

Higher National Unit Specification

General information for centres

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

Unit code: DP49 35

Unit purpose: This Unit aims to develop knowledge and understanding of analytic philosophy in early 20th Century - particularly in its emphasis on formal logic, the philosophy of language and their central role in the development of logical positivism.

On completion of this Unit the candidate should be able to:

1. Explain fundamental problems in the philosophy of logic.
2. Explain the logical positivist's approach to a traditional problem in philosophy.
3. Evaluate the logical positivist's approach to a traditional problem in philosophy.

Credit points and level: 2 HN Credits at SCQF level 8: (16 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 8*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills: Candidates should possess good communication skills. Other knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the Unit would be beneficial.

In addition, candidates should have achieved HN Unit DP47 34 *Philosophy A: Evaluating Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences* and HN Unit DP48 34 *Philosophy B: Aspects of the History and Development of Western Philosophy*.

Core skills: There will be opportunities to gather evidence towards core skills in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of core skills or core skills components. Further detail is provided in the Support Notes.

Context for delivery: If this Unit is delivered as part of a group award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the group award to which it contributes. This unit is included in the framework of the HNC/D Social Sciences.

Assessment: Outcome 1 will be assessed by one closed book exercise of unseen questions requiring a response of approximately 1000 – 1500 words. Broad guidance on the area(s) to be assessed will be given one week in advance of the assessment date. The use of notes, textbooks, handouts and other materials will not be permitted. The assessment will be conducted under supervision. It is recommended that the closed book assessment is undertaken in one sitting of two – three hours' duration.

General information for centres (cont)

Outcomes 2 and 3 will be assessed by one open book essay of approximately 2000 words. The question should be handed out at an appropriate point in the delivery of the unit and a submission date set. A feedback session with the candidate should ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, knowledge and/or skills, and evidence requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the knowledge and/or skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Explain fundamental problems in the philosophy of logic.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The distinction between inductive and deductive arguments.
- ◆ The distinction between sentences and propositions.
- ◆ The component parts of arguments (premises/conclusions; form/content; constants/variables).
- ◆ The notions of validity and soundness as applied to deductive arguments.
- ◆ The linked distinctions analytic/synthetic; a priori/a posteriori; necessary/contingent.
- ◆ The problem of induction.
- ◆ The problem of the status of the laws of logic.

Evidence requirements

Each candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can explain:

- ◆ the distinction between inductive and deductive arguments
- ◆ the distinction between sentences and propositions
- ◆ **two** of the following three distinctions:
 - premises/conclusions
 - form/content;
 - constants/variables
- ◆ the notions of validity and soundness as applied to deductive arguments
- ◆ **two** of the following three distinctions:
 - analytic/synthetic
 - a priori/a posteriori
 - necessary/contingent
- ◆ Either the problem of induction or the status of the laws of logic

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

The assessment will sample from the knowledge and skills in the manner indicated and will consist of one closed book exercise of unseen questions requiring a response of approximately 1000 – 1500 words. Broad guidance on the area(s) to be assessed will be given one week in advance of the assessment date. The use of notes, textbooks, handouts and other materials will not be permitted. The assessment will be conducted under supervision. It is recommended that the closed book assessment is undertaken in one sitting of two – three hours' duration.

Assessment guidelines

This Outcome will be assessed by unseen questions.

Outcome 2

Explain the logical positivist's approach to a traditional problem in philosophy.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The general approach, shared with all analytic philosophers.
- ◆ The scope of traditional problems tackled by analytic philosophers, in particular those associated with metaphysics, which are in fact pseudo-problems born of the misuse of language including: the problem of induction; the status of the laws of logic and mathematical statements; religious claims; meta-ethical claims, the problem of other minds.
- ◆ The various formulations of the verification principle, i.e. verification 'in practice' versus 'in principle', and 'weak' versus 'strong' verification, along with the reasons for introducing these distinctions.
- ◆ An analytical treatment of one of the traditional problems of philosophy, such as: the problem of induction; the status of the laws of logic and mathematical statements; religious claims; meta-ethical claims; the problem of other minds.

Evidence requirements

Each candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can explain:

- ◆ the general approach
- ◆ the range of traditional problems this approach has been applied to
- ◆ the various formulations of the verification principle
- ◆ one philosopher's treatment of one of the traditional problems in philosophy

Assessment guidelines

Outcome 2 will be assessed holistically with Outcome 3. The details of the assessment can be found under Outcome 3.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

Outcome 3

Evaluate the logical positivist's approach to a traditional problem in Philosophy.

Knowledge and/or skills

- ◆ The verification principle as a theory of meaning including: does the verification principle pass its own test for meaningfulness? If not, can any philosopher respond to this? Can one know how to verify a proposition if one does not already know what it means on independent grounds? Has the verification principle ever been formulated successfully, i.e. has a version of 'weak' verification been formulated that successfully rules out metaphysical statements as meaningless?
- ◆ The viability of one philosopher's proposed solutions.

Evidence requirements

Each candidate will need evidence to demonstrate his/her knowledge and/or skills by showing that he/she can evaluate:

- ◆ the verification principle as a theory of meaning
- ◆ the solutions offered by one philosopher to a traditional philosophical problem

Outcomes 2 and 3 will be assessed by one open book essay of approximately 2000 words. The question should be handed out at an appropriate point in the delivery of the unit and a submission date set. A feedback session with the candidate should ensure the authenticity of the candidate's work. Candidates must show a general appreciation of the range and scope of problems that the approach has been applied to and investigate **one** philosopher's treatment of **one** traditional problem in detail.

Assessment guidelines

Outcomes 2 and 3 will be assessed holistically.

Administrative Information

Unit code:	DP49 35
Unit title:	Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy
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Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 80 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

Analytic philosophy is more technical and difficult than the material candidates have been exposed to in HN Units DP47 34 *Philosophy A: Evaluating Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences* and HN Unit DP48 34 *Philosophy B: Aspects of the History and Development of Western Philosophy*. It is for this reason that it is suggested that the Unit is limited to only one element of the analytic tradition, for example Ayer's version of logical positivism as found in *Language, Truth and Logic*. While there is much more to analytic philosophy than logical positivism, this text is perhaps the most easily accessible in the analytic tradition, while being one of its most famous/notorious. The work of Frege, Russell, Davidson, Wittgenstein, Dummett and others need not figure at all in the delivery of this Unit unless it is to highlight some aspect of the analytic approach. However, since logical positivism is a form of positivism, teachers and lecturers might find it worthwhile to spend some time on the history of positivism itself and its particular attitudes, particularly vis-à-vis metaphysics, the sciences, and social progress. In this regard it might be worth emphasising the connections between David Hume, encountered in HN Unit DP48 34 *Philosophy B: Aspects of the History and Development of Western Philosophy* and A J Ayer.

Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic* could be the central text for this Unit. The material covered in Outcome 1 concerning logic has been included with the view to making this text more accessible. New material includes the question concerning the status of the laws of logic, and a new emphasis on the linked distinctions between analytic/synthetic propositions; a priori/a posteriori propositions; and necessary/contingent propositions. For those looking at Ayer, it is important that they recognise that his treatment of these distinctions is controversial, and this will be achieved only if other treatments are presented. In particular it is important that teachers and lecturers make the connection between Ayer's insistence that all necessary propositions are analytic and his views concerning the status of the laws of logic. Given the topics discussed in *Language, Truth and Logic*, this Outcome places more emphasis on the *philosophical* aspects of logic, rather than focussing exclusively on basic formal logic.

As for the problems that candidates could treat, the primary concern is that they should be among those discussed by Ayer himself in this seminal text. The most readily accessible will be those concerned with ethical and religious language, and it is expected that these will be the primary focus for most candidates. However, Outcome 1 introduces candidates to some central concepts and issues in the philosophy of logic, about which Ayer has much to say. Since logic and the philosophy of logic are central to the analytic tradition, it is hoped that at least some of the stronger candidates will find Ayer's treatment of these issues of interest as well.

One further problem might also be mentioned, namely, the problem concerning the nature of the philosophical enterprise itself. Having been exposed to the work of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes and Hume in HN Unit DP48 34 *Philosophy B: Aspects of the History and Development of Western Philosophy*, candidates will have some idea of the differing assumptions concerning what philosophy is and what philosophers do. Ayer presents a radical new understanding of what philosophy is about which candidates may want to examine.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

The more technical philosophical vocabulary developed in this unit and, in particular, the controversial approach to ethical propositions found in Ayer, form a vital basis for the study of HN

Unit DP4A 35 *Philosophy D: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, which focuses exclusively on ethics.

Guidance on the delivery and assessment of this Unit

This Unit has been designed with the expectation that candidates will have already completed HN Unit DP47 34 *Philosophy A: Evaluating Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences* and HN Unit DP48 34 *Philosophy B: Aspects of the History and Development of Western Philosophy*. The skills and information acquired in the completion of Units A and B, or their equivalents, are needed if candidates are to be successful in this Unit.

Outcome 1 will be assessed by:

One closed book exercise of unseen questions requiring a response of approximately 1000-1500 words. The assessment will be conducted under supervision. Notes will not be allowed. It is recommended that the assessment is undertaken in one sitting of two – three hours' duration.

Outcomes 2 and 3 will be assessed by:

One open book essay/report of approximately 2000 words. The essay/report need not be written up under supervision.

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

This Unit provides a range of opportunities for developing the 4 of the 5 Core Skills. The extent of development will depend on the learning opportunities chosen by the candidate or the delivery and assessment methods selected by the tutor.

Communication - This Unit may contribute towards the component *Written Communication* at Higher if the assessment is an essay. The general skill for this component is 'Produce well-structured written communication on complex topics'. In addition, the reading component may be developed through the comparison of the works of the philosophers. The general skill for this component is 'Read and understand complex written communication'. Opportunity also exists for the development of the oral component 'Produce and respond to oral communication on a complex topic' by setting tasks for group activity and arranging joint information feedback sessions.

In both formative and summative assessment the candidate should be encouraged to present all essential ideas/information and supporting detail in a logical and effective order; use a structure that takes account of purpose and audience and links major and minor points in ways which assist the clarity and impact of the writing; use conventions which are effective in achieving the purpose and adapted as necessary for the target audience and use spelling, punctuation and sentence structures which are consistently accurate.

These skills can be developed through formative activities, such as short essays, without being formally assessed for Core Skill certification.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

Working with Others - A tutor may actively choose to develop the general skill of ‘Work with others in a group to analyse, plan and complete an activity’ at Intermediate 2 level by setting tasks for group activity and arranging joint information feedback sessions. Candidates could be encouraged to collaborate at the early stages of their search activities.

Information Technology - Opportunities to develop this skill can easily be incorporated into the delivery of the unit by supporting the candidate to carry out information searches using efficient and effective search strategies. This will contribute towards the component *Using an IT system effectively and responsibly to process a range of information*, specifically the skill ‘carry out two searches to extract and present relevant information from electronic data sources’ at Intermediate 2 level. This Core Skill could be developed without formal certification.

Problem Solving - This Core Skill will be developed at Higher level throughout this unit particularly in planning the tasks. Tutors should encourage learners to explore appropriate strategies for managing their time and evaluating the considerable amount of data available on the topics contained in this unit. Tutors may actively choose to further develop this skill by setting tasks for group activity and arranging joint information feedback sessions. This will contribute towards the component *Critical Thinking* where the general skill of ‘analysing a complex situation or issue will be developed’, the component *Planning and Organising* where the general skill of ‘planning, organising and completing a complex task’ will be developed and the component *Reviewing and Evaluating* where the general skill of ‘reviewing and evaluating a complex problem solving activity’ will be developed. This Core Skill could be developed without formal certification.

Open learning

This Unit could be delivered by open or distance learning. However it would require careful planning by the centre to ensure sufficiency and authenticity of candidate evidence.

Arrangements would have to be made to ensure that Outcome 1 was assessed in a supervised environment under controlled conditions.

Candidates with additional support needs

This Unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs*, which is available on the SQA website www.sqa.org.uk

General information for candidates

Unit title: Philosophy C: An Introduction to Analytic Philosophy

This Unit is designed to introduce you to one of the most influential philosophical traditions of the 20th Century, the so-called Anglo-American analytic tradition. This tradition contains many different thinkers, with very different projects; but they are linked by the common assumption that the analysis of language, and the development of theories of meaning in particular, will provide insights into the resolution, or dissolution, of many traditional philosophical problems. By the end of the Unit you will be familiar with some concepts and issues in the philosophy of logic, the Verification theory of meaning, and the treatment of various problems that have traditionally occupied philosophers.

The Unit will be assessed as follows:

Outcome 1

One closed book exercise of unseen questions requiring a response of approximately 1000-1500 words. The assessment will be conducted under supervision. Notes will not be allowed. The assessment will be undertaken in one sitting of two – three hours' duration.

Outcomes 2 and 3

One open book essay/report of approximately 2000 words. The essay/report need not be written up under supervision. A feedback session with your tutor/lecturer will ensure the authenticity of your work.