

ESSENTIAL

SQA EXAM PRACTICE



NATIONAL 5

MODERN STUDIES

Practice Questions & Exam Papers

QUESTIONS & PAPERS

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KEY AREA INDEX GRID

Content	Practice Questions	Practice Paper 1	Practice Paper 2
Democracy in Scotland and the UK			
Power and decision making	Exemplar	1, 4	
Participation		2, 3, 5, 6	1, 2, 4, 5
Representation	1, 2, 14, 15		
Influence	13		
Voting systems	3, 4		3, 6
Social Inequality			
Nature of social inequality			8
Causes of social inequality	6, 16, 17	10a, 10b	
Consequences of social inequality		8	9
Responses to social inequality	5	9	10
Crime and the Law			
Nature of crime			11
Causes of crime	18	13b	13
Consequences of crime	Exemplar		12
Criminal justice system	7	11	
Responses to crime	13a	12, 13a	
World Powers			
Political system	20	15	16, 17b
Influence of other countries	9	16	17a
Social and economic issues	10	17	15
Effectiveness in tackling social and economic issues	21		
World Issues			
Nature and cause of conflict/issue	11, 22	19	20b
Consequences of conflict/issue	12	18	18, 19
Attempts to resolve conflict/issue			20a
Evaluation of international organisations in tackling conflict/issue	23	20	

Practice makes permanent

In the first part of this section you will receive advice on how to unlock the marks for the knowledge and understanding questions ('describe' and 'explain') and the evaluation of sources questions.

For each style of question, you will be given an example, followed by the opportunity to answer a range of questions.

In your SQA exam you will answer five 'describe', four 'explain' and three evaluation of sources questions. More marks are awarded for knowledge and understanding than evaluation of sources questions, so it is crucial that you have a sound grasp of the content.

The knowledge and understanding questions

Tips for success	Things to avoid
Be aware of the different requirements of 'describe' and 'explain' questions.	Don't confuse the different question types by, for example, giving a 'describe' answer to an 'explain' question.
Only answer the exact question that is set.	Don't turn the question into something it isn't – you won't receive any marks for details or examples that are not relevant.
Develop the points you make with detail.	Don't just write a list of facts – you can only gain a maximum of 2 marks.
Use recent examples to illustrate your knowledge and understanding.	Dated examples should be avoided.
Use the number of marks allocated to each question as a guide to how much you should write.	Don't write too much for the 4 marks answer – you may run out of time on the questions worth the most marks.

Top Tip!

One very developed 'describe' answer can gain 3 marks, and one very developed 'explain' answer can gain 4 marks.

'Describe' questions

HOW TO ANSWER

These are the more straightforward type of knowledge and understanding question, and are worth between 4 and 6 marks. All that is required is that you provide the detailed factual knowledge relevant to the question. All 'describe' questions must cover two descriptions.

For a 4- and 6-mark answer, you can be awarded up to 3 marks for a description that is relevant and has exemplification. Two descriptions are necessary for full marks.

Look at the 'describe' question below and see what you need to do to get full marks.

The Scottish Parliament has a range of devolved powers.

Describe, **in detail, two** devolved powers of the Scottish Parliament. 6 marks

OR

The UK Parliament has a range of reserved powers.

Describe, **in detail, two** reserved powers of the UK Parliament. 6 marks

Top Tip!

As stated, you need to be aware of the new powers given to the Scottish Parliament by the UK Parliament, such as income tax and a range of Social Security payments such as pension credits.

You need to have sound knowledge of the respective powers of the two parliaments, and be aware of the most recent welfare powers granted to the Scottish Parliament. A useful tip is to choose two of the more important powers for your answer.

Below is a list of some of the main devolved and reserved powers:

Devolved	Reserved	Shared
Education	Defence	Social Security benefits
Health	Immigration	
Law and order	Terrorism	

>> HOW TO ANSWER

ANSWER 1: Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Parliament is responsible for a wide range of powers such as education, health, housing, refuse collection, social work and local government. Children go to nursery, then primary school, followed by secondary. Some then go on to university. We all make use of our health services including visits to the doctors.

Comment

This is a very weak answer with basic exemplification. No marks for first sentence. Some basic information is given for education and health, each worth 1 mark. Overall this answer is a fail: 2/6.

What can we do to improve Answer 1? One approach is shown below.

ANSWER 2: Scottish Parliament

One power granted to the Scottish Parliament is education. This means that the Scottish government is responsible for staffing and changes to what is taught. We have Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland, which is taught in all Scottish schools from nursery to secondary and we have a different exam system from the rest of the UK. The Scottish Government at present is giving schools in challenging areas extra funding to try to raise standards.

A second power is health. This responsibility covers all aspects of health from doctors' surgeries to hospitals. Policies have been introduced to try to improve health and reduce health inequalities. Smoking is banned in public places and free prescriptions are available for all. In England many people, including students, have to pay for their prescriptions.

Comment

This answer provides detailed exemplification of both education and health. In education it covers Curriculum for Excellence and the financial help given to schools. In health it provides wide coverage of policies to reduce health inequalities. Overall, each description is worth 3 marks, so this answer gets 6/6.

ANSWER 3: UK Parliament

Two powers which the UK government is responsible for are defence and income tax. In defence the UK government is responsible for all the armed forces and the range of equipment available. The UK government makes the decision on whether to send troops abroad, as it did when it sent troops to Iraq. Recently the UK Government decided to renew the Trident nuclear programme. The Scottish Government does not support this decision but does not have the power to stop it.

The UK Government is responsible for the economy of the UK and sets the trade rules with other countries and organisations. All of the taxation decisions in the UK, such as income tax, are made by the UK Government.

Comment

The first paragraph is excellent. It describes, in detail, a range of UK responsibilities with up-to-date exemplification of the Trident nuclear programme – easily worth 3 marks. One mark is awarded for the first sentence of the second paragraph. The remaining information given is incorrect: income tax has been devolved to the Scottish Parliament since 2018. So overall this answer gets 4/6.

To improve this answer, a correct second power such as immigration should be chosen.

Now have a go at improving answer 3.

Test your knowledge and understanding: practice 'Describe' questions

MARKS

Democracy in Scotland and the UK

- 1 Committees have an important role in the Scottish Government.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** of the roles of committees in the Scottish Government. 4
- 2 The House of Lords has an important role in the UK Government.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** of the important roles of the House of Lords in the UK Government. 4
- 3 The Additional Member System (AMS) used to elect MSPs has many strengths.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** strengths of the Additional Member System (AMS). 6
- 4 The First-Past-the-Post System (FPTP) used to elect MPs has many strengths.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** strengths of the First-Past-the-Post System. 6

Social Issues in the UK: Social Inequality

- 5 Governments try to reduce social inequality.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** ways the Governments try to reduce social inequality in the UK. 6
- 6 There are many causes of social and economic inequality in the UK.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** causes of social and economic inequality in the UK. 4

Social Issues in the UK: Crime and the Law

- 7 Scotland has its own criminal courts.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** criminal courts in Scotland. 4
- 8 The work of the police in Scotland involves a variety of roles.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** roles of the police in Scotland. 6

Section 1: Democracy in Scotland and the United Kingdom

Total marks: 26

Attempt **EITHER** Part A **AND** Question 7 **OR** Part B **AND** Question 7

Part A Democracy in Scotland

page 39

OR

Part B Democracy in the United Kingdom

page 39

Question 7

pages 40–41

Part A – Democracy in Scotland

MARKS

In your answers to Questions 1, 2 and 3 you should give recent examples from Scotland.

- 1 The First Minister has important powers in the Scottish Government.
Describe, **in detail, two** important powers of the First Minister in the Scottish Government.
- 2 Some people in Scotland choose not to vote in elections.
Explain, **in detail, two** reasons why some people in Scotland choose not to vote in elections.
- 3 Some political parties' election campaigns are unsuccessful during Scottish Parliamentary elections.
Explain **in detail, two** reasons why some political parties' election campaigns are unsuccessful during Scottish Parliamentary elections.

4

6

6

[NOW GO TO QUESTION 7 STARTING ON PAGE 40.]

Part B – Democracy in the United Kingdom

In your answers to Questions 4, 5 and 6 you should give recent examples from the United Kingdom.

- 4 The Prime Minister has important powers in the UK Government.
Describe, **in detail, two** important powers of the Prime Minister in the UK Government.
- 5 Some people in the UK choose not to vote in elections.
Explain, **in detail, two** reasons why some people in the UK choose not to vote in elections.
- 6 Some political parties' election campaigns are unsuccessful during General Elections.
Explain **in detail, two** reasons why some political parties' election campaigns are unsuccessful during General Elections.

4

6

6

[NOW GO TO QUESTION 7 STARTING ON PAGE 40.]

Section 2: Social Issues in the United Kingdom

Total marks: 26

Attempt **EITHER** Part C **AND** Question 14 **OR** Part D **AND** Question 14

Part C Social Inequality

page 52

Part D Crime and the Law

page 52

Question 14

pages 53–54

Part C – Social Inequality

MARKS

In your answers to Questions 8, 9 and 10 you should give recent examples from the United Kingdom.

- 8** Social inequality exists in the United Kingdom.
Describe, **in detail, two** ways in which social inequality exists in the United Kingdom.
- 9** There are many consequences of social economic inequality on individuals.
Describe, **in detail, two** consequences of social and economic inequality on individuals.
- 10** Some people think that attempts to tackle social inequality have been successful.
Explain, **in detail, two** reasons why some people think that attempts to tackle social inequality have been successful.

4

6

6

[NOW GO TO QUESTION 14 STARTING ON PAGE 53.]

Part D – Crime and the Law

In your answers to Questions 11, 12 and 13 you should give recent examples from the United Kingdom.

- 11** Those in wealthier social groups also commit crimes.
Describe, **in detail, two** types of crime that those in wealthier social groups are more likely to commit.
- 12** Crime can have many consequences for communities.
Describe, **in detail, two** consequences of crime for communities.
- 13** Social deprivation can cause crime.
Explain, **in detail, two** reasons why social deprivation can cause crime.

4

6

6

[NOW GO TO QUESTION 14 STARTING ON PAGE 53.]

Section 3: International Issues

Total marks: 28Attempt **EITHER** Part E **AND** Question 21 **OR** Part F **AND** Question 21

Part E World Powers

page 55

Part F World Issues

page 56

Question 21

pages 57–58

Part E – World Powers

MARKS

In your answers to Questions 15, 16 and 17 you should give recent examples from a world power you have studied.

- 15** World powers have tried to tackle socio-economic issues in their country.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** ways that the world power you have studied has tried to tackle socio-economic issues in their country.
In your answer you must state the world power you have studied.
- 16** Citizens of a world power are guaranteed political rights.
Describe, **in detail**, **two** political rights that are guaranteed to citizens in the world power you have studied.
In your answer you should state the world power you have studied.

4

6

Attempt EITHER Question 17(a) or 17(b)

- 17 a)** Many world powers can claim to have a global influence.
Explain, **in detail**, why the world power you have studied can claim to have a global influence.
You should give a **maximum** of **three** reasons in your answer.
In your answer you should state the world power you have studied.
- OR**
- b)** Some groups in society are more likely to participate in politics than others.
Explain, **in detail**, why some groups in society are more likely to participate in politics than others.
You should give a **maximum** of **three** reasons in your answer.
In your answer you should state the world power you have studied.

8

8

[NOW GO TO QUESTION 21 STARTING ON PAGE 57.]

Section 1: Democracy in Scotland and the United Kingdom

Part A – Democracy in Scotland

1 You can be credited in a number of ways **up to a maximum of 4 marks**.

Possible approaches to answering the question:

An important power of the First Minister is that he or she is the leader of the largest political party in Scotland and head of the Scottish Government.

1 mark – accurate but undeveloped point.

Nicola Sturgeon is Scotland's First Minister. She has the important power to appoint her MSPs to key posts in her cabinet. John Swinney is Deputy First Minister and is the Cabinet Secretary in charge of finances.

2 marks – accurate point with development.

An important power of Nicola Sturgeon is that she represents Scotland on the world stage and, although it is a reserved power, she can outline the Scottish Government's defence and foreign policy. She is opposed to Trident and the UK bombing of Syria. In December 2015, she attended the Paris Summit on climate change as part of the UK delegation, but also as a member of the Compact of States and Regions.

3 marks – accurate point with development and exemplification.

Credit reference to aspects of the following:

- ▶ Leader of the Scottish Government.
- ▶ Directs policy in the Scottish Government.
- ▶ Spokesperson for the Scottish Government.
- ▶ Chairs Scottish Cabinet meetings.
- ▶ Chooses members of the Scottish Cabinet.
- ▶ Leader of the biggest party in the Scottish Parliament.
- ▶ Takes part in First Minister's Question Time every week.
- ▶ Lead role in discussions with other devolved governments and overseas.
- ▶ Focus of media attention.

2 You can be credited in a number of ways **up to a maximum of 6 marks**.

Possible approaches to answering the question:

Some people do not vote because they are not on the electoral register.

1 mark – accurate but undeveloped point.

One reason some people do not vote is that they do not trust politicians because of recent scandals. They also feel it will make no difference to their lives and do not see the point.

2 marks – accurate points but undeveloped.

One reason some people do not vote is that they think politicians are out of touch with the public and are only involved in politics for personal gain. Recently MSPs received a pay rise well above the rate of inflation, yet public sector workers were only given a 1 per cent wage rise. So this unfairness makes the public even more disillusioned.

3 marks – accurate point with development and exemplification.

Credit reference to aspects of the following:

- ▶ Those who support minority parties are aware that their party will win no seats even with AMS.
- ▶ Decline in the number of voters who join a political party, so more and more of the public are not interested in mainstream politics.
- ▶ Increase in the number of the public joining pressure groups and supporting single issue actions.
- ▶ Not everyone can vote, which includes Scottish prisoners and those under the age of 18.
- ▶ Voter apathy is increasing.