



National 5  
Course Assessment  
Specification



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# National 5 Philosophy Course Assessment Specification (C754 75)

**Valid from August 2013**

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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

<b>Course title:</b>	National 5 Philosophy
<b>SCQF level:</b>	5 (24 SCQF credit points)
<b>Course code:</b>	C754 75
<b>Course assessment code:</b>	X754 75

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	50 of the total marks
Component 2 — assignment	30 of the total marks
<b>Total marks</b>	<b>80</b>

This Course includes six 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](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html)

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

# Assessment

To gain the award of the Course, the learner 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:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the Course
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

The added value consists of:

- ◆ extending and applying the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the Course. This will be assessed by a question paper and an assignment. Over the Course assessment there will be parity between the assessment of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- ◆ breadth and application in a question paper, requiring learners to use their thinking skills and knowledge and understanding of philosophical positions and theories to respond to questions
- ◆ breadth and application in an assignment, requiring learners to integrate and apply skills and knowledge from across the Units in the Course. Learners will use their basic philosophical skills to give a reasoned view on a philosophical question or claim.

## 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.

### **Component 1 — question paper**

The purpose of this question paper is to sample philosophical knowledge and understanding from across Course Units. Learners will integrate and apply knowledge and understanding to respond to questions.

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

- ◆ knowing, understanding and being able to clearly explain basic philosophical positions and theories
- ◆ discussing and debating philosophical positions
- ◆ analysing and evaluating philosophical positions, at a basic level
- ◆ identifying assumptions at a basic level
- ◆ recognising reasoning and common fallacies used in arguments
- ◆ developing knowledge and understanding of the structure of simple arguments
- ◆ applying basic philosophical skills to analyse and evaluate simple arguments

This question paper will have 50 marks out of a total of 80 marks. Two questions will be worth 20 marks each and one question worth 10 marks.

### **Component 2 –assignment**

The purpose of this assignment is to enable learners to carry out a basic philosophical investigation. The learner will use philosophical skills, knowledge and understanding to give a reasoned view on a question or claim. The learner will investigate a question or assess a claim using philosophical skills and with reference to appropriate texts and sources.

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

- ◆ using philosophical skills and techniques
- ◆ communicating philosophically-informed views on questions or claims
- ◆ using suitable terminology, and with reference to appropriate texts and sources

This assignment will have 30 marks out of a total of 80 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. Learners will complete this in one hour and 30 minutes.

### **Controlled assessment — assignment**

This assignment:

- ◆ gives candidates an open choice of topics within guidelines set by SQA
- ◆ will be conducted under some supervision and control

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking.

All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

### **Setting the assessment**

The assignment guidelines are set by SQA but candidates will have an open choice of questions or claims to investigate.

### **Conducting the assessment**

The production of evidence for assessment will be conducted under some supervision and control. There are no restrictions on resources which can be used.

The evidence should be completed:

- ◆ in time to meet submission dates set by SQA
- ◆ independently by the candidate
- ◆ when the candidate is ready

## Further mandatory information on Course coverage

The following gives details of mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding for the National 5 Philosophy 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.

### **Mandatory skills, knowledge and understanding: what learners must know, understand and be able to do in preparation for Course assessment**

#### **Component 1: question paper**

The question paper will require the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ using philosophical skills and techniques
- ◆ knowing, understanding and being able to clearly explain basic philosophical positions and theories
- ◆ discussing and debating philosophical positions
- ◆ analysing and evaluating philosophical positions at a basic level
- ◆ identifying assumptions at a basic level
- ◆ recognising reasoning and common fallacies used in arguments
- ◆ developing knowledge and understanding of the structure of simple arguments
- ◆ applying basic philosophical skills to analyse and evaluate simple arguments

#### **Arguments in action**

Skills, knowledge and understanding required from this Unit include the ability to understand, identify and explain the following: statement; argument; premise; hidden premise; deductive argument; conclusion; true and false; valid and invalid; soundness. This will include the ability to recognise and be able to generate examples to show understanding.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate their ability to:

- ◆ distinguish statements from questions, commands, exclamations and arguments
- ◆ identify premises, hidden premises and conclusions in an argument
- ◆ describe how conclusions are arrived at in terms of reasoning
- ◆ analyse and evaluate simple arguments
- ◆ recognise and generate examples of the following common fallacies: attacking the person; false dilemma; illegitimate appeal to authority; slippery slope

#### **Knowledge and Doubt**

Skills, knowledge and understanding required from this Unit include the ability to explain philosophical views on:

- ◆ knowledge
- ◆ belief
- ◆ certainty
- ◆ scepticism

Candidates will be able to explain common sceptical arguments including: reliability of the senses; arguments from dreaming; and evil genius.

Candidates must understand and be able to explain and evaluate rationalism,

empiricism and scepticism, making reference to appropriate sources in epistemology. It is not expected that candidates will engage with original texts, but that they will know the source of information.

Candidates should know the key aspects and criticisms of Descartes and Hume and be able to evaluate arguments by commenting on their strengths and weaknesses.

For Descartes, candidates must be able to comment on:

- ◆ sceptical arguments
- ◆ method of doubt: senses, dreaming and evil genius arguments
- ◆ the Cogito
- ◆ the clear and distinct rule
- ◆ role of God in providing a secure foundation for knowledge

For Hume, candidates must be able to comment on:

- ◆ rejection of innate ideas
- ◆ arguments concerning the origin of ideas
- ◆ impressions and ideas
- ◆ missing shade of blue
- ◆ how we arrive at knowledge of cause and effect

### **Moral Philosophy**

Candidates must know and understand moral theories. Candidates must be able to apply these theories to give a moral response for a range of situations. Appropriate sources should be used when explaining theories. Candidates must be able to explain two moral theories, Utilitarianism and one other.

For Utilitarianism:

- ◆ Act and Rule Utilitarianism
- ◆ normative ethics
- ◆ Greatest Happiness Principle
  - consequentialism; equity; hedonism
- ◆ Bentham's hedonic calculus
- ◆ Mill's higher and lower pleasures
- ◆ common criticisms of Utilitarianism: evil pleasures; difficulty of predicting consequences; tyranny of the majority

For the other moral theory:

- ◆ the main features
- ◆ at least three common criticisms

### **Component 2: assignment**

The assignment will require the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ using philosophical skills and techniques
- ◆ communicating philosophically-informed views on questions or claims using suitable terminology, and with reference to appropriate texts and sources

The candidate will explain and evaluate a question or claim about a philosophical problem. This includes:

- ◆ describing the issues, reasons or arguments relating to the chosen question or claim
- ◆ identifying and selecting sources to address the issues, reasons or arguments relating to the question or claim
- ◆ using and analysing information from sources and philosophers/contributors to the debate
- ◆ evaluating issues, reasons or arguments relating to the chosen question or claim
- ◆ presenting an informed personal view on the philosophical question or claim
- ◆ using philosophical terminology

Candidates will draw on any of the following philosophical techniques when engaged in this assignment task:

- ◆ debating and modifying positions
- ◆ illustrating a point by using apposite examples
- ◆ identifying consistency and inconsistency
- ◆ drawing inferences
- ◆ making clear distinctions
- ◆ using counter-examples to further an argument
- ◆ using or recognising the use of: analogies; inductive arguments; deductive arguments; thought experiments; fallacious reasoning; intuition; self-contradiction

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to Course Assessment Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	1.1	Further information and clarification on scope and structure of the question paper/Coursework given in the 'Structure and coverage of Course assessment' section. 'Further mandatory information' section divided into separate parts for each Component.	Qualifications Development Manager	June 2013

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

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