within sources

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**Top Tips**

* ***Linking******sources*** *together gets more marks*
* *Always* ***link to the question*** *at the end of EACH paragraph*
* *Use* ***ALL*** *of the sources given*
* *Learn how to do* ***each type*** *of question*



Look over feedback on previous work before writing a word. This will help you to improve specific things rather than making the same mistakes over and over again!

**Unit Content: Social Inequality in the UK**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Detailed Content** | **Revised** |
| The nature of social inequality in the UK | * Inequality in relation to socio-economic status, geographical location, gender, ethnicity etc. * Evidence of inequality |  |
| Theories and causes of inequality | * Social explanations and theories * Individualist explanations and theories |  |
| The impact of social inequality on specific groups in society | * Income * Employment * Education * Housing * Health * Social mobility |  |
| Attempts to tackle inequality and their effectiveness | * Legislation * Benefits system * Provision of services like housing * Programmes directed to specific groups * Individualist approaches * Evaluation of the success of responses to inequality |  |

**Unit Content: World Power – China**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Detailed Content** | **Revised** |
| Political system and process | * The political system: constitutional arrangements; institutions, political processes * Political rights and responsibilities * Opportunities for participation and influence * Evaluation of the political system and the democratic nature of China |  |
| Socio-economic issues | * Education * Rural-urban divide * Health * Income * Crime * Changing economy * Human rights |  |
| Responses to socio-economic issues | * Government responses to these issues * Effectiveness of responses |  |
| The role of the world power in international relations | * Involvement in international organisations (UN, G20, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation etc.) * Relations with other countries * Evaluation of international influence and power |  |

**Unit Content: Democracy in Scotland and the UK**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Topic** | **Detailed Content** | **Revised** |
| The UK constitutional arrangement in the UK including devolution and the EU. | * The UK constitutional arrangement * The role and powers of central government * The role and powers of devolved bodies * The impact of EU membership on decision-making * Debates and issues over changes to the powers of the Scottish Parliament and the UK Parliament |  |
| The study of representative democracy in the UK | * The role of political representatives * Pressures on representatives * Role of the legislature * Role of the executive (Prime Minister, Cabinet, civil service) * Relationship and balance of power between legislature and executive |  |
| The impact of voting systems and a range of factors that influence voting behaviour | * Description of voting systems (FPTP, PR, AMS, STV) * Evaluation of voting systems * Impact of voting systems on election results * Outcome of elections * Factors affecting voting behaviour |  |
| The ways in which citizens are informed about, participate in and influence the political process in the UK | * Ways in which citizens are informed about and participate in the political system * The role of pressure groups in the political system * The role of the media in the political system * Evaluation of the influence of pressure groups * Evaluation of the influence of the media |  |

**Higher Modern Studies: 12 Mark Response**

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* **Read** the question or prompt carefully.
* Start with a short **introductory sentence**.
* Plan **two-four** points for your answer. You must provide balance with **both sides** of the argument.
* Always include **examples** to back up what you say.
* You must go beyond each example to **analyse** your point and **explain** how it links to the question. You get more marks for doing this!
* Make a **judgement** and stick to it i.e. answer the question!
* Repeat your judgement and back it up in EACH paragraph as well as at the end.
* End with a short concluding sentence **summing up your points and judgement**.

Each **paragraph** should be carefully structured to successfully make your point and ensure the best marks. Try using the guide below to structure **each of your paragraphs**.

**PEEL** the Paragraph

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **P**oint | *Give your POINT using the* ***wording of the question***adding explanation to make it clear. |
| **E**xample | *Give your EXAMPLE. Make sure that it actually* ***supports your point****. Make it* ***accurate*** *and* ***well explained****. You may have more than one example.* |
| **E**valuate | *EVALUATE and ANALYSE your example(s). You must show how your example(s) illustrates your point. They don’t speak for themselves!* |
| **L**ink | *LINK your point to the question using the* ***wording of the question****. Make it* ***clear*** *and leave the reader in no doubt as to your point and its* ***relevance****.* |

**Question Stems**

***“Analyse…”*** – You simply have to discuss at least 2 different factors relating to the topic of the question.

***“Evaluate…”*** – You have to discuss at least 2 different factors **AND** make a judgement.

**Higher Modern Studies: 20 Mark Response**

C:\Users\LothianK\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\W339XSRU\MC900254390[1].wmfHere is a guide to planning and structuring 20 mark responses. You will have around 45 minutes to complete a 20 mark response in the exam. There are 8 marks available for KU, 6 marks for evaluation/analysis, 2 marks for structure and 4 marks for your conclusion. You will be credited highly for more evaluation/ analysis and making judgements.

* **Read** the question or prompt carefully.
* Start with an **introduction**. This should set the scene, cover your points in the same order as the essay and set out a line of argument.
* Plan **four** good points for your answer. You must provide balance with **both sides** of the argument.
* Always include **examples** and plenty of detail to back up what you say.
* You must then go beyond each example to **analyse** your point fully and **explain** how it answers the question. You get more marks for doing this!
* Make a **judgement** and stick to it i.e. answer the question!
* Repeat your judgement and back it up in EACH paragraph as well as at the end.
* End with a conclusion **giving your points in the same order, making a clear judgement and summing up your evidence to back it up**.

Each **paragraph** should be carefully structured to successfully make your point and ensure the best marks. Try using the guide below to structure **each of your paragraphs**.

**PEEL** the Paragraph

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **P**oint | *Give your POINT using the* ***wording of the question***adding explanation to make it clear. |
| **E**xample | *Give your EXAMPLE. Make sure that it actually* ***supports your point****. Make it* ***accurate*** *and* ***well explained****. You may have more than one example.* |
| **E**valuate | *EVALUATE and ANALYSE your example(s). You must show how your example(s) illustrates your point. They don’t speak for themselves!* |
| **L**ink | *LINK your point to the question using the* ***wording of the question****. Make it* ***clear*** *and leave the reader in no doubt as to your point and its* ***relevance****.* |

**Top Tips for Essay Writing!!**



*Some basic ‘golden’ rules to follow*:

* **Do not** use the first person (e.g. “*I think*… “)
* Your **introduction** should set the scene, give the points of your essay briefly and in the same order, and give the reader your argument.
* Once you have chosen an **overall argument** don’t change your mind!
* If you are **running out of time**, ALWAYS write a conclusion.
* Give your essay **balance** by using a range of points on different sides of the issue
* **Analyse** – don’t just write a list of points. Explain them and analyse how important they are in relation to each other.
* Use **analytical phrases** like *“This clearly shows…” “The evidence shows that…” “The impact of this is…” “It is clear that…”*
* **Link** between paragraphs using phrases like “*Another important point*…”
* **Link** to the question by using the wording of the question in each paragraph.
* **Do not** introduce new information into your conclusion.
* **Don’t** get bogged down with too much information or statistics – analysis and evaluation are the keys to good grades!
* **Write a good plan** before you write a single sentence.