

Modern Studies

What are the aims of this course?

The Modern Studies **BGE** course will encourage learners to develop important attitudes, including: an open mind and respect for the values, beliefs and cultures of others; an openness to new thinking and ideas and a sense of responsibility and global citizenship. Modern Studies develops in learners a greater understanding of the contemporary world and their place in it. By studying this Course, learners are enabled to develop the four capacities within a Curriculum for Excellence.

For example, learners' horizons are extended and they are challenged to look at the world in new ways. Their confidence grows as they begin to understand more about their sense of identity and place in the contemporary world. Learners will become responsible citizens by building up a framework of social, political and economic knowledge and understanding.

What will I be learning about in this area of the curriculum?

Purpose and aims of the Course:

Modern Studies opens up the world of contemporary society for learners.

The purpose of Modern Studies is to develop learners' knowledge and understanding of contemporary political and social issues in local, Scottish, United Kingdom and international contexts. In these contexts, learners will develop an awareness of the social and political issues they will meet in their lives. This purpose will be achieved through successful study of the Course Units which focus on the political system in the UK, social issues in the UK and international issues.

Through the Modern Studies Course, learners will undertake a coherent study of contemporary society with concepts and themes being revisited and built upon across Units. It will develop the skills to help learners interpret and participate in the social and political processes they will encounter now and in the future.

Modern Studies makes a distinctive contribution to the curriculum by drawing on the social sciences of politics, sociology and economics and where appropriate, of associated ideas drawn from other social subjects. It thereby adopts a multi-disciplinary approach.

The main aims of Modern Studies in the BGE are to enable learners to:

- engage as active and informed members of society and local and global citizens
- have an appreciation of the complexity, and changing nature, of modern society
- understand and respect human and legal rights and responsibilities as well as democratic modes of government
- understand the democratic process and how, why and to what extent people are informed about and participate in society
- have an awareness of social and economic issues at local, Scottish, national and international levels and ways of addressing needs and inequalities
- understand different views about the extent of state involvement in society
- understand the nature and processes of conflict resolution at all levels
- **BGE:**

The Modern Studies **BGE** Course contributes to general education and the wider curriculum. It will help create informed and active citizens by helping learners to develop a greater understanding of political and social institutions and processes. Learners will

develop skills which are transferable to other areas of study and which they will use in everyday life. Use of ICT and interpretation of source materials together with cooperative learning help s to develop confident and successful learners.

In the **BGE** pupils will be exposed to a variety of skills and experiences which will help them to progress onto units of study at a National level.

National 4/5

Mandatory Units:

- **Democracy in Scotland and the United Kingdom**
- **Social Issues in the United Kingdom:** Inequality
- **International Issues:** World Powers – The USA
- **Assignment**

What skills will I develop?

The investigative, creative and critical thinking activities in this Course give learners important experience in contributing to group work and also working on their own. Learners will acquire attributes which will be important for their life and work.

Through the skills and content of the Modern Studies Course, learners will be encouraged to reflect upon their own health and wellbeing. An increased understanding of the political system and their place in it will develop a sense of responsible citizenship. Through its focus on social and economic understanding, learners will develop skills in employability and enterprise. The emphasis on the evaluation of sources and decision making will develop thinking skills. Learners will progressively develop skills in literacy and numeracy.

The Modern Studies Course develops a range of cognitive skills. It encourages active learning in the process of developing an understanding of contemporary society. Learners need to acquire and apply relevant knowledge. By using a variety of sources, they will develop evaluating, analysing and investigating skills in order to understand and explain political and social issues.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills, including:

- sourcing, understanding and using a wide range of information/evidence on contemporary issues
- evaluating information/evidence in order to detect a lack of objectivity, make decisions, and justify conclusions
- constructing arguments in a balanced and structured way
- communicating, by a variety of means, views, opinions, decisions and conclusions based on evidence

The skills listed above will be developed and applied over a range of political, social and international contexts. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners to focus on particular skills.

What learning and teaching approaches will I experience?

Group-work strategies are employed across the department. Pupils will utilise computers and outside visitors will help to vary the teaching and learning experience. Use of contemporary video and interactive technology will enhance pupil understanding of the contemporary world. The emphasis is on providing cotemporary resources and textbooks which are as up-to-date as possible

How will I be assessed?

There will be continuous class assessments.

What are the homework requirements?

Pupils will complete appropriate Knowledge and Understanding or Enquiry Skills activities aimed at raising attainment in a specific skill area.

What might this course lead to in the future?

On completion of the BGE course, pupils will be well placed to progress to National Qualifications at all levels.