



National
Qualifications
2025

X849/77/11

Modern Studies

FRIDAY, 23 MAY

9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

Total marks — 90

Attempt ONE section only.

SECTION 1 — POLITICAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

Part A — Attempt TWO questions.

Part B — Attempt BOTH questions.

SECTION 2 — LAW AND ORDER AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

Part A — Attempt TWO questions.

Part B — Attempt BOTH questions.

SECTION 3 — SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

Part A — Attempt TWO questions.

Part B — Attempt BOTH questions.

Write your answers clearly in the answer booklet provided. In the answer booklet, you must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

Use **blue** or **black** ink.

Before leaving the examination room you must give your answer booklet to the Invigilator; if you do not, you may lose all the marks for this paper.



* X 8 4 9 7 7 1 1 *

SECTION 1 — POLITICAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

PART A — 60 marks

Attempt TWO questions

Question 1 — Power and influence

‘The best electoral systems ensure a strong stable government.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 2 — Political ideology

‘Traditional conservatism has no contemporary relevance.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 3 — Political structures

‘No one branch of government is more powerful than the others.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

PART B — 30 marks
Attempt BOTH questions

Question 4

You are researching the consequences of withdrawal from the European Union on Scotland.

To what extent would focus groups be the best method for investigating this issue?

You should include reference to an alternative method(s) in addition to focus groups.

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples.

15

[Turn over

Question 5

MARKS

To what extent can **Source A** be considered trustworthy?

15

Source A

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The Institute for Government exists to make government more effective through rigorous research, open discussion and fresh thinking.

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- Undertaking high quality research, providing analysis of the key challenges facing government, and making compelling recommendations for change.
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Spotlight on

Ministers Reflect: Lord Frost

Interviews with former ministers on the realities of the role and how to be effective in government.

Lord Frost was interviewed by **Tim Durrant** and **Beatrice Barr** on 6 December 2022 for the Institute for Government's Ministers Reflect project. Lord Frost talks about negotiating the UK's exit from the EU as a special adviser and then as a Lords Minister, what his previous experience as a civil servant brought to his ministerial career, and the challenges of working across government to deliver Brexit opportunities.

Interview

Beatrice Barr (BB): You've mentioned the Brexit opportunities brief, which is something you set up in the Cabinet Office. It's such a complicated brief that inevitably cuts across so many departments — how did you conceive of it working? Did it continue to work in the way that you hoped that it would?

Question 5 (continued)

Source A (continued)

Lord Frost (LF): I had some slight doubts from the start that it would work well. As a civil servant, I'd run teams that are not line teams but whose job it is to get in the way of other bits of the system and check they are doing their job right — the policy planning role in the Foreign Office is a classic example of that. In my experience, it was difficult to make such roles work well. So I had some reservations about whether this was really going to work elevated to the ministerial level. I think I was right to have that. You do inevitably run into the problem that you've created a job whose job is to interfere with somebody else. Particularly with the way that Number 10 and the Cabinet Office are set up, they aren't a proper prime minister's department with real lines of delivery and accountability. Much of what you can achieve depends on your perceived political authority and your ability to push things and make trouble. On Brexit proper I was perceived as speaking with the PM's authority and there was never an issue. But on Brexit opportunities it was never quite like that. It was obvious that Boris had different views on some of the Brexit opportunities dossier to me, and that could be exploited to stop things going as fast as we wanted.

BB: You often hear that complaint about the Brexit departments, that the challenge of cutting across government departments was just so big. How do you think that crosscutting work could have been done better? Is there a way to make it work, or was it always going to be something that was a huge challenge?

LF: I think it's always a huge challenge, and it was particularly a challenge because some of the things we wanted to do weren't really prefigured in the manifesto. The manifesto was written in the Theresa May world, in 2019, in terms of emphasising high standards and certain social policy assumptions. Then we tried to change that around, but we didn't really have much political support we could point to. That was part of the problem. So you can do it but, as with everything really, there's got to be clear direction from the top, a clear identification of what needs to be done, and a real machine behind it.

(Extract adapted from Institute for Government website. Full interview available at <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/ministers-reflect/lord-frost>)

[Turn over

SECTION 2 — LAW AND ORDER AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

PART A — 60 marks

Attempt TWO questions

Question 6 — Understanding the criminal justice system

‘Equality within the criminal justice system has not yet been achieved.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 7 — Understanding criminal behaviour

‘Definitions, measurements and perceptions of crime are not fixed.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 8 — Responses by society to crime

‘Early intervention remains the best strategy to reduce future crime.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

PART B — 30 marks
Attempt BOTH questions

Question 9

You are researching the impact of the presumption against short prison sentences (PASS) in Scotland.

To what extent would focus groups be the best method for investigating this issue?

You should include reference to an alternative method(s) in addition to focus groups.

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples.

15

[Turn over

To what extent can **Source B** be considered trustworthy?

15

Source B

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Spotlight on

Ministers Reflect: Kenny MacAskill

Interviews with former ministers on the realities of the role and how to be effective in government.

Kenny MacAskill was interviewed by [Tess Kidney Bishop](#) and [Akash Paun](#) on 5 December 2018 for the Institute for Government's Ministers Reflect project. Kenny MacAskill was an SNP MSP from 1999–2016 and Cabinet Secretary for Justice from 2007–2014 and reflects on deciding to release Abdelbaset al-Megrahi from prison, merging the Scottish police forces and preparing for the referendum.

Interview

Akash Paun (AP): In the period after 2011, you pushed through some other major reforms, such as the merger of Scottish police forces. So I'd be interested in how you managed that process. How did you deal with the police and other stakeholders to successfully implement what was quite a major and, I think to some people, a controversial change?

Question 10 (continued)

Source B (continued)

Kenny MacAskill (KM): Well, I took the view it was a virtue from a necessity. You know, I had been lobbied by civil servants that we could save money by moving towards sharing chief constables and amalgamating services. I'd always said it's not worth going there. And then, of course, not only did we win in 2011 but we'd had the financial crash in 2008. It was quite clear that if we continued as we were then some of the smaller police services such as Fife and Dumfries and Galloway would frankly just not be able to do their day jobs. Strathclyde and Lothian would have muddled through, but the smaller ones were going to be incapable of delivering their jobs. To some extent, that's what's playing out south of the border at the moment. So we had to change. We then had to decide what we were going to change. And that was why we went away and looked internationally.

There were arguments for going to three or four police services. The arguments against going to three or four were that it didn't make any significant savings and you still had the difficulties over 'My PD (personnel device) is better than your PD, we're not doing that, our system's better than yours.' So it wouldn't make the change. And I always remember what persuaded me. I remember meeting people from Finland who said: 'Look, we went from 32 to 14, and then two years later we just went to one. If you're going to change, change once.' And that I thought was remarkable advice. So we decided we were going for a single service. In a country of five million people, it was the way to go.

AP: One of the major reasons for opposition was the sense of it becoming over-centralised, wasn't it?

KM: No, I think the major reason for opposition, as with everything after 2011, was the referendum. After 2011, everything became political. There was nothing off limits. And I could understand some opposition on the basis of whether you wanted this or that, but the major opposition was simply because it was us and because there was the referendum. I mean, nothing became off limits. I would never, as a shadow spokesman, have attacked a chief constable unless it was something horrendous, but they became fair game. Anything and everything was an issue. Actually, Labour supported a single service, it just tended to snipe from the sidelines. The Liberals said it was all about local autonomy but never came up with any suggestions. The Tories actually initially started off supporting a single service and then I think decided they'd better be in opposition and not support the change. We were supported by the Scottish Police Federation, we were supported by the Fire Brigades Union. We built that coalition, we knew where we were going and we delivered it.

(Extract adapted from Institute for Government website. Full interview available at <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/ministers-reflect/kenny-macaskill>)

[Turn over

SECTION 3 — SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND RESEARCH METHODS — 90 marks

PART A — 60 marks

Attempt TWO questions

Question 11 — Understanding social inequality

‘Definitions, measurements and perceptions of inequality are not fixed.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 12 — The impact of social inequality

‘At a national level, inequalities in housing have the greatest impact.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

Question 13 — Responses to social inequality

‘Overcoming inequality requires a collectivist approach.’

Discuss, with reference to the UK/Scotland **and** any other country/countries you have studied.

30

PART B — 30 marks
Attempt BOTH questions

Question 14

You are researching the impact of Universal Credit in Scotland.

To what extent would focus groups be the best method for investigating this issue?

You should include reference to an alternative method(s) in addition to focus groups.

In your answer you should make reference to relevant examples.

15

[Turn over

Question 15

To what extent can Source C be considered trustworthy?

15

Source C

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Spotlight on

Ministers Reflect: Jeane Freeman

Interviews with former ministers on the realities of the role and how to be effective in government.

Jeane Freeman was interviewed by [Akash Paun](#) and [Alex Nice](#) on 5 October 2021 for the Institute for Government's Ministers Reflect project. She was the Scottish National Party MSP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley from 2016–2021 and joined the Scottish government in 2016 as minister for social security and was cabinet secretary for health and sport from 2018–2021.

Interview

Alex Nice (AN): Thinking about how intergovernmental relations evolved during your time in office, did you find that it became more difficult to work with UK ministers over the time? Did Brexit put a greater strain on that co-operation?

Question 15 (continued)

Source C (continued)

Jeane Freeman (JF): There's no straightforward answer to that, to be honest, because an awful lot depends on individuals. So if I think about the time when I was social security minister — and from memory I think it was three secretaries of state for the DWP — relations between us depended a lot of those individuals, as individuals. So some, the first two for example, were clear that there were some difficulties that really we just needed to work our way through, and let's not have a big fight about this. Then we had a situation where it was a much more ideological battle, that basically social security was a UK government matter and Scotland was going to be allowed to footer round the edges, but 'you'll essentially do what we say'. So, it depended a lot on the approach of the individuals.

There is a running thread though through all of it, which is I am firmly of the view that UK government, ministers and the UK Westminster-based civil service — and this isn't actually particularly confined to a Conservative government, it was my experience with Labour as well — do not understand devolution. They simply don't understand it and they have paid no attention to it. And they don't understand what has happened in the political culture of Scotland and the citizens' view in Scotland, regardless of whether or not people support independence or oppose independence, in the 20-odd years since the Scottish parliament was established. It's not the same as it was 20 years ago.

AN: Health is devolved but the UK did have UK-wide science advice structures through SAGE (Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies). How useful did you find the science advice coming from structures that were based in London for Scotland? What led you to then set up Scotland's own science advice structures to complement that?

JF: There was really good co-operation between the four chief medical officers who I think probably spoke to each other at least once a day in a collective call, if not more often. The difficulty we had with SAGE is that we were observers to it, not part of it. That meant that we weren't always even observing those discussions. And so that's why the first minister set up her COVID-19 advisory group and allowed us to use some of the key brains that we have in Scotland from the University of Glasgow, St Andrews, Edinburgh and others who are sort of public health experts, epidemiologists and so on. Behavioural science was really important. That helped significantly.

(Extract adapted from Institute for Government website. Full interview available at <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/ministers-reflect/jeane-freeman>)

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Section 2 Part B Question 10 Source B

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