

Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Draft Course/Unit Support Notes



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

Contents

Introduction	1
General guidance on the Course/Units	2
Approaches to learning and teaching	5
Approaches to assessment	9
Equality and inclusion	14
Appendix 1: Further information on Units in the Course	15
Appendix 2: Reference documents	39

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specifications* for the Units in the Course.

These support notes cover both the Advanced Higher Course and the Units in it.

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General guidance on the Course/Units

Aims

The aim of this Course is to develop knowledge and understanding of religious, moral and philosophical issues that affect the world today. Religious and non-religious perspectives will be included. The Course will explore the questions they raise and the solutions or approaches they offer. Learners will have opportunities to reflect on these and on their own experience and views.

The Course will require learners to study complex religious and philosophical issues, and either contemporary medical ethics or religious experience in the world today.

The Course will help learners develop an understanding of religious, moral and philosophical issues of relevance in the world today. Learners will develop skills which are transferable to other areas of study and which they will use in everyday life.

Progression

In order to do this Course, learners should have achieved the Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course.

Learners who have achieved this Advanced Higher Course may progress to further study, employment and/or training. Opportunities for progression include:

- ◆ Progression to further/higher education
 - For many learners a key transition point will be to further or higher education, for example to Higher National Certificates (HNCs)/Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) or degree programmes. Examples of further and higher education programmes that learners might progress to are Religious Studies, Theology, Philosophy or Social Sciences and Medicine.
 - Advanced Higher Courses provide good preparation for learners progressing to further and higher education as learners doing Advanced Higher Courses must be able to work with more independence and less supervision. This eases their transition to further/higher education. Advanced Higher Courses may also allow 'advanced standing' or partial credit towards the first year of study of a degree programme.
 - Advanced Higher Courses are challenging and testing qualifications — learners who have achieved multiple Advanced Higher Courses are regarded as having a proven level of ability which attests to their readiness for higher education in Higher Education Institutions in other parts of the UK as well as in Scotland.

This Advanced Higher is part of the Scottish Baccalaureate in Social Sciences]. The Scottish Baccalaureates in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science and Social Sciences consist of coherent groups of subjects at Higher and Advanced Higher level. Each award consists of two Advanced Highers, one Higher and an Interdisciplinary project which adds breadth and value and helps learners to develop generic skills, attitudes and confidence that will help them make the transition into higher education or employment.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

The development of subject specific and generic skills is central to the Course. Learners should be made aware of the skills they are developing and of the transferability of them. It is the transferability that will help learners with further study and enhance their personal effectiveness.

The skills, knowledge and understanding that will be developed in the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course are:

Skills

- ◆ evaluating, analysing and synthesising evidence from a wide range of sources
- ◆ structuring and sustaining detailed, well-informed and well-reasoned arguments, expressed with clarity
- ◆ the ability to carry out independent research into complex religious, moral or philosophical issues
- ◆ explaining and applying interpretations of the context and relevance of the issues and making well-reasoned and detailed judgements

Knowledge and understanding

- ◆ an in–depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues arising from the philosophy of religion, responses from religious and other perspectives
- ◆ an in–depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues in medical ethics, responses from religious and other perspectives or an in–depth knowledge and understanding of complex issues concerning religious experience, responses from religious and other perspectives

Project

- ◆ identifying appropriate research issues
- ◆ planning and managing a complex programme of research
- ◆ sourcing, collecting and recording appropriate and reliable information

- ◆ evaluating, analysing and synthesising information
- ◆ using appropriate referencing conventions

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Approaches to learning and teaching

Advanced Higher Courses place more demands on learners as there will be a higher proportion of independent study and less direct supervision. Some of the approaches to learning and teaching suggested for other levels (in particular, Higher) may also apply at Advanced Higher level but there will be a stronger emphasis on independent learning.

For Advanced Higher Courses, a significant amount of learning may be self-directed and require learners to demonstrate a more mature approach to learning and the ability to work on their own initiative. This can be very challenging for some learners, who may feel isolated at times, and teachers and lecturers should have strategies for addressing this. These could include, for example, planning time for regular feedback sessions/discussions on a one-to-one basis and on a group basis led by the teacher or lecturer (where appropriate).

Teachers and lecturers should encourage learners to use an enquiring, critical and problem-solving approach to their learning. Learners should also be given the opportunity to practise and develop research and investigation skills and higher order evaluation and analytical skills. The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can make a significant contribution to the development of these higher order skills as research and investigation activities become more sophisticated.

Learners will engage in a variety of learning activities as appropriate to the subject, for example:

- ◆ researching information for their subject rather than receiving information from their teacher or lecturer
- ◆ using active and open-ended learning activities such as research, case studies and presentation tasks
- ◆ making use of the internet to draw conclusions about specific issues
- ◆ engaging in wide-ranging independent reading
- ◆ recording in a systematic way the results of research and independent investigation from different sources
- ◆ presenting findings/conclusions of research and investigation activities in a presentation
- ◆ participating in group work with peers and using collaborative learning opportunities to develop team-working
- ◆ participating in informed debate and discussion with peers where they can demonstrate skills in constructing and sustaining lines of argument to provide challenge and enjoyment, breadth, and depth to learning
- ◆ drawing conclusions from complex information
- ◆ using sophisticated written and/or oral communication and presentation skills to present information
- ◆ using appropriate technological resources (eg web-based resources)
- ◆ using appropriate media resources (eg audio or film clips)

- ◆ using real-life contexts and experiences familiar and relevant to young people to meaningfully hone and exemplify skills, knowledge and understanding
- ◆ participating in field trips and visits

Teachers and lecturers should support learners by having regular discussions with them and giving regular feedback. Some learning and teaching activities may be carried out on a group basis and, where this applies, learners could also receive feedback from their peers.

Teachers and lecturers should, where possible, provide opportunities to personalise learning, and enable learners to have choices in approaches to learning and teaching. The flexibility in Advanced Higher Courses and the independence with which learners carry out the work lend themselves to this. Teachers and lecturers should also create opportunities for, and use, inclusive approaches to learning and teaching. This can be achieved by encouraging the use of a variety of learning and teaching strategies which suit the needs of all learners. Innovative and creative ways of using technology can also be valuable in creating inclusive learning and teaching approaches.

Centres are free to sequence the teaching of the Outcomes, Units and/or Course in any order they wish. For example:

- ◆ Each Unit could be delivered separately in any sequence.

And/or

- ◆ All Units may be delivered in a combined way as part of the Course. If this approach is used, the Outcomes within Units may either be partially or fully combined.

There may be opportunities to contextualise approaches to learning and teaching to Scottish contexts in this Course. This could be done through mini-projects or case studies.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

The following skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work should be developed in this Course.

Teachers and lecturers should ensure that learners have opportunities to develop these skills as an integral part of their learning experience.

It is important that learners are aware of the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that they are developing in the Course and the activities they are involved in that provide realistic opportunities to practise and/or improve them.

Reading

Throughout the Course and while undertaking the project, learners will have the opportunity to develop reading skills. They may read a variety of texts, including sacred religious texts, academic journals, newspaper reports, online articles etc. They will also learn to express reasoned views about the viewpoints they study, developing the ability to read critically and evaluate the ideas contained in written sources.

Writing

The Course will provide considerable opportunities to develop writing skills within the Units. Learners should be encouraged to read widely and undertake extended writing where appropriate. For example, the requirements to draw detailed, reasoned and well-structured conclusions and present findings about factual and theoretical elements of religious, moral and philosophical topics or issues provides an ideal opportunity for learners to develop the skill of extended writing.

Personal learning

The Course, and in particular the project, will provide extensive opportunities for learners to undertake individually-led work including researching/investigating, producing written work, reflecting on what they have learned, revising etc.

Citizenship

Issues of citizenship permeate the Course. At Advanced Higher level, learners will gain an appreciation of the centrality of religious and philosophical beliefs to people's lives. Studying beliefs, values and viewpoints which may challenge their own will help learners develop an appreciation of the religious, cultural and social diversity of society.

Applying, analysing and evaluating

At Advanced Higher level, learners will be required to apply their knowledge and understanding of factual elements of religious moral and philosophical issues and questions. They will also be required to link these with underlying theoretical or abstract ideas which will require a greater depth and detail of understanding. This enables learners to explore challenging abstract ideas by engaging with a wide range of source material, and both evaluating and synthesising information. This depth of study affords them a unique opportunity of intellectual engagement with the subject matter.

The Course will involve learners in using different sources of information including academic literature, religious sources, newspaper or online articles, blogs etc. Any piece of information, or source, is capable of yielding more or less relevant input to a study, depending on the skills of the learner. However, teachers/lecturers should direct learners to more complex, and potentially richer sources of information.

The project

Completing the project will provide opportunities for developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. Learners will have the opportunity to develop their reading and writing skills as they research their issue and present findings. They

will develop personal learning as they work independently to identify an issue, and carry out research. They will develop citizenship through deepening their understanding of religious, moral and philosophical questions facing society. Learners will describe and summarise the research they have carried out, assess the usefulness of different sources, and express opinions and viewpoints. This Course provides opportunities to develop the skill of synthesising information. The project in particular will provide opportunities for learners to develop their skills in this area.

There may also be opportunities for other, additional skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work to be developed in the Course. For example, the use of debating, discussion groups or visits from religious representatives could develop skills of listening and talking. However, this could vary across centres depending on approaches being used to deliver the Course in a centre and this is for centres to manage.

At Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will be using a range of higher order thinking skills. They will also develop skills in independent and autonomous learning.

Approaches to assessment

Assessment in Advanced Higher Courses will generally reflect the investigative nature of Courses at this level, together with high-level problem-solving and critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis.

This emphasis on higher order skills, together with the more independent learning approaches that learners will use, distinguishes the added value at Advanced Higher level from the added value at other levels.

There are different approaches to assessment, and teachers and lecturers should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, as well as their understanding of their learners and their varying needs, to determine the most appropriate approaches and, where necessary, to consider workable alternatives.

Assessments must be fit for purpose and should allow for consistent judgements to be made by all teachers and lecturers. They should also be conducted in a supervised manner to ensure that the evidence provided is valid and reliable.

Unit assessment

Assessments must ensure that the evidence generated demonstrates, at the least, the minimum level of competence for each Unit. Teachers and lecturers preparing assessment methods should be clear about what that evidence will look like.

Sources of evidence likely to be suitable for Advanced Higher Units could include:

- ◆ meaningful contribution to group work and/or discussions (making use of log books, blogs, question and answer sessions to confirm individual learners have met the required standards)
- ◆ presentation of information to other groups and/or recorded oral evidence
- ◆ exemplification of concepts using (for example) a diagram
- ◆ interpretation of numerical data
- ◆ investigations
- ◆ extended response essay-type questions

Evidence should include the use of appropriate subject-specific terminology as well as the use of real-life examples where appropriate.

Flexibility in the method of assessment provides opportunities for learners to demonstrate attainment in a variety of ways and so reduce barriers to attainment.

The structure of an assessment used by a centre can take a variety of forms, for example:

- ◆ individual pieces of work could be collected in a folio as evidence for Outcomes and Assessment Standards
- ◆ assessment of each complete Outcome
- ◆ assessment that combines the Outcomes of one or more Units
- ◆ assessment that requires more than the minimum competence, which would allow learners to prepare for the Course assessment

Teachers and lecturers should note that learners' day-to-day work may produce evidence which satisfies assessment requirements of a Unit, or Units, either in full or partially. Such naturally-occurring evidence may be used as a contribution towards Unit assessment. However, such naturally-occurring evidence must still be recorded and evidence such as written reports, recording forms, presentation slides, drawings/graphs, digital recordings or observational checklists provided.

Combining assessment across Units

Units will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in the *Unit Specification*. Each Unit can be assessed on an individual Outcome-by-Outcome basis or via the use of combined assessment for some or all Outcomes.

A combined approach to assessment will enrich the assessment process for the learner, avoid duplication of tasks and allow more emphasis on learning and teaching. Evidence could be drawn from a range of activities for a combined assessment. Care must be taken to ensure that combined assessments provide appropriate evidence for all the Outcomes that they claim to assess.

Combined assessment could bring together aspects of content from across two or more Units. For example, it may help learners to understand the impact and significance of religious experience in the world today if their study of the *Religious Experience* Unit and the *Philosophy of Religion* Unit is closely integrated around the theme of the concept of God. They could study the religious experience argument for the existence of God, the beliefs associated with this, reference to it in sacred texts and contemporary testimony, and then consider how belief in God may be challenged by sociological, psychological or scientific perspectives offered by atheism as a belief position. Evidence retained from an individual presentation and class discussion of this issue could provide evidence for both Units.

In another example, learners may study the theme of the value of life as a way of approaching both the *Medical Ethics* and *Philosophy of Religion* Units. They could study human suffering in respect of medical conditions and consider the implications of this within the bounds and purposes of medical care, freewill and responsibility. This could provide evidence of the requirement to critically analyse questions and responses, and develop knowledge and understanding of the link

between beliefs, practices and sources and their implications for the lives of followers.

Combining assessment will also give centres more time to manage the assessment process more efficiently. When combining assessments across Units, teachers/lecturers should use e-assessment wherever possible. Learners can easily update portfolios, electronic or written diaries and recording sheets.

For some Advanced Higher Courses, it may be that a strand of work which contributes to a Course assessment method is started when a Unit is being delivered and is completed in the Course assessment. In these cases, it is important that the evidence for the Unit assessment is clearly distinguishable from that required for the Course assessment.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and, towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

For this Course, the assessment methods for Course assessment are a question paper and a project. Learners should be given opportunities to practise these methods and prepare for them.

Examples of activities to include within this preparation time include:

- ◆ Preparing for the Components of Course assessment, for example:
 - preparing for non-question paper components — selecting topics, gathering and researching information, evaluating and analysing findings, developing and justifying conclusions, presenting the information (as appropriate)
 - practising question paper techniques, revising for the question paper

In relation to preparing for the project, teachers and lecturers should explain requirements to learners and the amount and nature of the support they can expect. However, at Advanced Higher level it is expected that learners will work with more independence and less supervision and support.

Authenticity

In terms of authenticity, there are a number of techniques and strategies to ensure that learners present work that is their own. Teachers and lecturers should put in place mechanisms to authenticate learner evidence.

In Advanced Higher Courses, learners will take greater responsibility for their own learning and work more independently, so teachers and lecturers need to have measures in place to ensure that work produced is the learner's own work.

For example:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with learners
- ◆ short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress
- ◆ learner notes from their independent reading

Group work approaches are acceptable as part of the preparation for assessment and also for formal assessment. However, there must be clear evidence for each learner to show that they have met the evidence requirements.

For more information, please refer to SQA's [Guide to Assessment](#).

Added value

Advanced Higher Courses include assessment of added value which is assessed in the Course assessment.

Information given in the *Course Specification* and the *Course Assessment Specification* about the assessment of added value is mandatory.

In Advanced Higher Courses, added value involves the assessment of higher order skills such as high-level and more sophisticated investigation and research skills, critical thinking skills and skills of analysis and synthesis. Learners may be required to analyse and reflect upon their assessment activity by commenting on it and/or drawing conclusions with commentary/justification. These skills contribute to the uniqueness of Advanced Higher Courses and to the overall higher level of performance expected at this level.

In this Course, added value will be assessed by means of a question paper and a project.

The question paper is used to assess whether the learner can retain and consolidate the knowledge and skills gained in individual Units. It assesses knowledge and understanding and the various different applications of knowledge such as reasoning, analysing, evaluating and solving problems.

The project is used to assess a wide range of high-order cognitive and practical skills and to integrate assessment. For example, the project brings a number of higher order skills together, such as skills relating to planning, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The learner will carry out a significant part of the work for the project independently with minimal supervision.

In this Course, the project is a Dissertation. This provides continuity with the Advanced Higher Course that is being replaced.

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Equality and inclusion

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course/Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

The greater flexibility and choice in Advanced Higher Courses provide opportunities to meet a range of learners' needs and may remove the need for learners to have assessment arrangements. However, where a disabled learner needs a reasonable adjustment/assessment arrangements to be made, you should refer to the guidance given in the above link.

Appendix 1: Further information on Units in the Course

Advanced Higher helps to prepare learners for university level study. It gives learners an experience of in-depth research and independent analysis. The experience of dissertation writing, research techniques and source evaluation is invaluable preparation for the type of assignment prevalent in Higher education.

Differences between Higher and Advanced Higher

There are, of course, many common features to both Higher and Advanced Higher; however, there are also some significant differences — including differences in emphasis on particular skills.

Higher	Advanced Higher
◆ Essential for entry to university	◆ May be a conditional requirement
◆ Covers several contexts	◆ Greater opportunities for a deeper focus.
◆ The Coursework assignment is produced under high level of supervision and control	◆ The Coursework Dissertation is written and submitted by a deadline.

The *Course Specification*, *Unit Specifications* and *Course Assessment Specification* documents give an overview of the Course, and it may be helpful to issue them to your learners.

There is a choice of issues available.

Learners are expected to use libraries and online facilities as a matter of course.

There is a compelling case to be made for choosing a subject with which you are well versed and can offer sophisticated advice and guidance to your learners. However, attempting something a bit different may stimulate both your interest and that of your learners.

Course delivery

There is no recommended teaching order for the Units in this Course. Different combinations or orderings of Unit delivery will be appropriate in different contexts. This is for centres to manage.

KEY POINTS

- ◆ There is no prescribed order for teaching the course.
- ◆ Be aware of submission deadlines.
- ◆ Learners will require support with time management and their workload.

Examples of content and coverage

The tables below provide illustration of potential coverage for each area of the mandatory content, where this Unit is being used within the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course. It is intended to provide additional guidance on potential areas of teaching and learning, to supplement the expression of mandatory content provided in the *Course Assessment Specification*.

Teachers and lecturers should note that in each section the column on the left describes mandatory content for Course assessment, taken from the *Course Assessment Specification*. The column on the right describes examples of how this content might be covered, and is intended as guidance only.

Philosophy of Religion	
<p>The general aim of this Unit is to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of the philosophical principles and distinctions involved in a <i>priori</i> and <i>posteriori</i> arguments for the existence of God, and responses to these. Learners will critically evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of these types of argument. They will also evaluate the extent to which modern responses have challenged the traditional arguments. Learners should also demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of the links between these ideas and new discoveries at the forefront of scientific understanding.</p>	
Teleological Argument Mandatory content for Course assessment	Examples of coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Use of analogy — strengths and weaknesses. ◆ Key premise of Aquinas’ argument is the claim that things that lack intelligence cannot move towards their end unless they are directed by someone with knowledge and intelligence. ◆ Presence of suffering and evil. ◆ Evolution. ◆ Anthropic principle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teleological argument and responses. ◆ Two parts of the design argument: Design qua purpose and design qua regularity. Both are used by William Paley in <i>Natural Theology</i>. ◆ Fifth of Aquinas’ Five Ways: “from the governance of things”. ◆ An explanation of the use of analogy: Aquinas claims that things that lack intelligence cannot move towards their end unless they are directed by someone with knowledge and intelligence; analogy of the watch designer and God. ◆ The criticism from Hume that the universe may be self-sustaining and that over an unlimited period of time, a finite number of particles will produce all combination, leading to our universe. Consider how this links with Hawking’s Multiverse theory.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Consideration of analogy involved in Teleological arguments to both regularity and purpose, and the criticisms of these, eg David Hume's refutation based on the nature of the earth as being more 'organic' than 'mechanic'. Arguments around the flaws of reaching conclusions based on analogy. Including such criticisms as the fallacy of composition. ◆ Evolution — evolutionary process as presented historically by Darwin and in current scientific thinking and the impact on religion of this (perhaps with reference to new atheists, eg Dawkins). ◆ The Irreducible Complexity argument states there are things in the world that could not have arisen by chance; they must have been designed for the purpose they fulfil. ◆ Even if design is accepted — does this prove God? ◆ Discussion of whether the uniqueness of the universe excludes our arguing from design and whether design gives reason for belief in several gods. ◆ The problem of evil and suffering: the nature of evil: the problems evil poses to an omnipotent, omnibenevolent and omniscient God. ◆ The Freewill defence and arguments around human causation of suffering can be considered in response to the problem of moral evil. Consideration can be given to the response of Hick, based on the Irenaean Theodicy. ◆ Anthropic Principle — arguments around the fine tuning of the universe to support human life and the development of humanity. Consideration of the weak anthropic principle and the strong anthropic principle. Reference to scientists, mathematicians, philosophers such as Teilhard de Chardin, John Polkinghorne and very currently,
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	<p>John Lennox and his counter arguments to Multiverse theory and his propositions around the improbability of human life without design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Aesthetic principle: humans possess ability to appreciate beauty. This is not necessary for survival; is it evidence of divine creator? ◆ A range of sources may be drawn upon to enable learners to distinguish between traditional and contemporary forms of the argument and counter-argument. In addition to those already mentioned, these might include the writing of Flew, Stannard, Davies, Tennant and others.
<p>Cosmological Argument Mandatory content for Course assessment</p>	<p>Examples of coverage</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Aquinas' cosmological arguments. ◆ Possibility and necessity. ◆ Developments of the criticism of Aquinas' arguments. ◆ Other cosmological arguments. 	<p>Cosmological argument and responses Knowledge of what Cosmological arguments are historically and philosophically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Knowledge of each of the Five Ways: motion, cause, contingency, gradation of being, design. ◆ Kalam version of cosmological argument and modern development by William Lane Craig; Ed Miller; S. Clarke; JL Mackie. ◆ Strengths and weaknesses of inductive reasoning including inductive arguments begin with something that can be observed but the conclusion does not necessarily follow from the premises. ◆ Criticisms of Aquinas — philosophical criticisms including the calling into question of the causal principle (eg Russell's argument that the universe 'just is'), the problem of contingent and necessary beings, infinite regression.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ David Hume’s criticisms of cosmological argument in Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion and his modern supporters, eg Anthony Kenny and Bertrand Russell. ◆ Gottfried Leibniz’ principle of sufficient reason. ◆ The extent to which modern scientific theories of cosmology support or undermine the cosmological argument, eg Big Bang theory, Steady-State theory, Quantum Theory. ◆ Consideration of Hawking’s Multiverse Theory, String Theory and other relevant scientific theories that potentially counter a First Cause requirement. ◆ A range of sources may be drawn upon to enable learners to distinguish between traditional and contemporary forms of the argument. These may include the writing of Davies, Swinburne, Hick and others.
Atheism Mandatory content for Course assessment	Examples of coverage
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Atheism as a belief position. ◆ The grounds for atheism. ◆ Criticisms of atheistic stances. ◆ Ancient and modern arguments. ◆ Presumption of atheism. ◆ Coherence of the concept of God. ◆ External coherence. ◆ Internal coherence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Knowledge of the historical development of atheism from ancient times, through history and into current atheistic philosophy and leading proponents such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, Jennifer Michael Hecht and others. ◆ <i>A priori</i> arguments for atheism claim a logical contradiction in the theistic conception of God. <i>A posteriori</i> arguments for atheism claim that the world is other than it would be if God existed. ◆ The presumption of atheism — the onus is on those who would argue for God’s existence to provide sufficient reason for belief. Clifford’s statements that insufficient evidence should not be a basis for belief. Can be applied along with arguments

	<p>such as Occam's razor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Explanation of what is meant by the coherence or incoherence of God including: ◆ Omnipotence of God: God cannot do what is logically impossible but should be able to accomplish anything that is logically possible. Can God make a rock so heavy which God cannot lift? If God cannot do that, then God is not all powerful. ◆ Defence of God's omnipotence: God is 'almighty' rather than omnipotent. ◆ Defence of God's transcendence and immanence: God is above and beyond time. ◆ Tension between the omniscience of God and the concept of freewill and the freedom of humanity. ◆ Issues of suffering and evil: if God is all-powerful and all-loving, evil would be excluded from the world, but evil does exist so God must not? ◆ Analysis and evaluation of theodicies formed in response to atheist arguments: Irenaeus, Swinburne, Hick, Mackie. ◆ The weakness of the proofs offered for God such as the traditional philosophical arguments and the lack of credibility around religious experience. ◆ Social (Feuerbach, Durkheim, Marx) and psychological (Freud, Justin Barrett) construction of religion. ◆ Development of scientific and anthropological understanding. ◆ Relative philosophy, eg Logical Positivism (AJ Ayer).
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Medical Ethics <p>The general aim of this Unit is to develop understanding, analysis and evaluation of issues within medical ethics. Within this Unit all learners should be able to explain and critically evaluate complex issues involving religion and medical ethics. Learners will develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of these issues and religious and non-religious responses. This will include an understanding of new discoveries at the forefront of medicine; legal developments; and contemporary case studies. They will critically evaluate the extent to which modern scientific or ethical developments have challenged traditional religious viewpoints.</p>	
Mandatory content	Examples of coverage
<p>Beginning of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Perspectives on when life begins. ◆ The treatment of embryos. ◆ Abortion. ◆ Rights of unborn child, mother and father. 	<p>Beginning of Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Perspectives on when life begins — knowledge of current scientific thinking on brain activity and the age at which a foetus has awareness. ◆ IVF: history, law, regulation by HFEA, benefits, disadvantages. ◆ The link between IVF and PGD, embryo research and genetic engineering. ◆ Ethical issues raised: cost, family structures, genetic engineering, destruction of embryos, use in embryo research. ◆ Status of embryo: simply a ball of cells, a developmental reality or a person from conception? ◆ Religious perspectives, for example on ensoulment. ◆ Guidance from medical governing bodies, eg BMA/Role of the HFEA in monitoring fertility clinics and UK research involving human embryos. ◆ Impact of medical technology. ◆ Abortion: law, societal trends, and alternatives to abortion. ◆ Legal perspectives on paternal/maternal rights. ◆ Religious perspectives on the above: underpinning principle of sanctity of life, responses from denominations and writers such as J Wyatt, G. Meilaender, R. Holloway.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Secular perspectives on the above, eg P. Singer, J. Harris, Humanism, BMA. ◆ Stance of organisations such as SPUC and local pregnancy advisory services.
<p>Medical care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Knowledge of current legislation around transplant and donation and the arguments around opt-out/opt-in systems. ◆ Types of donors: Donation after brain stem death, donation after cardiac death, live organ donation. ◆ Alternative methods of procurement: xenotransplantation, development of synthetic organs, buying and selling organs and ethical issues raised by these alternatives. ◆ Issues surrounding consent to use or store organs. ◆ End use of organs, eg transplantation/research? ◆ Ethical arguments involved in allocation including cost, demand, fairness, shortage etc. ◆ Conflict between sanctity of life and quality of life principles. ◆ Religious, ethical, medical and legal perspectives on the value of life and related situations (eg disability). ◆ Knowledge of how life support system technology is used and why. Issues around DNR orders, the ethical arguments related to ending life and PVS states. ◆ Comparisons of secular and religious perspectives on medical care using sources such as Christian denominations and other religious views, BMA and humanist statements.
<p>End of life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Perspectives on when life ends. ◆ Palliative care of terminal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Knowledge of current medical definitions of death and religious perspectives and arguments on death and definitions (eg brain stem death with the ability of life support to

<p>illness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assisted suicide and euthanasia. ◆ Self-determination of medical care/patient autonomy. ◆ Purpose of medical care at the end of life. 	<p>keep heart beating).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Types of euthanasia: passive, active, voluntary, involuntary, physician assisted suicide. ◆ Possible value in suffering and meaning of death. ◆ Types of palliative care. ◆ Allocation of, and access to, resources in relation to palliative care. ◆ Knowledge of current legislation and ethical arguments around assisted suicide, right to end life and euthanasia in a range of viewpoints, (eg Margo McDonald, Tony Nicklinson, Dignitas, Church of Scotland report on 'End of Life Issues' 2009 and other religious views). ◆ Slippery slope arguments. ◆ Conflict between sanctity of life and quality of life principles and autonomy and heteronomy. ◆ Religious and secular arguments for and against euthanasia drawing on the work of writers such as J. Wyatt, P. Badham, M. Warnock, P. Singer and others. ◆ Rights to accept or refuse treatment. ◆ Determining the goals of care at end of life.
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Religious Experience

Within this Unit, all learners will critically evaluate the extent to which contemporary scientific or psychological causal explanations of religious experience have challenged traditional arguments about religious experience. This should include consideration of whether scientific or psychological explanations — including new developments where appropriate — can give a complete account of human experience.

All learners should also be able to demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of the continuing impact and importance of religious experiences in shaping and defining religion and its place in the contemporary world.

Mandatory content	Examples of coverage
<p>Nature of religious experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Main features of religious experience.◆ Religious experience today.◆ The impact of claims to religious experience.◆ Ethical implications of religious experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Main features of religious experience — consideration of the terms, definitions and a range of understandings of both ‘religious’ and ‘experience’ and the combination of these. This could include study of a range of thoughts including those of William James, Rudolph Otto and Richard Swinburne.◆ Religious experience today — consideration of the accounts and experiences from a range of individuals and groups in current society. Local input from individuals involved in faith organisations, the writings of contemporary apologists will be appropriate but must be continually reviewed and updated.◆ Developing interest in society in spirituality — does this support the argument from religious experience? Can human beings have a spiritual side if there is no divine being?◆ Research into religious experiences, eg J. Rosegrant and P. Vardy and the impact of claims to religious experience — consideration of how religious experience impacts on the lives of individuals, families, society.◆ Ethical implications of religious experience — consideration of how

	<p>religious experiences can potentially be generated and the ethical issues around this. Consider how religious experience can impact on the moral identification of the individual and their resultant thoughts, words and actions in ethical thinking.</p>
<p>Faith perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Mystical experience ◆ Role and importance of religious experience in a community of faith ◆ Personal conversion ◆ Development of religious experience ◆ Changing belief systems ◆ Religious experience argument for the existence of God ◆ How scientific understanding and faith can co-exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Examples of mystical traditions, eg of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism — common elements and differences. ◆ Mystical experience — understanding of mysticism and mystical experiences. Knowledge of individuals related to mystic experience, such as St Teresa of Avila, Jacob Boehme, Jonathan Edwards, and others such as St Francis of Assisi. ◆ Philosophical perspectives, for example, religious experience argument is <i>a posteriori</i> because it rests upon belief in religious experience and it relies on an inductive leap — can only observe the effect, not the cause. The validity of religious experience claims is bound to the problem of conflicting interpretations of religious experiences. ◆ Role and importance of religious experience in a community of faith — consideration of communities and experiences that unite and motivate religious communities. May include consideration of such events/groups as the revivals in New England with Jonathan Edwards; the Toronto Blessing, the Iona Community, Hillsong; the Hassidic movement within Judaism. ◆ Personal conversion — understanding of the concept of conversion, the impact of conversion and consideration of examples which may include figures such as St Paul, CS Lewis and contemporary figures such as Antony Flew.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A corporate or individual experience leads to questions of reliability. ◆ Development of religious experience — consideration of how religious experience may have changed as society, science, technology have progressed and how these changes are reflected in examples of contemporary religious experience. Questioning around whether all religious experience has changed or not. ◆ Changing belief systems — consideration of paradigm shifts, post-modernity and the development of belief systems and world views in contemporary society, perhaps with focus on the new age movement and contemporary spirituality and the work of John Drane. ◆ What knowledge do religious experiences give about God? ◆ Religious experience argument for the existence of God — consideration of the value of experience and the reasoning for belief in God in light of religious experience and the arguments against these — Richard Swinburne's principles of credulity and testimony suggest it is probable that God exists. However, Michael Martin argues the principle of credulity also applies to experiences of the absence of God. AJ Ayer's dismissal of religious experience as ineffable. ◆ How scientific understanding and faith can co-exist — consideration of the role of science and religion, the areas of study and explanation of science and religion in terms of the exclusive areas of each and the areas of overlap. The work of CS Lewis in considering science as an area of study affected by the overarching world view of religion may be considered.
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<p>Secular perspectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Psychological accounts — knowledge of theories around the need for belief and hope and the natural reality of this (Feuerbach). The impact of upbringing, family belief/relationships, the impact of specific experiences in life on religious experience. Consideration of the work of Freud (religion as neurosis, projection, the Oedipus complex, oceanic feeling) and Jung (Unconsciousness). ◆ Knowledge of scientific developments on religious experience such as studies of the brain and brain activity that suggested the correct stimulation (eg environment, music) can generate 'religious experience' (Michael Persinger, Andrew Newberg). Claims that religious experiences can be 'produced' by a transcranial magnetic stimulator. ◆ Physiological explanations: eg some sufferers of temporal lobe epilepsy report religious experiences during seizures (VS Ramachandran). ◆ The social construct of religious belief and thought and the ongoing role of this through societal structures and institution (Durkheim, Marx, Hitchens). ◆ Limitations — consideration of responses to these theories from key thinkers such as Mircea Eliade, Karl Barth, and the contemporary thinkers, eg Alister McGrath.
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Researching Religious, Moral and Philosophical Issues: the RMPS project

The general aim of this Unit is to develop a wide range of independent research skills. Learners who complete this Unit will:

- 1 **Develop independent research skills in the context of complex religious, moral or philosophical issues by:**
 - 1.1 Identifying an appropriate, complex religious, moral or philosophical issue for research
 - 1.2 Planning a programme of research
 - 1.3 Researching, collecting and recording information
 - 1.4 Evaluating, analysing and synthesising evidence
 - 1.5 Understanding approaches to organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate conventions

The following guidance relates to each of these Assessment Standards. Teachers and lecturers should note that this advice is intended as guidance only.

1.1 Identifying an appropriate complex religious, moral or philosophical issue for research

A complex issue requires analysis and qualitative judgement, rather than a descriptive and narrative approach. The issue may be worded as a question, statement, or a description of the area of study and should be such that the learner is challenged to provide a convincing overall conclusion to the issue(s) raised. It is likely that a suitable issue will give rise to a number of subsidiary questions, or sub-issues, which will need to be considered in order to reach an overall conclusion providing a robust synthesis and a qualitative judgement. An appropriate complex issue is also one which will enable the learner to interrogate differing religious, moral or philosophical perspectives or points of view. In some areas this may encompass significant debate — including major differences in the interpretation of religious, moral or philosophical developments.

Issues which invite evaluation, analysis and synthesis may be approached in one of the following ways, although such approaches are not mandatory.

How successful is/was/are...?

- ◆ To what extent can/do/should....?
- ◆ How far can/do/should....?
- ◆ How justified is the view...?
- ◆ A comparative analysis of... and ...
- ◆ How important is ...?

Possible ways of generating evidence: Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways, such as a checklist, like the one provided, indicating the chosen issue and describing the process of choosing it. A short rationale could be produced to justify the issue selected.

1.2 Planning a programme of research:

Once the issue has been agreed, the learner should begin planning a programme of research. This could include a variety of steps, such as:

- ◆ developing knowledge of the religious, moral or philosophical context relevant to the chosen issue
- ◆ making decisions about the way in which the chosen issue will be tackled
- ◆ identifying a suitable range resources
- ◆ agreeing key deadline dates for the completion of the different stages involved in researching the issue
- ◆ planning timescales for each part of the researching process

Developing knowledge of the religious, moral and philosophical context relevant to the chosen issue

This might involve reading, for example a textbook, online resources, newspaper articles, chapters or articles from journals or other similar sources. Teachers and lecturers may need to help learners identify suitable background reading at this early stage, as well as establishing a time-frame for completion.

Making decisions about the way in which the chosen issue will be tackled

Care should be taken to ensure that a sensible range of factors/views/outcomes is considered, and that concentration on an isolated factor/view/outcome does not exclude consideration of alternative explanations. The individual learner may find it helpful to mind map possible issues at this stage. Alternatively, an individual presentation could be made to peers, followed by a brainstorming session during which other learners contribute possible alternative approaches/interpretations.

To ensure that the approach taken is sufficiently in-depth, it may be useful to include no more than three or four main issues in the final plan. This may mean conflating some smaller issues into a single overarching issue, or justifying the exclusion of some relatively minor issues. Mind mapping can prove a useful tool in suggesting how subsidiary issues relate to each other and to the overall chosen issue. Learners should be encouraged to be discerning about which information they choose to include and their critical thinking skills can be shown by explaining why they are using or rejecting particular points.

Good planning is essential to researching the chosen issue as it provides a structured focus for collecting information. However, modification of the plan may be necessary, for example if new evidence emerges, or the learner wishes to change the focus of their research. This should be seen as an integral part of planning a programme of research and learners should be encouraged to recognise that this need to amend elements of the original plan is a valid aspect of almost all independent research.

Identifying a suitable range of resources

Researching religious, moral and philosophical issues at this level should involve a wide range of academic reading and it is therefore important that the learner plans ahead to ensure that the resources they need are available when they

need them. The starting point is likely to be resources held within the department but school and public libraries may also be able to help with accessing resources. Some university libraries provide reference facilities to final-year school learners.

Sources might include online journals/papers, newspaper or press articles or press releases and blogs.

For some issues, there are published works and learners may need teacher/lecturer guidance to help them select appropriate reading. Learners may also need help to distinguish between school textbooks (or books written for the general reader) and those written by academics with specialist knowledge of the issue. A good range of academic work should be consulted and learners should be able to recognise that different approaches and perspectives on religious, moral and philosophical issues may involve subtly different interpretations of events or ideas and will require careful reading.

Different subject disciplines use different research methods to create new knowledge and learners should be aware of some of these differences, for example, the differences between qualitative and quantitative data. Research methodology shapes thinking so this will help learners to 'think like' or 'think within' this particular subject discipline. This will help learners become competent, critical users of information.

Possible ways of generating evidence: Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways. The learner should be advised to keep a log as they go through the research process. They should record sources they have used, the author, page references and publication date. All learners should keep a record of this referencing for Unit assessment evidence.

Agreeing key deadline dates for the completion of the different stages involved in researching the issue.

Many learners will find the process of researching independently a challenge. Therefore it may be helpful for the teacher/lecturer and learner to agree dates at which progress will be reviewed. Key dates might include:

- ◆ Selection of an issue.
- ◆ Completion of a plan.
- ◆ Reviews/discussion of the collecting and recording evidence.

Where this Unit is being taken as part of the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course, the planning could also take account of:

- ◆ Submission date for a first draft of the project: Dissertation.
- ◆ Submission date for the final version of the project: Dissertation, possibly a few days before the SQA deadline date.

Possible ways of generating evidence: Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways, such as copies of planning notes, a written plan, a mind-map, discussion notes or a recording of a discussion or interview.

These may all provide evidence that the learner has met this Assessment Standard.

The checklist provided suggests one way of recording when progress checks have taken place.

1.3 Researching, collecting and recording information:

Many learners will find it helpful to focus research on one aspect of the chosen issue at a time, rather than attempting to research, collect and record information relating to the whole issue at the same time. For example, where the chosen issue involves an isolated factor, the learner may choose to start with research focused on this aspect of the issue. Researching one aspect at a time can help to break the task up into more manageable sections and facilitates periodic reviews of progress. A progress review sheet could be used to support this process.

Once a starting point has been identified the learner will decide how best to record information gathered. For many, word-processed or hand written note-making will be the most straight forward way of proceeding. Although many learners will have had some prior experience of collecting and recording information it is worth emphasising that it is good practice to:

- ◆ Use the list of contents/index to identify sections relevant to the issue being studied.
- ◆ Skim read to identify the most important and relevant material.
- ◆ Be aware that many academics summarise their arguments at the end of a section or chapter. Alternatively, their views may be outlined in the introduction or in the conclusion to the book or article.

Learners could complete a simple task like the one provided below to become familiar with different sources of information and bibliographic format. Teachers/lecturers could produce a short guide to conducting research and observing ethical standards in research to help learners realise the importance of acknowledging sources and/or using sensitive information.

There is no single approved way of collecting and recording information but the following advice may prove useful.

- ◆ Always note the author and title of the book/article being consulted. If using a published work, the date of publication should also be recorded.
- ◆ If the information is from an online source, note the URL and the date when accessed.
- ◆ Summarise relevant factual evidence briefly, noting page references. By summarising, rather than quoting directly, learners will both save themselves time and avoid unintended plagiarism. Similarly, there is no need to write in sentences and abbreviations can speed up the note making process, although it is important that the learner can subsequently make sense of the notes taken.

- ◆ Record statements of the author's views by using phrases such as 'According to Singer, "...". The recording of **brief** direct quotations may be helpful but these should be limited to a few words or phrases. Lengthy quotations are unhelpful. Page references for views/quotations should be noted to facilitate footnoting at a later stage.

Academics often refer to the views/evidence cited by other academics. Noting references to these may help learners understand more about different academic interpretations, and aid the development of a convincing personal line of argument at a later stage.

Checks on progress could take the form of a discussion between teacher/lecturer and learner; peer review; or individual presentation to the group. In any discussion of progress made, it may be helpful for the teacher/lecturer to make sure that the learner is using evidence analytically and that a line of argument is emerging.

Possible ways of generating evidence: Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways, such as a copy of the learner's notes which could be retained as evidence of researching, collecting and recording information. The task for recording bibliographic format provided may also help provide evidence for this stage of the process.

1.4 Evaluating, analysing and synthesising evidence.

The skills that the study of religious, moral and philosophical studies helps to develop particularly well are the critical evaluation, analysis and synthesis of information. The development of these skills is one of the most important aspects of researching at this level.

Evaluation and analysis

Analysis will involve the learner considering a range of information to identify patterns, trends, exceptions and so on. Pictures, maps, tables of statistics and written sources may all be relevant and learners can be encouraged to look closely and to pick out what is relevant to their chosen issue. It is important that, having analysed the information and identified the viewpoints presented in the sources, learners take a critical view of the details they have collected. This will include evaluating the validity of the information presented and a judgement on the interpretative perspective of the sources.

When using and reviewing sources it may be helpful to remind learners to take the following points into account:

- ◆ Consider first of all the **author**, what is the author's level of expertise — how much did/ does he or she know about the issue?
Bias, or point of view, does need to be born in mind. But it should not be assumed unless the words of the source do actually show bias.

- ◆ The **purpose** of the source is as important when it comes to assessing reliability — is it to persuade, to inform, to develop, to reject? Who are/were the intended readers?
- ◆ The **date** of a source might also be relevant as is the **context** in which it was written.

One more test of the value of a source is the extent to which it is supported or contradicted by other sources. Sources can be thought of as pieces of jigsaw; they are much more valuable in building up a complete picture if they can be fitted in with other sources. Learners should be actively encouraged to use sources to develop and support their arguments. They should be encouraged to see that this will strengthen their lines of argument, and to appreciate that proper referencing of sources helps the learner avoid plagiarism. Identifying sources will also help the reader to see the range of sources used.

Learners should be encouraged to evaluate academic writing critically, and use their own understanding and critical thinking skills to interrogate the sources they use. Learners should be helped to realise that knowledge is usually subjective and that, within the social subjects, 'truth' is often influenced by context, perception and circumstances.

These questions can help to make judgments about a source and help develop skills of critical analysis:

1. How relevant is the source to my question or issue?
2. What is the evidence used in this source to support this conclusion?
3. Which of these bits of evidence does this source regard as decisive?
4. Is it justifiable to draw the conclusion from the evidence as this source does?
5. Does this source give less weight to, or ignore altogether, other pieces of evidence that have a bearing on the issue?
6. How does this argument compare with the rival arguments of other sources, which have been similarly evaluated?

Any source should always be carefully evaluated. Learners may find it useful to apply the following questions when reading sources:

1. Is the author a serious and respected scholar?
2. Is the publisher/website politically neutral or is it linked to, or sponsored by, some political cause?
3. If using a website, is it managed by some responsible academic institution — typically a university or a national archive?
4. Does the work include any apparatus of scholarship (references, footnotes, bibliography)?
Does the design of the website or publication suggest that the digital special effects are more important than the words on the screen?

Practice in the skills

Teachers/lecturers should not give direct and specific help to learners with the analysis and evaluation of the particular issues, though it would certainly be helpful to discuss with them such matters as, 'For what reasons do you prefer the arguments of academic x to those of academic y?'

The following exercise helps develop the skills outlined above. Teachers/lecturers may find it useful to go through this exercise.

The teacher/lecturer could issue a text and ask learners to identify the main line of reasoning used. The learners could critically evaluate that line of reasoning by highlighting statements which prove the argument or undermine it. Learners could also be asked to identify any hidden agendas or information which is missing that could paint a different picture.

Learners could discuss how reliable the sources are in the text and whether the data is up-to-date. The teacher/lecturer could ask if the learner comes to the same conclusions as the writer.

Synthesis

Learners can be provided with a variety of complex sources of information and be asked to draw these together into a single text. These may include arguments and counter-arguments, conflicting data and a variety of subtly differing perspectives.

Possible ways of generating evidence: Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways, such as a literature review. This is a potential way to develop the skills of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis. A literature review matrix can help group together resources which address the same topic. The issues and themes emerging from the literature can be recorded and act as a framework for a literature review. An example is provided.

1.5 Understanding approaches to organising, presenting and referencing findings, using appropriate conventions.

A critical skill is to understand how findings can be presented in such a way as to be clear, reliable and reflect the relevant conventions of the subject. There is no single way to achieve this and learners should consider in particular possible approaches to organising and referencing their work.

Organising

A key issue in communicating the ideas synthesised from the research is to be able to structure the findings appropriately. This will normally involve laying out various sub-issues relevant to the question in a logical manner which develops a clear line of argument and leads to a conclusion which can be supported.

This may mean going into detail on the various areas. These might well include:

- ◆ Matters of precise definition that arise from the issue.
- ◆ Alternative interpretations that have been produced by different academics or academic traditions.
- ◆ Detailed analysis of particular pieces of evidence that have a substantial bearing on the issue.
- ◆ A wide-ranging consideration of all aspects of the issue.

It may be appropriate for learners to use sub-sections to keep their material under control. These sub-sections will normally arise from the sub-issues identified at the planning stage, but are not a requirement. Successful use of sub-sections will normally depend on the following:

- ◆ Keeping sections to an appropriate number.
- ◆ Sub-sections that are linked together coherently.

Formal language and tone is encouraged. For example, instead of learners using phrases like, 'I think that.....', it may be more appropriate for learners to express themselves in a more academic way, for example, 'this evidence is used to support and elaborate on...'.

References

Learners should understand how to use appropriate referencing conventions. Learners should be accurate in their references.

- ◆ All quotations should be referenced.
- ◆ Specific facts such as statistics should usually be referenced unless they are the common currency of all books on the subject.
- ◆ If a paragraph is based in its entirety on one book, then that should be referenced, even if there is no direct quotation.

The style of referencing can be the straightforward one of: Author, Date, *Title*, page number.

Example: Gillies, J. (2011) *Critical Navigation Skills*, P93

Learners may use the conventional *ibid* and *op cit* as appropriate.

Research findings should be accompanied by a bibliography. As with references, learning how to construct and present a proper bibliography is part of the development provided by this Unit. The bibliography should be a genuine note of all works used. It is important that the author's name and the title are entered correctly. The date and publisher should also be included.

Most university websites have advice on setting out a bibliography. Some well-known standard formats include Harvard, MLA and APA. The main point is that learners should be consistent in the format they choose to use and which is most appropriate for their area of research.

Websites should also be recorded in the bibliography. Web addresses should be listed, with the dates at which they were accessed. This is done because websites are subject to frequent alteration.

Possible ways of generating evidence

Evidence for this Assessment Standard can be generated in a variety of ways, such as:

- ◆ report of findings
- ◆ mind map
- ◆ information poster
- ◆ oral presentation
- ◆ short bibliography

Checklist

Learner name

Research activity	Notes	Date completed
Key dates agreed and issued		
Proposed issue		
Discussion/negotiation on issue		
Issue finalised and agreed		
Planning a programme of research	Agreed plan attached	
Agreed amendments to the plan (if any)		
Initial sources		
Review of progress (1) including evaluation and analysis of evidence so far		
Review of progress (2)		

Bibliographic format

Academic Book	
Education Journal	
Media Source	
Internet Source	

Literature Review — Using a matrix

This table shows a potential way of approaching a literature review. The text under each heading is an illustrative example of the issues that may be identified within a review of a particular piece of literature.

Study	Aim of study OR research question	Methodology & Methods	Results	Main themes or points emerging	Main conclusion Any limitations?	Any future research suggested?
Author 1	To investigate factors which....	30 minute interview with x number of participants The answers were recorded and transcribed.	Results limited to interview transcripts. Quotations used to illustrate points made.	Factors impacting are....	To increase participation in.....	Should increase sample size so results are transferable. Could extend to....
Author 2	To explore issues related to...	Used both survey and interview data. Data from survey managed with statistical packages. Interviews recorded then transcribed.	42% indicated that.... 78% said that.... Interviews backed up survey results but gave more details.	To encourage.... Consider choice in.....	X issues are important when..... Limitations: large number involved and use of both statistics good. Is data now out of date? Does this matter?	Need more research to see if.... Could extend research into.....

Appendix 2: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work
- ◆ Building the Curriculum 5: A Framework for Assessment
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)

Administrative information

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History of changes to Advanced Higher draft Course/Unit Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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