



Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies — draft Course rationale and summary

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Course rationale

Background

All new and revised National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

In this Course, and its component Units, there will be an emphasis on skills development and the application of those skills. Assessment approaches will be proportionate, fit for purpose and will promote best practice, enabling learners to achieve the highest standards they can.

This Course provides learners with opportunities to continue to acquire and develop the attributes and capabilities of the four capacities as well as skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

All Courses provide opportunities for learners to develop breadth, challenge and application, but the focus and balance of the assessment will be appropriate for the subject area.

Relationship between the Course and Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles

The Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course will build on the religious and moral education, religious education in Roman Catholic schools and health and wellbeing principles and practice papers. It will be developed primarily from the experiences and outcomes in these curriculum areas¹.

The Course contributes to learners' understanding of the society in which they live and work by helping them to learn about, and from, religious beliefs, non-religious values or viewpoints, and their own experience.

Through the Course, learners are enabled to develop the four capacities. The Course will do this by developing knowledge, understanding and skills; developing understanding of human beliefs, values and behaviour; and examining how religion, morality and philosophy can help people find meaning and purpose in life.

The Course allows learners to develop values and beliefs and learn to express these. This will allow learners to make informed moral decisions. It encourages learners to develop an understanding and respect for different beliefs, values and viewpoints, and to put their values or beliefs into action in ways which benefit others in local, national and global communities.

In developing these four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, the Course will also provide opportunities for learners to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. These include literacy, personal learning and thinking skills. Developing understanding and respect for different views will develop a sense of responsible citizenship.

Purpose and aims of the Course

The purpose of this Course is to develop knowledge and understanding of religious, moral and philosophical issues. 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. Religious and non-religious viewpoints will be included.

The main aims of the Course are to enable learners to develop:

- ◆ the ability to reflect on, and investigate, religious, moral and philosophical questions
- ◆ a range of skills including enquiry and the ability to express views

¹ Experiences and outcomes

www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp

- ◆ basic factual knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs and values of one world religion
- ◆ basic factual knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical responses to moral questions
- ◆ basic factual knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical questions

The Units cover the key themes of the subject area by requiring learners to study aspects of a world religion, understand philosophical and religious approaches to morality, and study key aspects of religious and philosophical questions.

The Course will help learners to understand religious, moral and philosophical issues that affect the world today. This will help learners gain an awareness of the religious and social aspects of the world they live in. Learners will develop skills which are transferable to other areas of study and which they will use in everyday life.

Information about typical learners who might do the Course

This Course is appropriate for a wide range of learners, including those who wish to achieve a greater understanding of religion and its place in society; those who want to learn more about the traditions, beliefs and values of their own religion; and those who wish to progress to more specialised study, further education, training or employment.

All Courses in this suite will take account of the needs of all learners, and provide sufficient flexibility to enable learners to achieve in different ways and at different paces.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills including: expressing views about religious, moral and philosophical questions; commenting on, and understanding, religious texts or sources; enquiring into different beliefs, values and viewpoints; and describing and explaining some religious, moral and philosophical questions and responses to these.

Courses and Units in Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies are provided from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 7. Vertical progression is possible through the levels of Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies qualifications, and lateral progression is possible to other related subjects.

This Course is recognised as an entry qualification to employment, training, and further education. This Course provides preparation for a diverse range of occupations and careers.

Course summary

Course title: Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

SCQF level 3 (18 SCQF credit points)

Course outline

Mandatory Units

World Religion (Access 3)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Morality and Belief (Access 3)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Religious and Philosophical Questions (Access 3)	(6 SCQF credit points)

Course structure and conditions of award

The Course develops a range of thinking skills. It encourages active learning in the process of investigating religious, moral and philosophical issues. Learners need to develop and apply knowledge and understanding. Learners can express their personal beliefs, values or viewpoints. Through the Course as a whole, learners must study some beliefs, values or viewpoints of more than one religion.

The Course has three mandatory Units. Within each Unit there is a considerable degree of flexibility in the topics which can be studied, to allow personalisation and choice.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills including: expressing views about religious, moral and philosophical questions; commenting on, and understanding, religious texts or sources; enquiring into different beliefs, values and viewpoints; and describing and explaining some religious, moral and philosophical questions and responses to these.

The skills listed above will be developed and applied over a range of religious, moral and philosophical contexts in the following Units. Each Unit also offers opportunities for learners to focus on particular skills.

Units are statements of standards for assessment and not programmes of learning and teaching. They can be delivered in a variety of ways.

World Religion (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to comment on and understand some key texts or sources relevant to the world religion selected for study. They will study one religion from a choice of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism). The Unit will develop

knowledge of some of the religion's beliefs, values, practices and traditions and its place in modern society.

Morality and Belief (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to enquire into, and present views about, religious and non-religious responses to a moral issue. They will develop knowledge and understanding of a contemporary moral issue. Religious and non-religious viewpoints will be explored. Religious viewpoints studied must be from one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism).

Religious and Philosophical Questions (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to describe and explain a significant religious and philosophical question and a response to this from a religious perspective and from other perspectives such as science or philosophy. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the question.

To achieve the Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course, learners must pass all of the required Units. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section.

Access 3 Courses are not graded.

Assessment

All Units are internally assessed against the requirements shown in Unit specifications.

They will be assessed pass/fail within centres.

SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgements are consistent and meet national standards.

Exemplification of possible assessment approaches for Units will be provided in the *National Assessment Resource*.

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