



Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Draft National Course Specification



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

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Course outline

Course title: Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

SCQF: level 3 (18 SCQF credit points)

Course code: to be advised

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

Recommended entry

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, learners would normally be expected to have attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the following or equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ related Access 2 Courses or component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. Further information on relevant experiences and outcomes will be given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Progression

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Units and Course at National 4
- ◆ further study, employment and/or training

Further details are provided in the Rationale section.

Equality and inclusion

This Course Specification has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment. The individual needs of learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods or considering alternative evidence. For further information please refer to the *Course Support Notes*.

Rationale

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 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 areas

This 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 this Course, learners are enabled to develop the four capacities. This 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.

This 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 developing these four capacities of Curriculum for Excellence, this 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 can 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 that affect the world today. Religious and non-religious viewpoints will be included.

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

- ◆ the ability to enquire into, and consider, religious, moral and philosophical questions
- ◆ a range of skills including enquiry and the ability to express a point of view
- ◆ basic knowledge and understanding of some belief, practices and sources related to one world religion
- ◆ basic knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical responses to moral questions
- ◆ basic 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.

This Course will help learners gain an awareness of the religious and social aspects of the world they live in. Learners will explore questions related to these, and some solutions or approaches that religion, or philosophy offer. Learners will have opportunities to reflect on these and on their own experience and views. 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

The Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies 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 beliefs and practices of their own religion; and those who wish to progress to more specialised study, further education, training or employment.

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, it may be beneficial for a learner studying this Course to have the skills and knowledge developed through relevant experiences and outcomes from the broad, general education or equivalent qualifications.

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: considering religious, moral and philosophical questions; understanding and commenting on sources; enquiring into different beliefs, values or viewpoints; and describing some religious and philosophical questions and responses to these.

successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Units and Courses are offered from SCQF level 3 to SCQF level 7. Vertical progression is possible through the levels of Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies qualifications.

Access 3 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies qualifications are recognised as entry qualifications to employment, training, and further education. This Course is a preparation for a diverse range of occupations and careers.

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Course structure and conditions of award

Course structure

The Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies 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 refer to some beliefs, values or viewpoints of more than one religion.

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

This 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.

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

World Religion (Access 3)

This Unit will develop knowledge of the impact and significance of religion today through studying some beliefs and practices found within one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) and the contribution these make to the lives of followers. Learners will develop skills to understand and comment on the meaning of a source relevant to the religion selected for study.

Morality and Belief (Access 3)

In this Unit, learners will develop skills to enquire into, and express a view about, a moral question. They will develop knowledge and understanding of a contemporary moral question and religious and non-religious responses. 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 skills to describe a question from the philosophy of religion and responses from religion and science and/or philosophy. Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of the question. Religious viewpoints studied must be from one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism).

successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen, effective contributor

Conditions of award

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.

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Skills, knowledge and understanding

Full skills, knowledge and understanding for the Course will be given in the *Course Support Notes*. A broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be covered in the Course is covered in this section.

This covers:

- ◆ understanding and commenting on the meaning of a source relevant to the religion selected for study, in basic terms
- ◆ enquiring into, and expressing a view about a moral question and religious and non-religious responses, in basic terms
- ◆ describing a question from the philosophy of religion and responses from religion and science and/or philosophy, in basic terms
- ◆ basic factual knowledge of the impact and significance of religion today through studying some beliefs and practices found within one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) and the contribution these make to the lives of followers
- ◆ basic factual knowledge of a contemporary moral issue, and religious and non-religious responses
- ◆ basic knowledge of a question from the philosophy of religion and responses from religion and science and/or philosophy

Skills, knowledge and understanding to be included in the Course will be appropriate to the SCQF level of the Course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.sqa.org.uk/scqf).

Assessment

Further information about assessment for the Course will be included in the *Course Support Notes*.

Unit assessment

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

They can be assessed on a Unit-by-Unit basis or by combined assessment.

They will be assessed on a pass/fail basis within centres. SQA will provide rigorous external quality assurance, including external verification, to ensure assessment judgments are consistent and meet national standards.

The assessment of the Units in this Course will be as follows:

World Religion (Access 3)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic factual knowledge of the impact and significance of religion today through studying some beliefs and practices found within one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) and the contribution these make to the lives of followers
- ◆ understanding and commenting on the meaning of a source relevant to the religion selected for study, in basic terms

Morality and Belief (Access 3)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic factual knowledge of a contemporary moral question, including one religious response and one non-religious response
- ◆ some factual enquiry into the question and expression of a view, in basic terms

Religious and Philosophical Questions (Access 3)

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic knowledge of a question from the philosophy of religion
- ◆ describing a question from the philosophy of religion and one response from religion and one from science and/or philosophy, in basic terms

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

Development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

(Note: The information given below reflects the initial thinking on significant opportunities for development of skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. These may be subject to change as the development process progresses.)

It is expected that learners will develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that learners will be expected to improve on and develop through the Course are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and drawn from the main skills areas listed below. These must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities.

1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing

3 Health and wellbeing

- 3.1 Personal learning

4 Employability

- 4.1 Citizenship

5 Thinking skills

- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying

Amplification of these skills is given in SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course. Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work for the Course is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Administrative information

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Superclass: to be advised

History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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