



Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Draft National Course Assessment Specification



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

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Course outline

Course title:	Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
SCQF level:	6 (24 SCQF credit points)
Course code:	to be advised
Course assessment code:	to be advised

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	80 marks
Component 2 — assignment	40 marks
Total marks	120 marks

This Course includes six SCQF credit points for 40 additional programmed hours to allow 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 will be provided in the *Course Support Notes*.

Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all 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:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the Course
- ◆ 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 learned during the Course. This will be assessed by a question paper and an assignment. Over the Course assessment there will be broad parity between the assessment of skills and knowledge and understanding
- ◆ demonstrating breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding from across the Units of the Course. The question paper will sample knowledge and understanding from across all three Units of the Course and will require application of skills in different contexts
- ◆ demonstrating challenge and application related to an appropriate religious, moral or philosophical assignment question or topic

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

Grade description for C

For the award of Grade C, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners 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, learners will have demonstrated successful performance in all of the Units of the Course. In the Course assessment, learners 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 an assignment. The question paper will have two sections.

Component 1 — question paper

The purpose of this question paper is to demonstrate application of skills and breadth of knowledge and understanding across the three Units of the Course.

In Sections 1 and 2, the skills which may be assessed are:

- ◆ interpreting sources
- ◆ critically analysing and evaluating
- ◆ presenting a reasoned and well-structured view

The question paper will have 80 marks (66% of the total mark).

This question paper has two Sections.

Section 1, titled 'Religion, morality and belief', will have 50 marks. This Section will be made up of a combination of questions and responses to source materials, requiring the candidate to draw on the knowledge and understanding and skills acquired during the Course. The knowledge and understanding will be drawn from the World Religion and Morality and Belief content as described in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of this document.

Candidates must choose one of the following six Parts. Each Part is worth 20 marks:

- ◆ Part 1 — Buddhism
- ◆ Part 2 — Christianity
- ◆ Part 3 — Hinduism
- ◆ Part 4 — Islam
- ◆ Part 5 — Judaism
- ◆ Part 6 — Sikhism

Candidates must then choose one of the following five Parts. Each part is worth 20 marks:

- ◆ Part 1 — Religion and justice (UK and world)
- ◆ Part 2 — Religion and human relationships
- ◆ Part 3 — Religion, environment and globalisation
- ◆ Part 4 — Religion, medicine and the human body
- ◆ Part 5 — Religion and conflict

Candidates must then answer a question which will relate the two Parts they have previously completed. This will be an extended response question worth 10 marks.

Section 2, titled 'Religious and philosophical questions', will have 30 marks. This Section may be made up of a combination of questions and responses to source

materials, requiring the candidate to draw on the knowledge and understanding and skills acquired during the Course. The knowledge and understanding will be drawn from the Religious and Philosophical Questions content described in the 'Further mandatory information on Course coverage' section of this document.

Learners must choose one of the following Parts and answer all questions relating to that Part:

- ◆ Part 1 — The origins of the universe and life on Earth
- ◆ Part 2 — The existence of God
- ◆ Part 3 — The problem of evil and suffering
- ◆ Part 4 — Religious experience

The question paper will have a greater emphasis on the assessment of knowledge and understanding than the assignment, with approximately 60% of the marks being allocated to knowledge and understanding. The other marks will be awarded for the demonstration of skills.

Component 2 — assignment

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate challenge and application by demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of religious, moral and philosophical questions.

This assignment will give learners an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding as they:

- ◆ identify an appropriate religious, moral or philosophical studies question or topic for study, with minimal support
- ◆ research the question or topic, using a range of sources of information including at least one relevant religious viewpoint and one non-religious viewpoint
- ◆ critically analyse the different sources
- ◆ show in-depth knowledge and understanding of the question or topic studied and relevant abstract concepts
- ◆ synthesise information to explain the significance and/or impact of the question or topic today
- ◆ present a well-reasoned and structured response to the question or topic, with detailed description of both supporting information and potential challenges or counter-arguments

The assignment will have 40 marks (33% of the total mark).

The assignment will have a greater emphasis on the assessment of skills than the question paper, with approximately 60% of the marks being allocated to skills. The other marks will be awarded for the demonstration of knowledge and understanding.

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. Learners will complete this in 2 hours and 15 minutes, under exam conditions.

Controlled assessment — assignment

This assignment is:

- ◆ set by centres within SQA guidelines
- ◆ conducted under some supervision and control

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

SQA will provide a brief for the generation of evidence to be assessed. Learners will have an open choice of topic/issue/question to be researched.

The production of evidence for assessment will be conducted under some supervision and control and:

- ◆ when the learner is ready
- ◆ within a specified time (1 hour and 30 minutes)
- ◆ with the use of specified resources
- ◆ in time to meet a submission date set by SQA
- ◆ independently by the learner

Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course. Course assessment will involve sampling the skills, knowledge and understanding. This list of skills, knowledge and understanding also provides the basis for the assessment of Units of the Course.

This outlines the skills, knowledge and understanding which may be sampled in the Course assessment and topics or issues from which learners may draw on in their assignment. Options exist in each section to allow opportunities for personalisation and choice.

Section 1: World religion

All learners will address the possible impact and significance of religious beliefs, practices and sources in the world today. All learners should be able to demonstrate detailed factual and abstract knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, practices and sources listed within each religion, in the context of life today.

Buddhism

Beliefs:

- ◆ No belief in God
- ◆ Life of the Buddha
- ◆ The three marks of existence/universal truths
- ◆ Samsara/The three root poisons/Dependent origination
- ◆ Nibbana
- ◆ Karma
- ◆ The four noble truths
- ◆ Dhamma

Practices:

- ◆ Eightfold Path
- ◆ Meditation
- ◆ Sangha
- ◆ Ten precepts
- ◆ Karma
- ◆ Worship

or:

Christianity

Beliefs:

- ◆ Kingdom of God: immanence/God the creator, God's relationship with human beings
- ◆ Jesus's Incarnation, death and resurrection
- ◆ Fallen nature of human beings
- ◆ Judgement, heaven and hell
- ◆ Sacred Writings
- ◆ Faith and salvation

Practices:

- ◆ Spirituality: developing a relationship with God through prayer and meditation

- ◆ Sacraments
- ◆ Ways in which Christians put Jesus' teaching and example into practice
- ◆ Individual and community worship

or:

Islam

Beliefs:

- ◆ Allah the Creator; Tawhid; Risalah
- ◆ The life of Muhammad, Muhammad as the 'Seal' of the prophets
- ◆ Human beings: the pinnacle of Allah's creation but when they disobey Allah's will they cause suffering
- ◆ Khaliphah; only one life on earth which is a test of faithfulness and obedience to Allah's will
- ◆ The Day of Judgement: paradise and hell
- ◆ The Five Pillars
- ◆ Sacred writings

Practices:

- ◆ Submission, including Taqwa and Ihsan
- ◆ Living according to the Qur'an and Sunnah
- ◆ The Five Pillars of Islam
- ◆ Individual and community worship

or:

Hinduism

Beliefs:

- ◆ The nature of Brahman — the reality which pervades all existence; worshipped in many forms
- ◆ Atman
- ◆ Avidya
- ◆ The stories of Rama and Krishna
- ◆ Samadhi
- ◆ Moksha
- ◆ Samsara
- ◆ Dharma
- ◆ Karma

Practices:

- ◆ Puja
- ◆ Upholding of Sanatana Dharma and duties and customs associated with Varnashramadharm
- ◆ The Three Margas: Jnana, Karma, Bhakti
- ◆ Worship
- ◆ Festivals: Diwali, Holi, Navaratri, Durga Puja

or:

Judaism

Beliefs:

- ◆ Nature of God: One, Creator, Deliverer, reveals his will in the Torah
- ◆ Nature of Human Beings

- ◆ A Chosen People — the Covenant
- ◆ The Messiah
- ◆ The world to Come
- ◆ Judgement; heaven and hell

Practices:

- ◆ Living according to the Torah, including Tefillin, Mezuzah, Shema
- ◆ Rosh Hashanah
- ◆ Succoth/Simchat Torah

or:

Sikhism

Beliefs:

- ◆ The Nature of God the Creator
- ◆ Human life — Atma; Transmigration; Freewill; Karma
- ◆ Separation from God: Haumai, Maya
- ◆ Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh
- ◆ Sacred writings; The Guru Granth Sahib
- ◆ Reunion with God — Jivan Mukti; freedom from rebirth

Practices:

- ◆ Developing compassion and selflessness — Sewa; Kirt Karna; Vand Chakna
- ◆ Controlling the Five Evils and their effects
- ◆ Gurmukh — the roles of prayer, human effort and God's grace
- ◆ Khalsa — an outward sign of inner commitment (including differences between the commitments of non-baptised and Khalsa Sikhs)
- ◆ Worship — including Simran; Nam Japna; The importance of the Sangat

Section 2: Morality and belief

All candidates will cover the following areas:

1. Defining what constitutes a moral question
2. Making moral decisions:
 - ◆ Distinguishing between universalist and situationist ethics
 - ◆ Some similarities and differences between religious and non-religious sources of morality

All learners will also cover one of the following moral topics. All learners should be able to demonstrate detailed factual knowledge and understanding of the topic, religious and non-religious viewpoints and relevant moral philosophical theories.

Religion and justice (UK and world)

- ◆ Causes of crime
- ◆ Purposes of punishment
- ◆ Perspectives on justice
- ◆ International approaches to capital punishment
- ◆ Sentencing in the UK
- ◆ Comparative effectiveness

or:

Religion and human relationships

- ◆ Religious and legal dimensions of marriage
- ◆ Sexuality
- ◆ Religious views on the role of men and women
- ◆ Equality and human rights
- ◆ Exploitation in the media
- ◆ The sex trade

or:

Religion, the environment and globalisation

- ◆ Religious and non-religious views on humans' responsibility for the environment
- ◆ Global economics
- ◆ Environmental crises
- ◆ Causes and effects of poverty
- ◆ Global charitable work by religions, individuals and governments

or:

Religion, medicine and the human body

- ◆ Sanctity of life
- ◆ Medicine, religion and human rights
- ◆ Transplantation and organ donation
- ◆ Euthanasia and palliative care
- ◆ Status and treatment of embryos

or:

Religion and conflict

- ◆ Justifications for war: Just War theory, holy wars, self-defence
- ◆ Causes and effects of war
- ◆ Approaches to war: WMD, terrorism, diplomacy/sanctions
- ◆ War and human rights
- ◆ Pacifism

Section 3: Religious and philosophical questions

All candidates will cover one of the following questions and responses. All learners should be able to demonstrate detailed factual and abstract knowledge and understanding of the question and responses.

Part 1: Origins of the universe and life on Earth

Question:

- ◆ What are the origins of the universe and life on Earth?

Responses:

- ◆ God(s) created the Universe and all life
- ◆ Literal and metaphorical interpretations of creation stories
- ◆ The Universe was created at the Big Bang
- ◆ Life on Earth developed through evolution

- ◆ Distinction between reason and faith

Part 2: The Existence of God(s)

Question:

- ◆ Can we prove or disprove the existence of God?

Responses:

- ◆ Sacred writings as evidence of God(s) existence
- ◆ The cosmological and teleological arguments
- ◆ Evil and suffering as evidence against God(s) existence
- ◆ Responses to the cosmological and teleological arguments
- ◆ Distinction between reason and faith

Part 3: The problem of evil and suffering

Question:

- ◆ If God is good why do we suffer?

Responses:

- ◆ God(s) has given mankind freewill
- ◆ Suffering and sin
- ◆ Religious perspectives on suffering
- ◆ Evil and suffering as evidence against God(s) existence
- ◆ Philosophical responses to suffering

Part 4: Religious experience

Question:

- ◆ What is religious experience?

Responses:

- ◆ Religious experience in scripture
- ◆ Modern-day miracles
- ◆ Literal and metaphorical interpretations of miracles and religious experiences
- ◆ Scientific explanation of miracles
- ◆ Psychological and sociological explanations for religious experience

Administrative information

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Superclass: to be advised

History of changes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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