

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Nature of Belief (Intermediate 2)
NUMBER	D409 11
COURSE	Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (Intermediate 2)

SUMMARY

The unit seeks to develop understanding of issues of belief and to provide candidates with an opportunity to make judgements and draw conclusions.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate understanding of issues of belief.
- 2 Analyse issues of belief.
- 3 Evaluate issues of belief.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have completed a course or units where appropriate:

- in Religious Studies Standard Grade at General level
- in Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at Intermediate 1 level
- in a Short Course in Religious and Moral Education with evident potential at this level
- in a social subject at an equivalent level

The unit will be available to more mature candidates who have an interest in the subject matter and can demonstrate appropriate ability at this level.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	DD
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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Nature of Belief (Intermediate 2)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Intermediate 2.

CORE SKILLS

This unit gives automatic certification of the following:

Complete core skills for the unit	None
Core skills components for the unit	Critical Thinking Int 2

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Nature of Belief (Intermediate 2)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate understanding of issues of belief.

Performance criteria

- (a) Describe an issue of belief.
- (b) Explain why the issue presents a challenge to religious belief.

OUTCOME 2

Analyse issues of belief.

Performance criteria

- (a) Given a selected issue, explain the challenge to religious belief.
- (b) Explain a relevant response to the challenge.

Evidence requirements for Outcomes 1 and 2

Evidence in the form of one extended response for one issue out of three. The response should describe the main features of the issue and clearly explain why it presents a challenge to religious believers.

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate issues of belief.

Performance criteria

- (a) Discuss both sides of a given issue.
- (b) Present a clear personal conclusion supported by at least two reasons.

Evidence requirements

PCs (a) and (b): evidence in the form of one extended response for one issue out of three. The issue should be the same issue assessed in Outcomes 1 and 2.

The extended response will consist of comment on both sides of the issue and a clear personal conclusion supported by at least two appropriate reasons.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Nature of Belief (Intermediate 2)

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

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

In this unit there is a choice of an area of study from the following:

- Existence of God
- Science and Belief
- Belief and Action

Existence of God

- Are the traditional arguments for belief in God convincing?
Lack of sufficient evidence, objections to arguments from First Cause and Design; religious responses.
- Is religious experience sufficient?
The nature of proof and religious experience, arguments and counter arguments.
- Is suffering and evil a problem?
Suffering and evil as a challenge to religious belief; religious responses.

Science and Belief

- How do we come to 'know' things?
Scientific method and religious beliefs.
- How did the universe begin?
Genesis story and Big Bang Theories.
- How did life come about?
Evolution and creation.

Belief and Action

- Is God real or imagined?
View of God as a human projection and responses.
- Does religion promote social justice?
Marxist challenge and Christian responses.
- How might people be liberated from oppression?
Marxist revolution and Christian responses.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Candidates should select one area of study, from either Existence of God, Science and Belief or Belief and Action. Within the area selected candidates should study all three issues.

In Outcome 1, the emphasis should be on describing what the issue is about. This will usually involve candidates in setting out the parameters of the issue and highlighting the main point of contention. They also have to explain why the issue presents a challenge to religious belief. In Outcome 2 candidates are expected to analyse an issue of religious belief by explaining the nature of both the challenge and response. In Outcome 3 candidates are expected to evaluate the issue by discussing both sides of the argument and drawing a personal conclusion supported by at least two reasons.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Wherever possible, assessment should be used judiciously and efficiently to provide evidence of the achievement of all the learning outcomes in the units and, where appropriate, to contribute to course assessment. The evidence can be gathered during and/or at the end of the unit and must be completed under controlled conditions, ie under supervision without collaboration and the assistance of notes or teacher/lecturer advice. The evidence should be composed of assessments relating to each of the outcomes with equal weighting being given to each outcome. The evidence should be based on one out of the three issues within the chosen area of study.

The marking scheme should reflect the standard embodied in the performance criteria. This will allow the evidence to be considered as a whole. The level of attainment required for successful completion of the unit should represent satisfactory attainment of all the performance criteria.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special 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 on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).