

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT Social Philosophy (Advanced Higher)

NUMBER D427 13

COURSE Philosophy (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This unit seeks to develop knowledge and understanding, analysis and evaluation of central theories, concepts and issues in social philosophy.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the problem or issue.
- 2 Analyse in a reasoned and structured manner one response to the problem or issue.
- 3 Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the response to the problem or issue.

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 Philosophy at Higher
- in Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at Higher
- in a social subject at an equivalent level

This 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: DE

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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

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CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

Core skills for Advanced Higher remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

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

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

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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.

In relation to (a) theories of justice and (b) human or natural rights:

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present a detailed description of the problem of issue.
- (b) Make relevant reference to appropriate sources.

OUTCOME 2

Analyse in a reasoned and structured manner one response to the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present a detailed account of the response.
- (b) Explain how the response can be seen as an attempt to deal with the problem or issue.

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the response to the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the merits and deficiencies of the response.
- (b) Present a conclusion with supporting arguments.

Evidence requirements

Evidence for all outcomes will be provided in the form of an essay for each prescribed issue. Therefore two essays are required: one on justice and one on human or natural rights.

National Unit Specification: support notes

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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

Candidates will be introduced in this optional unit to some of the central areas and philosophical problems concerning social philosophy. These concerns are: the relationship between the state, society and the individual; the nature of authority. Candidates will analyse and assess arguments in social philosophy put forward by classic and contemporary political philosophers. Candidates will be expected to analyse abstract terms such as freedom, rights, justice, liberty and equality.

Candidates will study some theories of Justice (eg Plato, Rawls, Nozick).

They will study some Human Rights theories (eg Locke, Bentham, Marx).

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Concerning Justice, candidates will consider Plato's answer to the of the question: 'What is justice?' as presented in *The Republic*. They will examine Rawl's theory of justice where the emphasis is placed on 'fairness', the original position and the veil of ignorance. Candidates will look at Nozick's theory of justice born of his criticisms of Rawls.

Candidates must describe in detail the historical and philosophical background of the concept of human rights (eg John Locke), which underpins the American Declaration of Independence and the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Candidates should be aware of criticisms of this position, for example those of Jeremy Bentham and Karl Marx. Candidates must analyse the view that there are generically moral, inalienable, irrevocable rights held equally and universally by human beings. Candidates must select a particular right of their choice (eg the right to freedom of speech; the right to work; the right to life) and argue whether or not this right is absolute.

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Teaching staff should use assessment judiciously and efficiently. It should be used to provide evidence of the achievement of all the outcomes in the unit. A balance must be struck between the need for some targeted assessment of specific knowledge and skills and assessment instruments.

Responses of some length are required at this level. The evidence can be gathered during and/or at the end of the unit. The evidence should be composed of assessments relating to each of the outcomes with equal weighting being given to each outcome.

The marking scheme should reflect the standard embodied in the performance criteria. This would 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 the outcomes and, by inference, satisfactory coverage of all the performance criteria.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

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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).