



BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

JUNIOR CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION

ASSESSMENT SYLLABUS

SOCIAL STUDIES
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SOCIAL STUDIES ASSESSMENT SYLLABUS

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FOREWORD

The Botswana Examinations Council is pleased to release the assessment syllabus for the revised Junior Secondary Education curriculum implemented in January 2010.

The purpose of this assessment syllabus is to guide schools, teachers and other educational institutions on what will be assessed in the subject area and how the assessment will be carried out for certification of students completing the Junior Secondary Education.

The curriculum at junior secondary level, puts emphasis on understanding and application of concepts; development of high order thinking skills (HOTS) such as inquiry, decision making, reasoning, creative, analytical, problem solving and process skills. It also calls for the acquisition of hands on experience that should increase the participation and performance of all groups e.g. groups of different abilities, learners with special needs, girls and boys.

All these skills entail more practical and challenging content and tasks that require higher levels of engagement of a learner's cognitive ability. The assessment syllabus has been designed to allow these higher order thinking skills to be assessed. It assesses what candidates know, understand and can do, enabling them to demonstrate their full potential.

The assessment syllabus is intended to promote a variety of styles of teaching, learning and assessment to enable candidates to progress to higher levels of learning. Therefore, teachers must be proficient in planning and directing a variety of learning activities. They should be conscious of the need for the students to be accountable and responsible for their own learning to some extent. They must also take into account the widening different levels of achievement which they aspire to. This implies active participation by both students and teachers, the creation of rich and diverse learning environments and the use of relevant assessment procedures to monitor the development of each learner.

It is important then that we value the student's own experiences, build upon what they know and reward them for positive achievement. This assessment syllabus is the outcome of a great deal of professional consultation and collaboration. On behalf of the Botswana Examinations Council, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to the development and production of this assessment syllabus.



Executive Secretary

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1. Introduction

As part of the Botswana Junior Secondary Education Programme, this Social Studies syllabus is designed to provide a framework for the assessment of candidates who have completed the three-year course based on the revised Junior Secondary Social Studies teaching syllabus.

The Junior Secondary Education Social Studies Assessment Syllabus aims to afford the candidate an opportunity to fully demonstrate their potential and exhibit the knowledge and skills they possess through a variety of assessment modes. The syllabus also aims at providing information on what will be assessed and how it will be assessed with the intention of achieving comparable standards from year to year.

Candidates will be assessed on a scale of A – E. Candidates who fail to meet the minimum requirement for E will be awarded a U.

This syllabus should be read in conjunction with the Junior Secondary School Social Studies teaching syllabus.

This syllabus is available to private candidates.

The outcome of instruction in the content prescribed by the Social Studies teaching syllabus will be assessed through a Multiple-Choice paper and a written paper.

2. General Aims of Assessment

The syllabus embraces the subject aims defined in the Social Studies teaching syllabus.

The assessment syllabus has the following additional aims:

- To ensure proper assessment of all the important skills in the curriculum
- To enable both teaching and assessment to cater for all ability levels
- To provide an efficient evaluative mechanism of the curriculum
- To encourage an investigative approach to learning
- To provide internationally recognised standards
- To enable the students to realise their full potential
- To reinforce candidates' ability to handle and interact meaningfully with given materials
- To encourage candidates to apply learned skills to manipulate life

3. Assessment Objectives

For purposes of assessment, the behavioural outcomes of instruction in the prescribed content have been classified into two broad skill areas known as assessment objectives. Brief descriptions of the assessment objectives are given below.

Assessment Objective 1: Knowledge and Understanding

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to recall and understand;

- 1.1 Social Studies facts and concepts;
- 1.2 human evolution and Botswana's historical development and their contribution to modern society;
- 1.3 the importance of using natural, human and economic resources in sustainable ways;
- 1.4 the importance of civil rights and responsibilities;
- 1.5 Botswana's social and cultural environments;
- 1.6 Botswana's political, social, economic and cultural developments.

Assessment Objective 2: Inquiry and Critical thinking Skills

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to;

- 2.1 interpret and read a map as well as manage information;
- 2.2 investigate physical, socio-economic and political issues using appropriate research methods;
- 2.3 evaluate Botswana's system of government, national principles and nation building policies;
- 2.4 make judgment about peoples' attitudes towards the environment;
- 2.5 evaluate the effect that the different economic sectors have on the physical, socio-economic and cultural environments;
- 2.6 evaluate Botswana's cultural diversity, socio-economic and political interactions with the world.

4. Scheme of Assessment

The JCE Social Studies syllabus will be assessed through a Multiple-Choice paper and a written paper.

Paper 1		Multiple-Choice Items	
Time	1 hour	Marks	40
Weighting	35%		

This will be a 40 item Multiple-Choice paper assessing knowledge, understanding, analytical, application and interpretation skills. Each item will have four options.

Note: *Candidates are allowed to use a calculator in this paper.*

Paper 2		Short-Answer Items and Structured Essays	
Time	2 hours 15 minutes	Marks	80
Weighting	65%		

This is a written paper assessing knowledge, understanding, and Critical Thinking Skills. Candidates will be required to make deductions and extrapolations.

There will be three sections in the paper, that is, Sections **A**, **B** and **C**.

Section A: This section will present **three** structured items of 10 marks each. The items will target the candidate's analytical, interpretation and inference skills. Tasks will be based on stimulus material. Candidates will answer **all** questions. This section will be worth **30 marks**.

Section B: This section will present **three** structured essay items of 10 marks each. Candidates will be expected to use factual knowledge to explain, discuss, analyse and evaluate issues. This section will be worth **30 marks**.

Section C: This section will present structured item based on research skills. This section will be worth **20 marks**.

Note: *Candidates are allowed to use a calculator in this paper.*

5. Assessment Grid

The grid below shows the assessment objectives that will be mainly assessed in each paper.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES	COMPONENTS	
	Paper 1	Paper 2
1.1	√	√
1.2	√	√
1.3	√	√
1.4	√	√
1.5	√	√
1.6	√	√
2.1	√	√
2.2		√
2.3		√
2.4		√
2.5		√
2.6		√

6 Grade Descriptors

The descriptions below provide a general indication of the standards of achievement expected of the candidates for the award of key grades A, C and E.

GRADE A

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate good knowledge and clear understanding of Social Studies facts and concepts;
- show clear understanding of the interdependence between societies and their environment and thoroughly examine the dynamic nature of this interdependence and how it may change over time;
- make a well reasoned and balanced judgment on socio-economic, cultural and political issues arising from their societies and the world at large;
- investigate and assess socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental issues and present them with a high degree of accuracy, consistency and cohesion;
- use a wide variety of instruments to collect data, analyse it and interpret the findings with a high degree of accuracy.

GRADE C

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate adequate knowledge and understanding of Social Studies facts and concepts;
- show average understanding of the interdependence between societies and the environment, examine the dynamic nature of this interdependence and how it may change over time;
- make fair judgment on socio-economic, cultural and political issues arising from their societies and the world at large;

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- investigate and make a fair assessment of the socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental issues and present them in a coherent manner;
- use a few instruments to collect data, analyse it and interpret the findings.

GRADE E

Candidates should be able to;

- demonstrate basic knowledge of Social Studies facts and concepts;
- show basic understanding of the interdependence between societies and their environment;
- identify socio-economic, cultural or political issues arising from their societies and the world at large;
- show limited ability to investigate socio-economic, cultural, political or environmental issues;
- show limited ability to use a few instruments to collect data, and interpret the findings.

7 Inclusive Assessment

BEC intends to ensure that all assessment is inclusive of all candidates regardless of their ability or challenges. This will afford all candidates the opportunity to display what they know without fear or prejudice. The assessment will therefore ensure that in the written papers items cater for all ability levels. Special needs candidates will be catered for through modification of assessments to suit visually challenged candidates, learners with hearing impairment as well as learners with learning disabilities. Candidates will also be accommodated as much as possible to gain access into the practically oriented syllabuses.

Centres are however requested to;

- inform BEC of any candidates who need special arrangements by March every year;
- ensure familiarity with the BEC special arrangements manual;
- make the necessary accommodations for learners with disabilities during the teaching and learning;
- modify learners assessments according to their various needs during the teaching and learning.

This will ensure that the special arrangements carried out by BEC do not come as a shock to candidates during examination time.



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