



# Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (National 5)

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## 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:** Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (National 5)

**SCQF:** level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)

**Course code:** to be advised

### Mandatory Units

**World Religion (National 5)** 6 SCQF credit points

**Morality and Belief (National 5)** 6 SCQF credit points

**Contemporary Religious Debates (National 5)** 6 SCQF credit points

**Course assessment** 6 SCQF credit points

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. Further information on the Course assessment is provided in the Assessment section.

### Recommended entry

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

- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (National 4) Course or relevant 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:

- ◆ other SQA qualifications in Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies or related areas
- ◆ further study or employment

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* and the *Course Assessment Specification*.

## **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<sup>1</sup>.

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 viewpoints, and experience.

Through the Course, learners are enabled to develop the four capacities. The Course will do this by developing knowledge, understanding and skills, offering insights into 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, learn to express these, and act in accordance with an informed conscience when making moral decisions. It encourages learners to develop an understanding and respect for different faiths, beliefs and values, 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, planning and thinking skills. Developing understanding and respect for different views will develop a sense of responsible citizenship.

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<sup>1</sup> Experiences and outcomes  
[www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/understandingthecurriculum/howisthecurriculumstructured/experiencesandoutcomes/index.asp)

## **Purpose and aims of the Course**

The purpose of this Course is to develop knowledge and understanding of religious, moral and philosophical issues and how these relate to personal or practical contexts. It will explore the questions they raise and the solutions or approaches they offer. Learners will have opportunities to critically reflect on these and on their own experience and views. Religious and non-religious perspectives will be included.

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

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs and values of one world religion
- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical responses to moral questions
- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical responses to contemporary religious debates
- ◆ the ability to reflect on, and relate, knowledge about religious, moral and philosophical questions to personal or practical contexts
- ◆ a range of skills including investigation, analysis, evaluation, and the ability to express beliefs and views in a reasoned manner

The Units cover the key themes of the subject area, requiring learners to study a world religion in detail, understand a range of philosophical and religious approaches to morality, and study key aspects of contemporary religious debates.

The Course will help learners develop an understanding of key religious, moral and philosophical issues of relevance in the world today. This will help learners gain an awareness and understanding of the religious and social diversity of society. 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.

Entry to this Course is at the discretion of the centre. However, it may be beneficial for learners to have the skills and knowledge required by one or more of the following:

- ◆ relevant experiences and outcomes in the Religious and Moral Education/Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools curriculum area
- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (National 4) or relevant component Units or another social subject
- ◆ 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 a different pace.

By undertaking this Course, learners will develop a wide range of important and transferable skills including describing, explaining and analysing some religious, moral and philosophical questions and responses to these; enquiring into, and evaluating, different beliefs, ideas and viewpoints; expressing views about religious, moral and philosophical issues in a reasoned manner and interpreting and understanding the context of key texts and sources.

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.

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## **Course structure and conditions of award**

### **Course structure**

The Course develops a range of cognitive skills. It encourages active learning in the process of investigating religious, moral and philosophical issues. Learners need to acquire and apply relevant knowledge and understanding. Learners can reflect and articulate their personal faith position or viewpoint.

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: describing, explaining and analysing some religious, moral and philosophical questions and responses to these; enquiring into, and evaluating, different beliefs, ideas and viewpoints; expressing views about religious, moral and philosophical issues in a reasoned manner and interpreting and understanding the context of key texts and sources.

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 number of ways.

#### **World Religion (National 5)**

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to interpret and understand the context of key texts and sources drawn from the world religion selected for study. They will study one religion from a choice of the six major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism). The Unit will develop knowledge and understanding of some of the religion's beliefs. It will involve study of some of the values, practices and traditions of the religion selected for study.

#### **Morality and Belief (National 5)**

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to enquire into, evaluate and present reasoned views about religious and non-religious responses to moral issues. They will develop knowledge and understanding of at least one contemporary moral issue from a choice. Religious and non-religious viewpoints will be explored. Religious viewpoints studied must be from the six major world religions.

#### **Contemporary Religious Debates (National 5)**

In this Unit, learners will develop techniques to explain and analyse at least one significant religious belief from a choice and responses to this belief from science or philosophy. They will develop knowledge and understanding of the area. The range of contexts for study will be flexible to allow for personalisation and choice.

## **Conditions of award**

To gain the award of the Course, the learner must pass all the Units as well as the Course assessment. The required Units are shown in the Course outline section. Course assessment will provide the basis for grading attainment in the Course award.

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## Skills and knowledge

Full skills and knowledge for the Course will be given in the *Course Assessment Specification*. A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course includes:

- ◆ expressing views about basic factual and theoretical elements of religious, moral and philosophical issues in a reasoned manner, taking account of different ideas and viewpoints and relating these to personal or practical contexts
- ◆ interpreting key texts and sources including those from the religion(s) selected for study, in familiar contexts using some abstract or theoretical ideas
- ◆ enquiring into, critically evaluating, and expressing reasoned views about religious and non-religious responses to at least one moral and philosophical question in familiar contexts including using some abstract or theoretical ideas and relating these to personal or practical contexts
- ◆ describing, analysing and explaining — in detail and making use of some theoretical or abstract ideas — at least one significant religious belief and some responses from science or philosophy
- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of some of the main beliefs, values, practices and traditions of one of the six major world religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism)
- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of some key religious and philosophical responses to at least one contemporary moral issue
- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of at least one significant religious belief, and responses to this from science or philosophy

## Assessment

Information about assessment for the Course will be included in the *Course Assessment Specification* which will provide full details including advice on how a learner's overall attainment for the Course will be determined.

### 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 (National 5)**

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge of some of the beliefs, values, practices and traditions of the world religion selected for study
- ◆ interpretation of key texts and sources related to the religion selected for study, using some theoretical or abstract ideas

#### **Morality and Belief (National 5)**

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of at least one contemporary moral issue and some religious and philosophical responses
- ◆ some straightforward evaluation of the issue(s), using some theoretical or abstract ideas, expressing views in a reasoned manner

#### **Contemporary Religious Debates (National 5)**

The learner will be required to provide evidence of:

- ◆ basic factual and theoretical knowledge and understanding of at least one significant religious belief and responses to this from science or philosophy
- ◆ describing, explaining and analysing the belief(s) and engagement in detail, using some theoretical or abstract ideas

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

## **Course assessment**

Courses from National 4 to Advanced Higher include assessment of [added value](#)<sup>2</sup>. At National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher, the added value will be assessed in the Course assessment. The added value for the Course must 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 the Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (National 5) Course, added value will focus on:

- ◆ breadth
- ◆ challenge
- ◆ application

The learner will draw on, extend and apply the knowledge and skills they have learned during the Course. This will be assessed through a combination of a [question paper](#)<sup>3</sup> and a [project](#)<sup>4</sup>. The question paper will require demonstration of a breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills accumulated from across the Course. The project will require learners to extend and apply their knowledge and skills and will be sufficiently open to allow for personalisation and choice.

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<sup>2</sup> Definitions can be found here: [www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html](http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/45528.html)

<sup>3</sup> See link above for definition.

<sup>4</sup> See link above for definition.

## 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 also develop broad, generic skills through this Course. The skills that are likely to be appropriate for this 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
- 1.3 Listening and talking

### **3 Health and wellbeing**

- 3.1 Personal learning

### **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

- 4.6 Citizenship

### **5 Thinking skills**

- 5.1 Remembering
- 5.2 Understanding
- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

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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**Published:** April 2011 (version 1.0)

**Superclass:** to be advised

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## History of changes to National Course Specification

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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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 Specification.