

## **Aberdeenshire Council Response**

### **Questions on modern studies and citizenship**

1. *What proportion of your schools offer Modern Studies as a discrete subject in BGE?*

**10 of the 17 secondary schools in Aberdeenshire offer Modern Studies as a discrete subject for all 3 years in the BGE. A further 4 schools have Modern Studies taught as a discrete subject for part of the BGE, most usually for S2/3 or S3.**

2. *What proportion of your schools offer an integrated Social Studies Course in BGE?*

**3 of the 17 secondary schools teach a fully integrated course which covers the Experiences and Outcomes for Social Studies.**

3. *In what proportion of your schools does PSE/PSHE curriculum cover citizenship in S1 – S3?*

**In almost all our schools, 16 from the 17, Citizenship is covered in the PSE/PSHE curriculum in S1-3.**

4. *In what proportion of your schools does PSE/PSHE curriculum cover citizenship in S4 – S6?*

**In most of our schools, 14 from the 17, Citizenship is covered in the PSE/PSHE curriculum in S4-6.**

### **Senior Phase**

[NB please note these questions relate to whether your schools provide the following qualifications, as opposed to whether pupils attending your schools access these courses in other schools or in colleges]

1. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 3 qualification in Senior Phase?

**Currently, 11 schools from 17 offer National 3 in Modern Studies.**

2. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 4 qualification in the Senior Phase?

**Currently, all schools offer National 4 in Modern Studies.**

3. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies National 5 qualification in the Senior Phase?

**Currently all schools offer National 5 in Modern Studies.**

4. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies Higher qualification in the Senior Phase?

**Currently all schools offer Higher Modern Studies.**

5. What proportion of your schools offer a Modern Studies Advanced Higher qualification in the Senior Phase?

**Currently all schools offer Advanced Higher Modern Studies.**

6. Has the provision of qualifications at any of these levels fluctuated over the past five years? If so, please specify.

**Provision has remained very stable. Classes at the lowest levels and highest levels run according to demand. Schools report that Modern Studies is a very popular qualification with pupils.**

### **Staffing**

1. *What proportion of secondary schools in your area have at least one full time specialist modern studies teacher (or equivalent of at least 1 FTE)?*

**All our schools have at least one full time specialist – most have 2 fully qualified Modern Studies teachers.**

2. *What proportion of the modern studies specialists in schools in your area are teaching in permanent posts?*

**Almost all Modern Studies teachers are in permanent posts. There are 2 probationers in posts in Aberdeenshire schools.**

3. *Has the number of permanent posts in modern studies changed in the last 5 years in your area? If so, please provide details.*

**The number of permanent posts has remained stable. Where there has been a change, this has mainly been due to fluctuations in school roles, or change triggered by promotion within the Social Studies Faculty which has necessitated recruitment of another member of staff to make up for the shortfall created by the increase of management time given to the PT.**

4. *Of the secondary schools in your area that offer discrete Modern Studies classes in BGE, roughly what proportion of these classes are taught by a specialist modern studies teacher?*

**In the main, all are taught by Modern Studies teachers. Occasionally, another Social Subjects teacher may take a class, if there are timetabling or staffing constraints, but this is not the norm.**

5. *What proportion of secondary schools in your area offer Modern Studies qualifications of some form? Within this proportion, do you know the extent to which these classes are taught by a specialist modern studies teacher?*

**All schools offer a range of Modern Studies qualification, and all of these classes are taught by subject specialists.**

6. *Are there any specific challenges in your area at present in relation to the recruitment of modern studies specialists? Has this become easier or more challenging over the course of the past 5 years?*

**There has been no appreciable change. The number of applicants may have reduced, but schools have been able to recruit into posts. Two schools reported that they felt the quality of candidates had reduced in recent years. It is easier, however, to recruit to Modern Studies than it is for subjects like Mathematics, Technical etc.**

#### **General comments (optional)**

1. *What could help to improve the quality of teaching and learning in modern studies in your education authority area?*

**The Chair of our Modern Studies Professional Support Group felt that Political Literacy should be promoted as vigorously as STEM. Funded opportunities for pupils to take part in Parliament visits would be very welcome, and free access to BBC documentaries would also be appreciated. By its very nature, Modern Studies is a subject which is constantly changing and this necessitates a lot of on-going curriculum development. Opportunities to network with teachers across the country to help with sharing resources could help improve learning and teaching in the subject.**

2. *Are there any other comments you would like to make to inform the Committee's work?*

**Aspects of the Modern Studies Curriculum, especially Citizenship, are delivered in a variety of ways – not only through Modern Studies. In The BGE, we have schools who offer electives focussing on aspects of Modern Studies, and this is also a focus in Tutor time and in Assembly programmes, as well as in Geography, RMPS and PSE.**

**In the Senior Phase Geography, Philosophy, Politics, Sociology, Travel and Tourism, Scottish Studies, and Higher and Advanced Higher Modern Languages courses cover aspects of citizenship.**

**Citizenship also features heavily in the wider achievement programmes offered. These include Eco School, Learning For Sustainability, Charities and Rights Respecting School Groups as well as opportunities for young people to be involved in programmes like the Youth Philanthropy Initiative, Mock Elections Programmes, Aberdeenshire's Mock Trial Competiton and Community Resilience Projects. Visits to Scottish Parliament are also an integral feature of many schools' provision.**