



Advanced Higher
Course Assessment
Specification



Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course Assessment Specification (C764 77)

Valid from August 2015

This edition: April 2015, version 1.1

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this Course Specification can be downloaded from SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk.

Please refer to the note of changes at the end of this Course Assessment Specification for details of changes from previous version (where applicable).

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015

Course outline

Course title:	Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
SCQF level:	7 (32 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	C764 77
Course assessment code:	X764 77

The purpose of the Course Assessment Specification is to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the Course assessment and the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed.

Course assessment structure

Component 1 — question paper	60 marks
Component 2 — project: dissertation	40 marks
Total marks	100 marks

This Course includes eight SCQF credit points to allow additional time for preparation for Course assessment. The Course assessment covers the added value of the Course.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Assessment Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment of this Course is provided in the *Course/Unit Support Notes*.

Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the candidate must pass all of the Units as well as the Course assessment. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

Course assessment

SQA will produce and give instructions for the production and conduct of Course assessments based on the information provided in this document.

Added value

The purpose of the Course assessment is to assess added value of the Course as well as confirming attainment in the Course and providing a grade. The added value for the Course will address the key purposes and aims of the Course, as defined in the Course Rationale. It will do this by addressing one or more of breadth, challenge, or application.

In this Course assessment, added value will focus on the following:

- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This added value consists of:

- ◆ drawing on, extending and applying the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the Course. This will be assessed by a question paper and a project
- ◆ demonstrating depth of knowledge and understanding and application of skills in the question paper. This will sample knowledge and understanding from the mandatory content of the Course and will require the application of skills
- ◆ demonstrating challenge and application through independent research related to an appropriate religious, moral or philosophical or issue, in the project

Grading

Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

The Course assessment is graded A–D. The grade is determined on the basis of the total mark for all Course assessments together.

A candidate's overall grade will be determined by their performance across the Course assessment.

Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, candidates will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Grade description for A

For the award of Grade A, candidates will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course.

Credit

To take account of the extended range of learning and teaching approaches, remediation, consolidation of learning and integration needed for preparation for external assessment, six SCQF credit points are available in Courses at National 5 and Higher, and eight SCQF credit points in Courses at Advanced Higher. These points will be awarded when a Grade D or better is achieved.

Structure and coverage of the Course assessment

The Course assessment will consist of two Components: a question paper and a project: dissertation

Component 1 — question paper

The purpose of this question paper is to demonstrate depth of knowledge and understanding and application of skills.

This question paper will give candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ in-depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues arising from philosophy of religion
- ◆ in-depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues arising from religious experience
- ◆ in-depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues arising from medical ethics
- ◆ analysing and evaluating arguments and evidence
- ◆ synthesising information to structure and sustain a line of argument

The question paper will be marked out of 60. The question paper has two Sections:

- ◆ Section 1: Philosophy of Religion
- ◆ Section 2
 - Part A Religious Experience
 - Part B Medical Ethics

All candidates should complete Section 1 and either Part A or Part B from Section 2.

Section 1: Philosophy of Religion will have 30 marks.

This Section will be made up of two extended response questions from which candidates will choose to answer one. Both questions will be drawn from the same sub-section of the mandatory Course content described in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of this document.

Candidates should then complete either Part A or Part B of Section 2.

Section 2 Part A: Religious Experience will have 30 marks.

This Part will be made up of two extended response questions from which candidates will choose to answer one. Both questions will be drawn from the same sub-section of the mandatory Course content described in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of this document.

Section 2 Part B: Medical Ethics will have 30 marks.

This Part will be made up of two extended response questions from which candidates will choose to answer one. Both questions will be drawn from the same sub-section of the mandatory Course content described in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of this document.

Command words

All questions will require candidates to integrate points of analysis and evaluation and synthesise information, in order to structure and sustain a line of argument. They will be based on the following command words:

- ◆ 'To what extent...'
- ◆ '[statement]..Discuss'
- ◆ 'Critically evaluate...'

followed by '*Present a reasoned argument and conclusion*'.

Scaffolding

Where necessary, questions will be accompanied by appropriate scaffolding which clarifies the demands of the question. Scaffolding will not provide any advice on either the content being sampled, or the structure which a candidate might use in their answer.

Optional questions

In both Sections, candidates will choose one question to answer from a choice of two. The optional questions will be of equal demand, comparable structure and coterminous in scope.

Sampling

The question paper will sample from the full range of content outlined in the further mandatory information on Course coverage. **The full range of the mandatory content of the Course will be assessed over a number of years.** No pattern will be set for the rotation of mandatory content, meaning that the same content may be assessed in subsequent years. Questions will use the same phraseology as the mandatory content, and candidates will be awarded marks for relevant knowledge and understanding that they use in answering the question. This may vary depending on the focus of learning and teaching in different centres.

Component 2 — project–dissertation

The purpose of this project is to demonstrate challenge and application by demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of a project on a complex religious, moral or philosophical issue.

The project–dissertation will give candidates an opportunity to undertake independent research in order to demonstrate the following skills:

- ◆ justifying appropriate research issues
- ◆ using a wide range of sources to research a question or issue
- ◆ analysing and evaluating arguments and evidence
- ◆ synthesising information to structure and sustain a line of argument to progress towards a conclusion
- ◆ organising, presenting and referencing findings using an appropriate referencing system

The project–dissertation will have 40 marks.

Setting, conducting and marking of assessment

Question paper

This question paper will be set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Candidates will complete this in 2 hours.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA

Controlled assessment — project–dissertation

The project–dissertation will be managed by centres within SQA guidelines and conducted under some supervision and control. Evidence for assessment will be produced independently by the candidate in time to meet a submission date set by SQA.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course.

Question papers will sample this mandatory knowledge and understanding and assess skills.

Section A: Philosophy of Religion

Within this section candidates will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of the philosophical principles and distinctions involved in the following arguments and responses to them. Candidates should be able to analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the arguments and their responses. Candidates should be able to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of the extent to which modern developments have challenged traditional philosophical or religious viewpoints.

Cosmological argument and responses

- ◆ Aquinas's cosmological arguments
- ◆ Possibility and necessity
- ◆ Developments of the criticism of Aquinas' arguments
- ◆ Kalam cosmological argument
- ◆ Other cosmological arguments

Teleological argument and responses

- ◆ Use of analogy — strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Key features of Aquinas' argument
- ◆ Presence of suffering and evil
- ◆ Evolution
- ◆ Anthropic principle

Atheism

- ◆ Atheism as a belief position
- ◆ The grounds for atheism
- ◆ Criticisms of atheistic stances
- ◆ Presumption of atheism
- ◆ Coherence of the concept of God
- ◆ External coherence
- ◆ Internal coherence

Section 2: Medical Ethics

Candidates will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of the following complex issues involving medical ethics. They will critically evaluate the extent to which modern developments have challenged traditional religious viewpoints.

Beginning of life

- ◆ Perspectives on when life begins
- ◆ The treatment of embryos
- ◆ Abortion
- ◆ Rights of unborn child, mother and father

Medical care

- ◆ Organ transplant and donation
- ◆ Methods for the procurement of organs

- ◆ Criteria for the allocation of organs
- ◆ Use of life support technology
- ◆ Perspectives on the value of life

End of life

- ◆ Perspectives on when life ends
- ◆ Palliative care of terminal illness
- ◆ Assisted suicide and euthanasia
- ◆ Self-determination of medical care/patient autonomy
- ◆ Purpose of medical care at the end of life

Section 3: Religious Experience

Within this section, candidates will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of the following perspectives on religious experience. They will critically evaluate the extent to which modern developments have challenged traditional arguments about religious experience.

Nature of religious experience

- ◆ Main features of religious experience
- ◆ Religious experience today
- ◆ The impact of claims to religious experience
- ◆ Ethical implications of religious experience

Faith perspectives

- ◆ Mystical experience
- ◆ Role and importance of religious experience in a community of faith
- ◆ Individual conversion
- ◆ Development of religious experience
- ◆ Changing belief systems
- ◆ Religious experience argument for the existence of God
- ◆ How scientific understanding and faith can co-exist

Secular perspectives

- ◆ Psychological accounts of religious experience
- ◆ Scientific accounts of religious experience
- ◆ Sociological accounts of religious experience
- ◆ Limitations of sociological, scientific and psychological accounts
- ◆ How scientific understanding and faith can co-exist

Administrative information

Published: April 2015 (version 1.1)

History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	<p>Structure and coverage of Course assessment section — Component 1 list of skills, knowledge and understanding updated to reflect Marking Instructions.</p> <p>Information on Question Paper structure, command words, scaffolding, optional questions and sampling updated and added for clarity.</p> <p>Component 2 — list of skills updated to reflect Marking Instructions.</p> <p>Further mandatory information on Course coverage section — amendments to introductory paragraphs in each Section, to improve clarity. Removal of 'ancient and modern arguments' from the bullet points of mandatory content for Philosophy of Religion. Within Religious Experience, personal religious conversion' changed to 'individual conversion'.</p>	Qualifications Development Manager	April 2015

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2015

This specification may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged. Additional copies of this Unit can be downloaded from SQA's website at www.sqa.org.uk.

Note: You are advised to check SQA's website (www.sqa.org.uk) to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of the Course Assessment Specification.