

National 5 Philosophy Course Support Notes



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

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Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the National 5 Philosophy Course. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering the Course and its Units. They should be read in conjunction with the *Course Specification*, the *Course Assessment Specification* and the Unit Specifications for the Units in the Course.

The National 5 Philosophy Course has been benchmarked against the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) at SCQF level 5. The Course is made up of three Units and a Course assessment, which includes a question paper and an assignment.

General guidance on the Course

Aims

The National 5 Philosophy Course challenges learners to think clearly about problems by asking questions about the world we live in. Learners are introduced to philosophical positions and theories relating to issues of relevance in the world today. Learners will develop basic philosophical skills and techniques which they can apply to questions and claims. In the *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* Unit learners develop skills which are used to analyse a range of simple arguments. Learners will develop basic philosophical skills and techniques as they analyse and evaluate a variety of philosophical positions and theories in the *Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt* and *Philosophy: Moral Philosophy* Units.

Learners will become empowered to challenge assumptions and to apply knowledge and understanding of different themes, approaches and theories in philosophy. Thinking, analytical and communication skills which are important in education and employment are developed throughout the Course.

The table below outlines the broad aims of the Course.

Aims	Outline
Develop basic knowledge and understanding of philosophy and philosophers.	Basic knowledge and understanding will include the ability to name some philosophers and to know and be able to describe some fundamental facts about their theories. There is some scope for personalisation when selecting philosophers and ideas to explore.
Develop basic thinking, analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to philosophy.	Developing basic patterns of reasoning through philosophy supports learners to think, for example, about questions or claims within moral philosophy or epistemology. At this level, analytical and evaluative skills also involves being able to construct and deconstruct ideas and simple arguments whether they are encountered in everyday examples or whilst studying philosophical arguments in the Units of the Course.
Encourage learners' ability to use abstract thought.	Encouraging abstract thought will develop the learners' ability to deal with ideas rather than events. Questions or claims will be examined in new and different ways to produce ideas and challenges to ideas; for example using thought experiments. This ability to consider issues theoretically has relevance to many areas of life, including learning, life and work.
Offer learners insight from the ideas of others which may be different from their own.	Responsible citizenship involves being open to different ideas and an ability to see things from different points of view. Ideas from a range of philosophical traditions and theories challenge the learners' thinking and any preconceived ideas.
Develop communication skills appropriate to philosophy.	The Course offers opportunities for learners to be curious and to explore questions and claims through philosophy. Learners will have opportunities to explain their reasoning and to develop philosophical techniques that are used to challenge claims. Clarity of thinking is expected to develop and to be increasingly evident in the way the learner communicates. Terminology in the Course will include specific words and phrases used in philosophy. Learners are expected to use this terminology accurately. This enables the learner to become a more effective contributor.

Progression into this Course

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 by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course or relevant component Units

In terms of prior learning, experiences and outcomes from a number of curriculum areas provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. The Course is particularly well suited to further developing understanding of beliefs and values through reflection and discussion and participating in debates about issues which have been introduced through Religious and Moral Education or Social Studies Courses.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications and/or experiences and outcomes may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in the Course

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the Course.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* for mandatory information about the skills, knowledge and understanding to be covered in this Course.

A broad overview of the mandatory subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the Course includes:

Skills

- ◆ **Analysing:** This is the breakdown of something into its constituent parts and detection of the relationships of those parts and the way they are organised.
- ◆ **Evaluating:** This occurs when a judgement is made on the basis of certain criteria.
- ◆ **Presenting a reasoned view:** This is the ability to develop an argument that leads to and supports a clear conclusion.

Knowledge and understanding

Knowledge refers to material that is relevant to explaining or understanding the question and includes:

- ◆ basic knowledge and understanding of argument structure and philosophical fallacies
- ◆ basic knowledge and understanding of key theories of knowledge
- ◆ basic knowledge and understanding of key moral philosophical theories

Progression from this Course

This Course or its components may provide progression to:

- ◆ Higher Philosophy or Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies
- ◆ other SQA qualifications in social studies, social science or related areas at Higher level or SCQF level 5
- ◆ further study or training in humanities, social science or theology
- ◆ employment in areas such as police, health, education, science, care, local government or voluntary sectors

Philosophy has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support both vertical and lateral progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts.

Hierarchies

Hierarchy is the term used to describe Courses and Units which form a structured sequence involving two or more SCQF levels.

It is important that any content in a Course and/or Unit at one particular SCQF level is not repeated if a learner progresses to the next level of the hierarchy. The skills and knowledge should be able to be applied to new content and contexts to enrich the learning experience. This is for centres to manage.

The National 5 Philosophy Course is in a hierarchy with the Higher Philosophy Course. Units have the same titles and structures but the level of demand differs in the degree of difficulty and complexity from one level to the next.

In National 5 Philosophy, learners will work with ideas, arguments and texts at a basic level. For example, by looking at the simple arguments and making basic judgements about their reliability. Learners need only do this in the context of deductive arguments and are not expected to engage with examples of inductive reasoning. Learners would be expected to identify and explain the standard criticisms of moral and epistemological theories in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. This could involve explaining the strengths and weaknesses of a theory in their own words.

Whilst learners should be encouraged to pursue their potential in the subject there is no requirement at this level that learners provide original insights or have an intimate knowledge of the texts to achieve the Course award. Introducing learners to skills in the analysis and evaluation of theories and texts should be stimulating and satisfying for learners at SCQF level 5. Learners may benefit from a greater level of teacher support and direction than at Higher level. *Unit Support Notes* provide more detailed guidance on skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the Unit.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

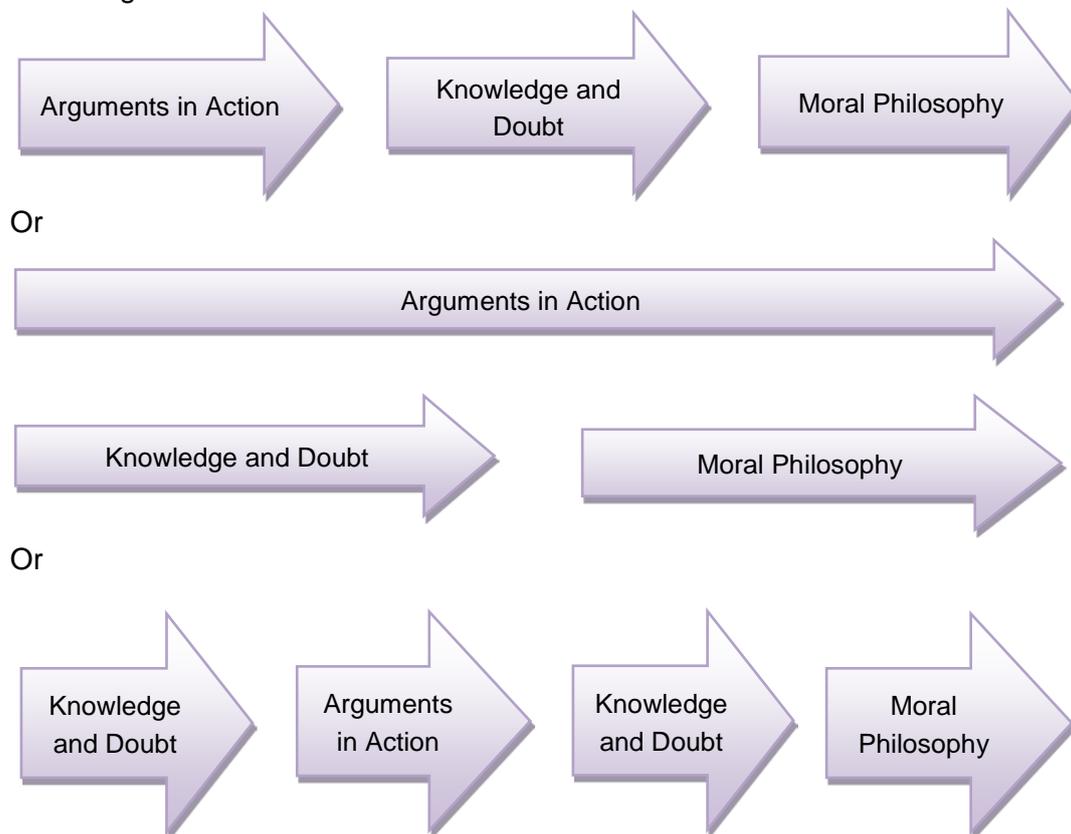
Mode of delivery

There are three Units in this Course. The level of demand in each Unit corresponds with the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework at level 5](#).

The three Units in the Course are:

Philosophy: Arguments in Action (National 5)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Philosophy: Moral Philosophy (National 5)	(6 SCQF credit points)
Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt (National 5)	(6 SCQF credit points)

Units may be delivered in any order. They may be delivered sequentially or concurrently. The following diagram illustrates some alternative approaches to delivering the Units.



The first two suggestions encourage the idea that thinking skills are fundamental to all branches of philosophy and can be revisited and highlighted throughout the other Units.

Some centres may then move to *Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt* Unit as it includes some important terms and ideas that will help learners understand moral philosophy at a deeper level.

The third approach has a similar aim; however, by beginning with a brief introduction to epistemology in the *Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt* Unit, learners may benefit from engaging with some aspects of the Course in preparation for *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* Unit.

Unit Support Notes give more suggestions for learning and teaching approaches.

A glossary of terminology is provided in Appendix 2.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Learners are expected to develop broad generic skills as an integral part of their learning experience. The *Course Specification* lists the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work that learners should develop through this Course. These are based on SQA's *Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work* and must be built into the Course where there are appropriate opportunities. The level of these skills will be appropriate to the level of the Course.

Skills	Examples of opportunities to develop these skills within Philosophy
1 Literacy	
1.1 Reading	Reading in philosophy involves the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented in sources, for a purpose and within a context. It includes handling information to make reasoned and informed decisions. Learners should naturally be exposed to a range of written sources in the delivery of the Units in this Course. This may include engagement with primary and secondary philosophical texts. This will develop their ability to read and comprehend texts and moreover acquire the skill of reading between the lines and identifying hidden assumptions. These sources could take the form of websites, textbooks, class notes or newspapers which could be used to identify a range of arguments from a variety of issues.
1.2 Writing	Writing in philosophy involves the ability to create texts which communicate ideas, opinions and information, to meet a purpose and within a context. Learners should be given the opportunity to respond in written form to examples and problems encountered in the delivery of the Units in this Course. This writing could take the form of short response answers to set questions, summarising and explaining key ideas, or could be a typed contribution to an online message board or forum. Regardless of how this is accommodated, care should be taken to emphasise the importance of communicating clearly in writing, particularly in philosophy where an imprecise use of language or ambiguous grammar can pose a serious obstacle to the practice of the discipline. The careful study of arguments should itself help instil a renewed awareness of the importance and impact of the written word. Appropriate accommodation should of course be made for learners with additional support needs such as dyslexia.

Skills	Examples of opportunities to develop these skills within Philosophy
1.3 Listening and talking	Listening in philosophy involves the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented orally for a purpose and within a context, drawing on non-verbal communication as appropriate. Talking means the ability to communicate orally ideas, opinions and information for a purpose and within a context. Teachers and lecturers should wherever possible plan lessons which make room for the development of listening and talking skills. Opportunities to develop talking skills could take the form of group work, paired activities, whole class discussions or individual presentations. Listening skills can also be developed using these approaches or by the use of lectures or videos which require the learner to pay close attention to the spoken word and extract key information from it.
5 Thinking skills	
5.3 Applying	Applying in philosophy involves the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context, and to plan, organise and complete a task. Wherever possible learners should be given the opportunity to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have developed to novel examples and scenarios. This should become routine in the Units of this Course as learners acquire philosophical techniques and a technical vocabulary and practise their application to problems and arguments that have either been supplied for them or that they have identified themselves.
5.4 Analysing and evaluating	Analysing and evaluating in philosophy involves the ability to identify and weigh-up the features of a situation or issue and to use your judgement of them in coming to a conclusion. It includes reviewing and considering any potential solutions. The ability to analyse and evaluate philosophical positions, theories and arguments is the chief objective of these Units. In the <i>Philosophy: Arguments in Action</i> Unit, learners should be routinely given opportunities to assess arguments for their reliability using the concepts they have been taught. Examples used should vary in complexity and sophistication to stretch learners and develop their capacity for analysis. At a simple level of analysis, learners should be able to identify premises and conclusions within arguments while more sophisticated examples may involve extrapolation of premises from a mixture of relevant and irrelevant information.

There may be opportunities to develop other skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. For example, the use of learning logs/peer and self-evaluation of understanding of key philosophical ideas may contribute to the area of health and wellbeing and the skill of personal learning. Opportunities to develop other skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work could vary across centres depending on approaches being used to deliver the Unit. This will be for individual teachers and centres to decide.

Approaches to assessment

The National 5 Philosophy Course should be seen as a coherent introductory study of different aspects of Philosophy. There will be opportunities throughout the Course to reinforce and deepen learning by making links between aspects of knowledge and understanding across Units, depending on the particular topics and issues studied.

To pass a Unit it is necessary to provide evidence of achievement at the minimum standard defined by the Assessment Standard. This minimum standard may not be clear from the wording of the Assessment Standard but it is exemplified in the Unit Assessment Support packs.

Preparation for Course assessment

Each Course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable learners to prepare for Course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the Course and at various points throughout the Course for consolidation and support. It may also be used for preparation for Unit assessment, and towards the end of the Course, for further integration, revision and preparation and/or gathering evidence for Course assessment.

Combining assessment across Units

If an integrated or thematic approach to Course delivery is chosen, then there may be opportunities for combining assessment across Units. This can:

- ◆ enrich the assessment process for the learner by linking assessment more closely to teaching and learning
- ◆ make more sense to the learner and avoid duplication of assessment
- ◆ allow for evidence for particular Units to be drawn from a range of activities
- ◆ allow more time for time for learning

Care should be taken when using combined assessment that those aspects of the Assessment Standard not achieved by the combined assessment are covered by a further assessment. Therefore, when designing an assessment to cover multiple Units assessors must ensure that they track and record where evidence of individual Units appears.

Care must be taken that combining assessment does not add complexity to the assessment which must be at SCQF level 5.

Equality and inclusion

The National 5 Philosophy Course requires learners to communicate and develop ideas through discussion and debate. Debate and discussion could be carried out in a variety of ways: oral, written, electronic. Communication could be written, oral or diagrammatic. Learners also use written texts and sources in this Course, however information from texts and sources may be provided in a format suitable to individual learner needs.

The *Philosophy: Moral Philosophy* Unit may provide opportunities for candidates to encounter a number of sensitive issues such as disability, prejudice, racism or abortion. The use of this Unit as a vehicle for exploring these issues is part of its value in the curriculum; however teachers should approach these issues with sensitivity and professionalism, taking into account the background and composition of learners and managing discussions appropriately. This could also be the case in the *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* Unit where care should be taken to distinguish technical aspects of arguments from their content.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Course Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Course.

It is important that centres are aware of and understand SQA's assessment arrangements for disabled learners, and those with additional support needs, when making requests for adjustments to published assessment arrangements. Centres will find more guidance on this in the series of publications on Assessment Arrangements on SQA's website: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications are available on SQA's website at: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa//14977.html.
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*](#)
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*](#)
- ◆ [*Course Specifications*](#)
- ◆ [*Design Principles for National Courses*](#)
- ◆ [*Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)*](#)
- ◆ [*Overview of Qualification Reports*](#)
- ◆ Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas
- ◆ [*SCQF Handbook: User Guide*](#) and [*SCQF level descriptors*](#)
- ◆ [*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*](#)
- ◆ *Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*

Appendix 2: Glossary

Philosophy is a subject that involves the use of technical terminology which may be new to the learner. The following glossary is intended to provide support to learners who are building their vocabulary and developing skills in philosophy.

Act Utilitarianism	A type of Utilitarianism that holds that the moral worth of each action depends upon whether it individually on that occasion produced the greatest happiness.
A priori	Discoverable by reason, without the aid of the senses.
A posteriori	Discoverable by the use of the senses.
Analogy	Similarity.
Analytic	In an analytic statement, the meaning of the statement guarantees its truth (eg 'All sisters are female').
Argument	A collection of statements (the premises) put forward to support a central claim (the conclusion).
Assert	To claim that something is the case without supporting evidence. Statements can only assert a claim, they cannot prove one.
Assumptions	For example relevant facts, opinions, beliefs that have an influence on an argument but may not actually be stated.
Attacking the person	This fallacy is committed if it is argued that p is false on the grounds that it is advanced by a particular person, for example because that person stands to gain from our acceptance of it as true or because that person's behaviour is not consistent with the truth of p .
Authority	Recognised expertise.
Brain-in-a-vat	Hilary Putnam's thought experiment — in which brains are artificially caused to have the experiences which they would have if they were inside bodies (which they are not).
Cogito	Latin for 'I think'.
Competent judges	A term used by Mill to describe people best placed to judge between higher and lower pleasures. Competent judges are those who have experienced both sorts of pleasure.
Conclusion	What an argument attempts to prove the truth of (see also 'premise').
Consequentialism	The view common to any first-order ethical theory that holds that the consequences of an action are the primary factor in calculating its moral worth.
Contingently true	True, but could conceivably have been false (contrast necessarily true).
Counterexample	A particular example which shows that some general claim is false. The statement 'all Scottish cities are on the East coast' is shown to be false by the counterexample of Glasgow — which is on the West coast.
Contradiction	Asserting that something both is and is not the case at the same time. For example, Barack Obama cannot be and not be the President at the same time. He either is, or he is not the President; he cannot be both.
Deductive argument	An argument which attempts to prove certain conclusions based on what is contained in the premises alone, eg 'All cats have tails. Felix is a cat therefore Felix has a tail.'
Deontology/ Deontological	The ethical theory that the moral worth of an action is intrinsic to the act itself rather than its consequences. Kant's deontological approach argued that moral obligation lay in doing one's duty.

Demon	An evil supernatural being. Some translations of Descartes' Meditations translate 'evil genius' as 'evil demon'
Deny	To simply claim that something is not the case without supporting evidence. Statements can only assert a claim, they cannot prove one.
Duty	An action that a person is morally or legally obliged to perform.
Empiricism	The view that reliable knowledge can be gained via experience; the justification condition is met by using one or other of the five senses.
Epistemology	The branch of philosophy which considers knowledge. What is knowledge? What can we know with certainty — and how?
Equity/Equity principle	The first-order ethical theory that everyone's interests are of equal importance or at least are worthy of equal consideration.
Evil genius	Descartes' Evil genius would be capable of deceiving me into reasoning wrongly — and into believing that there is a physical world when there is not.
False dilemma	This fallacy is committed if, in the course of an argument, it is presumed without argument that p and q are the only two possibilities, when in fact there are other possibilities.
Falsify	Show to be false.
Felicific Calculus	Another name for the Hedonic Calculus.
Foundational belief	Also known as a 'first principle' (hence the full title of Descartes' text). A belief which is self-evident, and from which we can arrive at further beliefs by inference from the foundations.
Greatest Happiness Principle	The morally right action is that action which maximises happiness.
Hedonic Calculus	A method proposed by Jeremy Bentham of calculating how much utility an action produces.
Hedonism/Hedonic principle	The first-order ethical theory that whether an action is morally right or wrong depends on whether it promotes the maximum pleasure.
Higher pleasures	A term used by Mill to describe intellectual pleasures such as literature, art or music, as opposed to the 'lower' physical pleasures.
Hume's Fork	Hume's distinction between Matters of Fact (which are a posteriori) and Relations of Ideas (which are a priori).
Idea	In Hume's text, an idea is a perception — a mental entity, which is the faded remains of an earlier impression.
Illegitimate appeals to authority	This fallacy is committed if a conclusion c is inferred from the fact that some person or group asserts c , without justifying the right of that person or group to be regarded as authoritative in this matter.
Imagination	In Hume's text, the imagination is the faculty of the mind which creates complex ideas, by augmenting, diminishing, compounding, or transposing.
Impression	In Hume's text, an impression is a perception — a mental entity, which is either inward (a feeling) or outward (the result of the operation of the senses).
Inconsistency	A relationship between statements in which it is impossible for both to be true at the same time (eg 'I am in Inverness' is inconsistent with 'I am not in Inverness').
Induction	A type of argument in which a general claim is the conclusion, and a limited number of individual observations comprise the premises.

Infer	To move from accepting one belief to accepting another (eg I infer from my belief that my phone is ringing that someone wants to speak to me).
Inference	The process of inferring. Innate idea. An idea which is present in the mind at birth.
Justice	Concerned with fairness and equality, particularly in the distribution of goods or punishments.
Justification	To justify is to give a satisfactory answer to the question 'how do you know?'
Local Scepticism	Scepticism is the doubt that knowledge is possible. Local scepticism is scepticism about a particular kind of knowledge claims — eg the religious sceptic doubts the possibility of knowledge of God.
Lower pleasures	A term used by Mill to describe non-intellectual pleasures such as food, drink and sex.
Matters of fact	One of the two components of Hume's Fork. A matter of fact is a statement (which may be false) which has to be tested for truth or falsity a posteriori.
Memory	In Hume, the memory is a faculty of the mind which stores simple ideas.
Method of doubt	Descartes' method of ensuring rigour in his knowledge claims by withholding assent from beliefs which are not absolutely certain and indubitable.
Moral dilemmas	An ethical problem which involves choosing between competing courses of action which may appear to be both morally praiseworthy or both morally blameworthy.
Moral philosophy	The branch of philosophy that studies the concepts of right and wrong. It can be subdivided in Normative Ethics and Meta-ethics.
Motive	The reason for doing something.
Necessarily true	True, and not possibly not true (contrast 'contingently true').
Normative ethics	The study of moral issues and the first-order theories that attempt to resolve moral dilemmas. Concerned with answering the question of what it is that makes an action right or wrong.
Other minds	The philosophical problem of other minds is the problem of knowing whether other people have mental lives. Can we infer this from their behaviour?
Perception	In Hume's text a perception is a mental item — either an impression or an idea.
Possible worlds	One way of determining whether a statement is necessarily true is to ask whether there are possible worlds in which it is false (if not, then it is necessarily true).
Premise	The part of an argument which is intended to defend the conclusion (see also 'conclusion').
Proposition	A statement.
Propositional knowledge	Propositional knowledge is justified true belief; what is believed is a proposition.
Prove	To support an assertion with evidence. Only arguments can prove a claim.
Qualitative	Concerned with evaluating the non-measurable features of an object. A qualitative measure of a cake might be how tasty it is as opposed to a quantitative measure such as how heavy it is.

Quantify	To measure.
Quantitative	Concerned with quantities or amounts of things. A quantitative measure of a cake might be how heavy it is as opposed to a qualitative measure such as how tasty it is.
Rationalism	The view that reliable knowledge can be gained via reason; the justification condition is met just by thinking.
Refute	To deny an assertion with supporting evidence. Only arguments can refute claims.
Relations of ideas	One of the two components of Hume's Fork. A relation of ideas is a statement which is tested for truth or falsity a priori.
Rule Utilitarianism	A type of Utilitarianism that holds that the moral worth of each action depends upon whether it accords with rules which in turn are justified by their tendency to promote the greatest happiness.
Scepticism	Doubt that knowledge is possible (see also Local scepticism).
Slippery slope	This fallacy is committed when an arguer claims that one thing will inevitably lead later to another, usually worse, state of affairs, without further argument.
Standard form	A consistent way of organising and presenting arguments which involves identifying the premises and conclusions; converting any rhetorical questions; making explicit hidden premises; identifying intermediate conclusions and listing them in a logical sequence (eg premise, premise, conclusion).
Soundness	A deductive argument which has true premises and is valid is said to be sound. An unsound argument is therefore one which has either a false premise or is invalid or both.
Statement	A sentence capable of being true or false (eg 'the sky is blue'). Statements are also known as propositions.
Sufficient condition	A condition which, if it is met, guarantees that a further condition is met. For example, it is sufficient for my being in Scotland that I am in Stirling (contrast Necessary condition).
Tabula rasa	Latin for 'scrubbed tablet' or 'blank slate'. Those who deny that innatism is true claim that the mind is at birth a tabula rasa.
Theorem	The conclusion of an a priori argument.
Trademark argument	Descartes' argument that God has left an innate idea of himself in my mind.
Tripartite theory of knowledge	The theory that knowledge has three components: belief, truth, and justification.
Validity	A valid argument is one which would guarantee a true conclusion if the premises were true. An invalid argument does not guarantee a true conclusion when the premises are true.
Virtual reality	The generation by computer software of an environment which appears real to the senses. This raises a philosophical problem: how do I know that what I am experiencing is not merely virtual reality?

Administrative information

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History of changes to Course Support Notes

Course details	Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
	2.0	Changes throughout to reflect the amended Course Assessment Specification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

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Unit Support Notes — Philosophy: Arguments in Action (National 5)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* (National 5) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to develop the learner's ability to think philosophically. In order to do this, learners will need to be exposed to a range of activities which will help develop their philosophical skills. The specific objective of this Unit is to develop those skills associated with the ability to analyse and evaluate arguments. These arguments could concern everyday issues like sport or politics, or they could focus on specific philosophical topics or debates like 'God or freewill'. It is recommended that learners are exposed to a wide variety of contexts to enable them to see the relevance of argument evaluation skills to academic study and other areas of life.

This Unit is a mandatory Unit of the National 5 Philosophy Course and is also available as a free-standing Unit.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of arguments
- 2 Analyse arguments

The Course aims and ideas of how these can be achieved through this Unit are outlined in the table below.

National 5 aims	Development of aims in the <i>Philosophy: Arguments in Action</i> Unit
Develop basic knowledge and understanding of philosophy and philosophers.	This could be achieved by using philosophical topics, not covered elsewhere in the Course, as a vehicle for introducing concepts in argument analysis. An example of this at National 5 level could include introducing learners simple syllogisms (eg ' <i>All men are mortal, Socrates is a man, So Socrates is mortal</i> ') which would not only introduce learners to basic argument concepts but also affords the opportunity to place the study of arguments within the wider context of philosophy and its history.
Develop basic thinking, analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to philosophy.	The <i>Philosophy: Arguments in Action</i> Unit more than any other Philosophy Unit explicitly addresses the sort of thinking and analytical skills required for philosophy. At National 5 level this could include identifying the key premise(s) and conclusion of a simple argument and explaining whether it is valid or invalid.
Encourage learners' ability to use abstract thought.	This is developed in a variety of ways in this Unit. The very act of distinguishing the content of the argument from its structure encourages the learners to think in an abstract way.

<p>Offer learners insight from the ideas of others which may be different from their own.</p>	<p>The <i>Philosophy: Arguments in Action</i> Unit encourages learners to engage with opposing viewpoints and assess them from an objective and dispassionate perspective. Study of this Unit should enable learners to appreciate that arguments can be well constructed even though they oppose their own beliefs or, conversely, that arguments can be badly constructed, even though they support their own viewpoints.</p>
<p>Develop communication skills appropriate to philosophy.</p>	<p>Learners will have the opportunity to articulate and defend arguments both orally and in written exercises, displaying appropriate attitudes and conduct as outlined below.</p>

Progression into this Unit

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

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course or component Units

In terms of prior learning and experience, relevant fourth level experiences and outcomes may also provide an appropriate basis for doing this Unit.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in the Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 *Philosophy Course Support Notes*.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specification* for information about the skills, knowledge and understanding relating to this Unit.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

Appropriate progression from this Unit might include:

- ◆ other component Units of the National 5 Philosophy Course
- ◆ the Higher Philosophy Course or relevant component Units such as the *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* (Higher) Unit, in conjunction with other Philosophy Units at National 5
- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course or relevant component Units at National 5 or Higher

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning and teaching, preparing learners for assessment and gathering evidence for assessment.

Overarching guidance

There are a wide variety of learning and teaching approaches which can be used to deliver this Unit. This section of the *Unit Support Notes* provides advice and guidance and some examples of approaches that could be used. At all times, teachers/lecturers should provide opportunities for personalisation and choice to ensure that learning is relevant and motivating. Learning should, where possible, be relevant to the learners' domestic and everyday life, their overall learning programme and/or work and leisure.

Sequencing and timing

This Unit consists of two Outcomes which can be delivered and assessed either sequentially, where learners will analyse arguments and then later evaluate their reliability, or in a holistic way, where learners gain both skills together. Specific to this Unit is the acquisition of a technical vocabulary of terms and concepts which are essential for the successful demonstration of the skills developed in the Unit. This vocabulary will include terms which may be unfamiliar to the learner, such as 'premise', and terms which may be familiar to the learner but have a special technical meaning in philosophy, such as the term 'argument'. Activities and exercises should be undertaken which ensure that vocabulary has been securely grasped before moving on to their application in analysing and evaluating arguments.

Appropriate attitudes and conduct are important to effectively participate in debates and discussions in philosophy. Some topics can raise strong opinions but teachers should take time to create an environment where learners feel safe to express their thoughts and ideas and question their own ideas and those of others. It is therefore recommended that teachers establish ground rules designed to provide a safe environment. Learners should be encouraged to:

- ◆ respect the right of others to express values and positions which may conflict with their own
- ◆ listen patiently and allow other to express their views uninterrupted
- ◆ develop the confidence to share their own values and positions with others who may not agree with them
- ◆ critically assess their own values and positions, as well as those of others, in a structured manner
- ◆ reach conclusions about philosophical issues, theories and positions based on the information and evidence they have studied
- ◆ be prepared to explain the reasoning they have used in order to reach these conclusions
- ◆ use appropriate language

Possible approaches to learning and teaching

A rich and supportive learning environment should be provided to enable a learner to achieve the best they can. This could include approaches which include:

- ◆ describing and identifying the component parts of arguments
- ◆ developing argument evaluation skills
- ◆ asking learners to explain or show their thinking
- ◆ collaborative and independent learning
- ◆ discussion around new concepts and how they can be applied in novel contexts
- ◆ using technology where appropriate
- ◆ learners inventing or identifying their own examples of arguments drawn from imaginary or real-life situations

Hints and tips

There are many different possible approaches to embedding the knowledge and skills required for this Unit and judging readiness for assessment and it is up to teachers to negotiate with learners on which approach might suit the group best.

A 'Building Block' approach

One possible approach is to teach the underpinning concepts in a logical sequence, starting from the simplest and most fundamental ideas and progressively building more complex ones on top. This approach is similar to the tactic one might adopt in teaching arithmetic: where grasping the concept of number might precede the concept of addition which in turn might allow the learner to progress to multiplication. The concepts in argument analysis are similarly progressive in this way, so a possible sequence of delivery might be:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Statements and Arguments(2) Premises and Conclusions(3) Validity and Invalidity(4) Common Fallacies |
|--|

Having grasped each concept discretely, and tested the level of understanding with multiple examples, the learner might then start to orchestrate their accumulated skills by applying them all to unseen contexts. In this approach, application to philosophical arguments might come last in the order of learning, since original philosophical texts are sometimes more difficult sources to use for clear cut examples. At National 5 level it is suggested that secondary texts might provide more accessible and simplified examples of arguments for learners to work on.

Argument analysis should focus on the central questions:

- ◆ What is the conclusion of this argument?
- ◆ What are the premises in this argument?
- ◆ Are there any hidden assumptions?
- ◆ Does it commit any fallacies?
- ◆ If the premises are true, must we accept the conclusion?

A measure of readiness for assessment lies in the extent to which the learner can undertake a task like this with limited support. Learners could select their own examples which might be used for the purposes of self-assessment or peer assessment. By discussing examples in groups, learners can point out aspects of the argument that their peers might have missed and so capitalise on all the human resources in the classroom, not just the class tutor.

A ‘Philosophy First’ approach

A second strategy might be to adopt a top-down approach where the starting point for delivery is simplified examples of arguments taken from secondary sources. This way learners engage more immediately with the subject of philosophy and learn the key concepts as they naturally arise in the analysis of a number of examples. For example, the Unit could begin as an introduction to philosophy which immerses the learner immediately in the subject by looking at an interesting philosophical topic which contains arguments for or against a position. Whilst learning about this topic the learner could then be gradually encouraged to tease out relevant premises and question assumptions behind these premises acquiring the skills *en passant*. A demonstration of this approach is given below:

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

<p>Outcome 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of arguments</p>	<p>Course content: Skills, knowledge and understanding required from this Unit include the ability to understand, identify and explain the following: statement; argument; premise; conclusion; valid and invalid arguments. This will include the ability to recognise and be able to generate examples to show understanding.</p>
<p>Learners should know and understand that in philosophy an argument is a collection of statements intended to provide support for a particular claim. For example:</p> <p><i>Human beings are creatures who are given rights on the basis that they are able to think and to feel pain. Many other animals are also able to think and feel pain. Therefore non-human animals should also be given rights’.</i></p> <p>Encouraging learners to choose their own examples and examples from media or other sources that they collect will prepare them for Unit and Course assessment (Assessment Standard 1.1). Learners should be able to describe the essential parts of the argument in their own words and weed out any irrelevant parts.</p> <p>Learners should be able to clearly identify the premises and conclusion(s) of an argument and distinguish them from each other (Assessment Standard 1.2). The above argument might be displayed like so:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Humans have rights because they think and feel pain (Premise). ◆ Many animals can think and feel pain (Premise). ◆ So, animals should be given rights (Conclusion). 	

<p>Outcome 2: Analyse arguments</p>	<p>Course content: Candidates must be able to demonstrate their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ distinguish statements from questions, commands, exclamations and arguments ◆ identify and explain valid and invalid arguments ◆ distinguish premises from conclusions in an argument ◆ analyse simple arguments ◆ recognise and generate examples of the following common fallacies: attacking the person; false dilemma; illegitimate appeal to authority; slippery slope
<p>Learners should demonstrate their ability to analyse arguments by identifying a fallacy within an argument. This could be done by presenting learners with a range of arguments, some of which contain a fallacy and some which did not and asking them to correctly identify the fallacious arguments. (Assessment Standard 2.1)</p> <p>Learners should further demonstrate their ability to analyse arguments by giving an explanation of whether an argument (either one they have selected themselves or one they are presented with) is valid or invalid. (Assessment Standard 2.2)</p>	

An integrated approach

A variation of this strategy becomes available in the context of Course delivery where the *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* Unit could be subsumed entirely in the delivery of the other two Units in the National 5 Philosophy Course. In such an approach the concepts of argument analysis could be raised while studying texts and sources in epistemology or moral philosophy. Some texts lend themselves better to this task than others and again secondary sources might be better suited for this task than primary texts. Care should be taken however to supply additional material for those concepts or fallacies not encountered naturally in the Course.

Further information on Assessment can be found in Appendix 1.

Assessment strategies and methods

It would normally be expected that considerable learning and teaching will have taken place prior to the assessment evidence being collected. Learners should have successfully completed tasks and exercises of a similar demand to those in the assessment. In other words the assessor must be confident that the learner is ready for, and can achieve, the assessment.

Suggested assessment activities could include:

- ◆ specific assessment tasks
- ◆ practical assignment
- ◆ oral questioning using a recording or transcript as evidence
- ◆ observation using an observation checklist or video recording as evidence
- ◆ learning and teaching activities which provide naturally occurring opportunities for assessment

It is recommended that all evidence generated by the learner is kept together and in a secure place for verification purposes. This can be done by creating and providing the learner with a workbook or portfolio. Where possible opportunities to collect and store evidence electronically could be used.

Assessment for the Unit could be done as part of the learning and teaching programme or it may be done as a discrete activity. The assessment could be carried out as a single event or it may be broken up into smaller, more manageable chunks. In this case care must be taken to avoid duplication of evidence and potential over-assessment.

For information on assessment and re-assessment, teachers and lecturers should refer to SQA's *Guide to Assessment*, available on SQA's website.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit, is given in the National 5 Philosophy *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

The *Philosophy: Arguments in Action* Unit is a particularly good vehicle for both accommodating and promoting equal opportunities by using examples of poor arguments that are sometimes used to defend racism, sexism or sectarianism.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*](#)
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*](#)
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*](#)
- ◆ *Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html

Administrative information

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

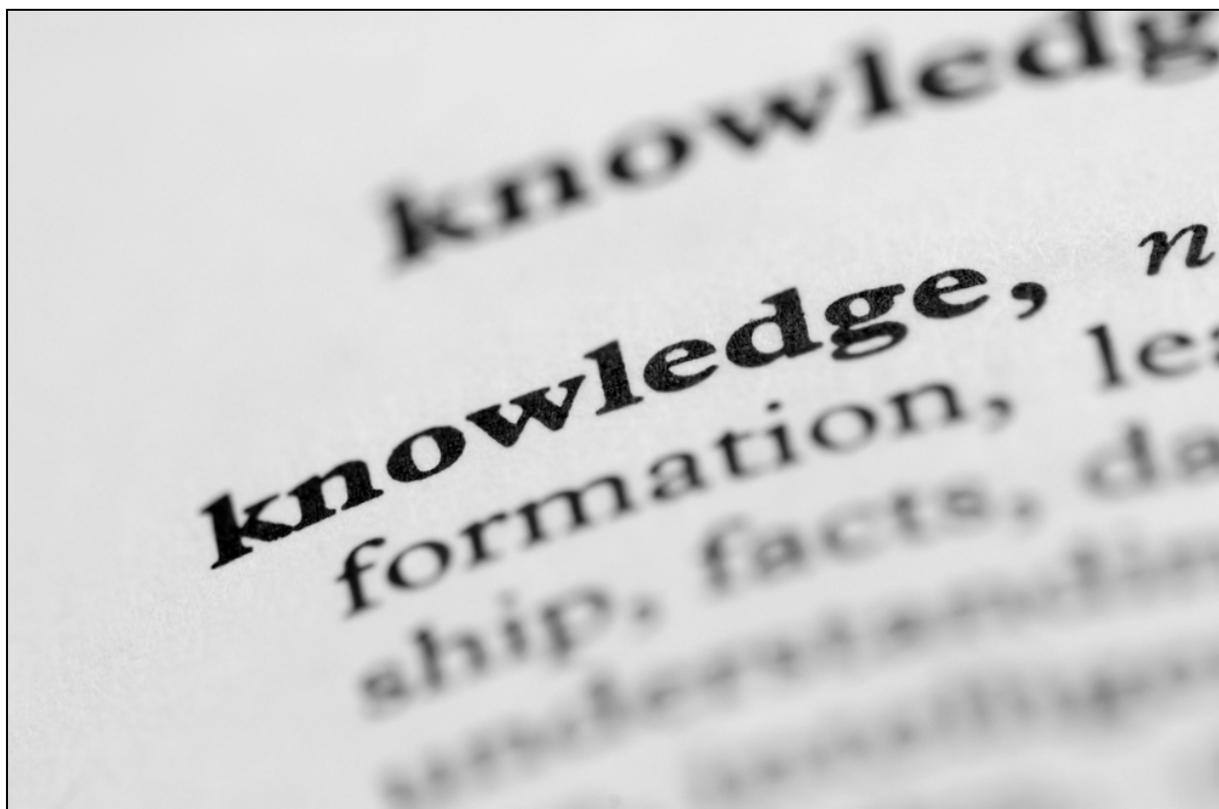
Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Changes throughout to reflect the amended Unit Specification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

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Unit Support Notes — Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt (National 5)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Philosophy: Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt* (National 5) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the Unit Specification
- ◆ the Course Specification
- ◆ the Course Assessment Specification
- ◆ the Course Support Notes
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to equip the learner with the knowledge and skills necessary to examine, understand and discuss theories of knowledge. Learners will investigate reasons for scepticism in philosophy and develop a basic understanding of different theories. Learners will actively explore problems associated with theories of knowledge and make use of thinking skills to analyse and evaluate theories and to express opinions with supporting reasons. Views and reasoning will be developed by discussing and debating different philosophical views and referring to key texts and sources.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of epistemology
- 2 Evaluate rationalist or empiricist arguments

The Course aims and ideas of how these can be achieved through this Unit are outlined in the table below.

Aims	Outline in the <i>Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt</i> Unit
Develop basic knowledge and understanding of philosophy and philosophers	<p>Basic knowledge and understanding of theories of knowledge (epistemology) may include rationalist and empiricist approaches and references to Descartes and Hume. Learners could be introduced to epistemology by reading Plato's Cave and watching animations of it. They could discuss the symbolism of the parable especially the journey from the darkness in the cave to the light outside.</p> <p>Likewise, they could discuss Hume's Missing Shade of Blue:</p> 
Develop basic thinking, analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to philosophy	<p>Learners will develop an understanding of ways of thinking about questions and claims from different points of views. Analysis will involve looking at the component parts of theories or claims and evaluation will involve making comment on the theories or claims.</p> <p>Initially, learners could be asked to reflect on how they define knowledge and draw on examples from their own lives. They could then challenge one another's statements in pairs or groups. Building on this foundation, they can then be encouraged to criticise Rationalism and Empiricism. They will, at this level, understand that the senses can let us down and state relevant examples of this. Similarly, with Rationalism, they can appreciate that statements such as 'Black cats are black' tell us very little and will be able to produce similar examples. These examples could be part of a portfolio of evidence.</p>

Aims	Outline in the <i>Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt</i> Unit
Encourage learners' ability to use abstract thought	The concept of scepticism offers a focus for exploring the nature of knowledge. The idea promoted by the sceptic that nothing is certain is in itself abstract. Learners can be asked to prove that they are whom they consider themselves to be. The idea that we might be in some kind of perpetual dream world will also develop abstract thought as will discussion about what it means to exist.
Offer learners insight from the ideas of others which may be different from their own	<p>Ideas from a range of philosophical traditions and theories may be introduced to challenge the learner's thinking and any preconceived ideas. The ideas of Heraclitus, that everything is in constant flux, could initiate interesting discussions — statements such as, 'No man ever steps into the same river twice', can be debated. Learners could be asked to discuss Thomas Nagel's question, 'What is it like to be a bat?' Evidence such as the link between blind people and their use of echolocation could be introduced.</p> <p>Extracts from texts may be used when evaluating contrasting theories to demonstrate different ways of thinking about knowledge. Descartes' sceptical arguments in Meditation 1 are accessible to the learner as are Hume's reflections on simple and complex ideas in the Enquiry.</p>
Develop communication skills appropriate to philosophy	<p>Ideas on the nature of knowledge can be shared through discussion; either in class or using technology. Learners can explore issues such as the reliability of the senses; discuss the dreaming argument or the brain in a vat argument.</p> <p>Learners will use terminology such as Knowledge; Belief; Certainty; Scepticism. Empiricism; Rationalism. Learners are expected to use this terminology accurately in their contributions. This brings together all of the above. Learners can be encouraged to keep a detailed glossary of terms.</p>

Progression into this Unit

Entry to this Unit 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 by equivalent qualifications and/or experience:

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course or relevant component Units

In terms of prior learning, experiences and outcomes from a number of curriculum areas provide an appropriate basis for doing this Course. The Course is particularly well suited to further developing understanding of beliefs and values through reflection and discussion and participating in debates about issues which have been introduced through Religious and Moral Education or Social Studies.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications and/or experiences and outcomes may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in this Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 Philosophy Course *Support Notes*.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specification* for information about the skills, knowledge and understanding relating to this Unit.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could support both vertical and lateral progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts. This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ future completion of the remaining Units at National 5 level
- ◆ Philosophy Units or Course at Higher level
- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at National 5 or Higher level
- ◆ other SQA qualifications in social studies, social science or related areas at National 5 or Higher level
- ◆ further study or training in humanities, social science or theology
- ◆ employment in areas such as police, health, education, science, care, local government or voluntary sectors

Philosophy has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support both vertical and lateral progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

Overarching guidance

This Unit offers scope for personalisation and choice when selecting content for learning, teaching and Unit assessment. It is recommended that teachers/lecturers select content and contexts that will be relevant and motivating for the learner. Learning should, where possible be relevant to the learner's domestic and everyday life, their overall learning programme and/or work and leisure.

Sequencing and timing

This Unit consists of two Outcomes which can be delivered and assessed in a holistic way, where learners gain skills in explaining and evaluating as they investigate scepticism and theories of knowledge together. Or, this may be done sequentially, where learners focus on reasons for scepticism before turning attention to evaluating theories of knowledge.

Appropriate attitudes and conduct are important to effectively participate in debates and discussions in philosophy. Some topics can raise strong opinions but teachers should take time to create an environment where learners feel safe to express their thoughts and ideas and question their own ideas and those of others. It is therefore recommended that teachers establish ground rules designed to provide a safe environment. Learners should be encouraged to:

- ◆ respect the right of others to express values and positions which may conflict with their own
- ◆ listen patiently and allow others to express their views uninterrupted
- ◆ develop the confidence to share their own values and positions with others who may not agree with them
- ◆ critically assess their own values and positions, as well as those of others, in a structured manner
- ◆ reach conclusions about philosophical issues, theories and positions based on the information and evidence they have studied
- ◆ be prepared to explain the reasoning they have used in order to reach these conclusions
- ◆ use appropriate language

Possible approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

A rich and supportive learning environment should be provided to enable a learner to achieve the best they can. This could include approaches which include opportunities for learners to engage in collaborative and skills based learning activities. These may include learner-centred problem-solving activities, pair and group discussion, analysis of research scenarios, role play, analysis of real-life applications of theory, games and quizzes, IT/web-based activities, and formal presentations. Stimulus materials, visual aids and familiar situations may be used to good effect, as well as video and audio material.

At National 5 level, learners should be supported and gradually encouraged, as far as possible, to research topics in the library, online, in newspapers, magazines and journals and to generally show initiative, wherever appropriate. The benefits of cooperative learning, peer support and peer feedback can be substantial and should be encouraged and can be supported by the use of technology (ICT). At National 5 level, learners will need guidance, support and clear directions to gain most benefit from these activities.

Before introducing the learners to the philosophical theories they will be studying it might be helpful to spend some time considering relevant themes within the context of films, for instance: *The Truman Show*, *The Matrix* or *Alice in Wonderland*.

Scepticism and the theories of knowledge are themes in philosophical texts and also in general literature. Such texts may include:

- ◆ 'What Does It All Mean? Ch.2 How Do We Know Anything?' Thomas Nagel
- ◆ 'What Is It Like To Be A Bat?' Thomas Nagel
- ◆ extracts from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll

Rationalism may be discussed by considering:

- ◆ description of Plato's Cave
- ◆ Descartes' Meditation 1

Empiricism may be discussed by considering:

- ◆ description of Locke's tabula rasa
- ◆ Hume's Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, Section II

Scepticism and the theories of knowledge are themes in several films and it might be helpful to exemplify these ideas through film. Suitable films may include:

- ◆ *The Sixth Sense* — a revelation that requires viewers to reinterpret what they had taken to be true up to that point in the film.
- ◆ *The Matrix* — a version of Descartes' evil genius thought experiment.
- ◆ *Total Recall* — ignorance of whether we are being controlled by an evil being.
- ◆ *Inception* — the difference between dreams and reality.
- ◆ *The Truman Show* — how we can be fooled regarding true reality.

The nature of appearance and reality is often explored in art. Suitable examples may include the work of Escher. Some of Escher's images are freely available on the internet. They can be used as a focus for discussing the nature of appearance and reality and also are useful for demonstrating the subjective nature of perception.

Opportunities for extension, remediation and consolidation of skills and knowledge should be built into this Unit. How this is organised will depend on the needs of the learners and the teaching approach used.

Assessment strategies and methods

It would normally be expected that considerable learning and teaching will have taken place prior to the assessment evidence being collected. Learners should have successfully completed tasks and exercises of a similar demand to those in the assessment. In other words the assessor must be confident that the learner is ready for, and can achieve, the assessment.

The Outcomes and Assessment Standards for this Unit require learners to explain reasons for scepticism in philosophy and to evaluate two theories of knowledge.

There is scope for personalisation and choice when teaching and assessing this Unit. It is not necessary for Unit assessment to assess the mandatory content to be assessed in the Course assessment. It is however important that Unit assessment evidence clearly demonstrates the achievement of Assessment Standards.

Suggested learning and teaching activities that may be used to generate evidence for assessment could include:

- ◆ oral questioning using a recording or transcript as evidence — learners could work in groups of three, eg one learner could take the part of Hume and the other learners act as a critic and a chairperson who asks questions and handles the discussion
- ◆ observation using an observational checklist or video recording as evidence, eg learners could work collaboratively producing a revision guide in the form of a rap to the arguments of scepticism
- ◆ written assignment, eg learners could be asked to keep a rough glossary and be asked to update it and make it more formal at the end of teaching individual topics
- ◆ written activities, eg learners could be asked make a table with the headings philosophical idea, explanation, example from everyday life and learner opinion — this could be done for rationalism or any of the theories
- ◆ learning and teaching activities which provide naturally occurring opportunities for assessment, eg short learning checks with peer marking, (for instance, write down two problems with empiricism) learners making up questions on different theories, reading and writing comments on peers' work, keeping short learning logs to record how skills are improving and carrying out short written surveys of peers' views in the classroom

If the Unit assessment is designed as an evidence portfolio or a project, it is recommended that all evidence generated by the learner over a period of time is kept together in a secure place. With this approach there could be opportunities to collect and store evidence electronically thereby opening up more opportunities to develop ICT skills. This may include writing, podcasting or electronic presentations.

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Achievement is on a pass/fail basis for the Outcomes. Learners who fail to achieve all of the Assessment Standards within the Outcomes only need to be re-assessed on those Assessment Standards they have not achieved. Re-assessment should only follow after further work to strengthen the required skills, knowledge and understanding has taken place.

It is recommended that all evidence generated by the learner is kept together and in a secure place for verification. This can be done by creating and providing the learner with a workbook or portfolio. Where possible opportunities to collect and store evidence electronically could be used.

For verification purposes it is necessary to retain evidence for the Unit only. However, additional evidence may be useful for confirming assessment judgements.

For information on assessment and reassessment, teachers and lecturers should refer to SQA's *Guide to Assessment*, available on SQA's website.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit, is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

Should sensitive issues be raised in the *Philosophy: Knowledge and Doubt* Unit, teachers should approach these issues with sensitivity and professionalism, taking into account the background and composition of learners and managing discussions appropriately.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA’s website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*](#)
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*](#)
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) (published 2009) and SCQF level descriptors (to be reviewed during 2011 to 2012): www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/4595.html
- ◆ [*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*](#)
- ◆ [*Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*](#)
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html

Administrative information

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History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Changes throughout to reflect the amended Unit Specification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

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Unit Support Notes — Philosophy: Moral Philosophy (National 5)



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

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance on approaches to delivering and assessing the *Philosophy: Moral Philosophy* (National 5) Unit. They are intended for teachers and lecturers who are delivering this Unit. They should be read in conjunction with:

- ◆ the *Unit Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Assessment Specification*
- ◆ the *Course Support Notes*
- ◆ appropriate assessment support materials

If the *Unit Support Notes* have been developed for a Unit which is not part of a Course, then it is only necessary to read them in conjunction with the *Unit Specification*.

General guidance on the Unit

Aims

The general aim of this Unit is to equip the learner with the knowledge and skills necessary to examine, understand and debate specific philosophical issues in moral philosophy. Learners will use thinking skills and key moral philosophers to identify and explain different moral positions in relation to real-life situations. This will be achieved by introducing learners to different moral theories and exploring how these theories can be applied to moral issues. Learners will develop their own opinions about the theories explored.

Learners who complete this Unit will be able to:

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of moral theories
- 2 Evaluate moral theories

This Unit allows some personalisation and choice of moral theories to be studied. Learners will be introduced to the way philosophers have attempted to show why some actions are considered morally good or bad.

On completion of this Unit learners are expected to be able to explain a moral theory, making reference to appropriate philosophers and evaluate a moral theory. This involves describing the main features of a moral theory and describing how a moral theory applies to specific moral issues. Learners identify appropriate sources to explain alternatives within moral theories and evaluate the moral theory by describing its strengths and weaknesses.

Appropriate sources include both primary and secondary texts. Sources may also include video clips, podcasts, internet sites etc.

The Unit offers a degree of challenge for learners as they evaluate the responses of a theory to specific moral issues and express an informed opinion on the moral theory with supporting reasons.

Learners will be introduced to the way philosophers have attempted to show why some actions are considered morally good or bad. Learners will gain an appreciation of a moral theory within normative ethics with the hope that this will help them engage with their own ethical questions.

Centres and learners may choose which moral theory to study, however for those preparing for Course assessment, the study of Utilitarianism is mandatory. Learners will develop knowledge of the essential elements of the theory and the skills to evaluate the approach studied.

Course aims	Development in the <i>Philosophy: Moral Philosophy</i> Unit
Develop basic knowledge and understanding of philosophy and philosophers	Learners have opportunities to develop basic knowledge of moral theories; for example Utilitarianism through the study of significant philosophers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.
Develop basic thinking, analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to philosophy	Utilitarianism can be analysed by learning about the key principles of hedonism, equity and consequentialism. Learners should be encouraged to consider each key principle. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each principle?
Encourage learners' ability to use abstract thought	There are many opportunities for learners to use abstract thought to help them engage in their analysis and evaluation of a moral theory. The use of thought experiments, hypothetical examples, analogies etc should be encouraged.
Offer learners insight from the ideas of others which may be different from their own	The nature of the study of moral philosophy will ensure that learners are exposed to a variety of ideas and views, some of which will not be their own. Learners should be encouraged to engage with these. Good evaluation begins with an openness to learn about ideas in an objective way. It is important that learners are prepared to consider their own previously held moral views and potentially adapt them given the new ideas they will be presented with.
Develop communication skills appropriate to philosophy	There are a variety of forms that allow for the development of communication skills within the study of moral philosophy. Group presentations, extracting information from videos, written responses, the production of reports and ICT presentations give scope for learners to develop their communication skills as they provide evidence of their ability to communicate their understanding. Moral philosophy is also an ideal context for verbal debate and discussion.

For learners preparing for Course assessment, certain mandatory content must be covered. This is set out in the *Course Assessment Specification* and guidance is given in the *Course Support Notes*.

Learners will gain an appreciation of moral theories within normative ethics with the aim of engaging learners with their own ethical questions.

Progression into this Unit

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

- ◆ National 4 People and Society Course or relevant component Units
- ◆ National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course

In terms of prior learning, experiences and outcomes from a number of curriculum areas provide an appropriate basis for doing this Unit. The Unit is particularly well suited to further developing understanding of beliefs and values through reflection and discussion and participating in debates about issues which have been introduced through Religious and Moral Education or Social Studies.

Centres wishing to establish the suitability of learners without prior qualifications and/or experiences and outcomes may benefit from carrying out a diagnostic review of prior life and work experiences. This approach may be particularly useful for adult returners to education.

Skills, knowledge and understanding covered in the Unit

Information about skills, knowledge and understanding is given in the National 5 Philosophy *Course Support Notes*.

Teachers and lecturers should refer to the *Course Assessment Specification* and the *Unit Specification* for information about the skills, knowledge and understanding relating to this Unit.

If this Unit is being delivered on a free-standing basis, teachers and lecturers are free to select the skills, knowledge, understanding and contexts which are most appropriate for delivery in their centres.

Progression from this Unit

The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could support both vertical and lateral progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts. This Unit may provide progression to:

- ◆ future completion of the remaining Units at National 5 level
- ◆ Philosophy Units or Course at Higher level
- ◆ Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at National 5 or Higher level
- ◆ other SQA qualifications in social studies, social science or related areas at National 5 or Higher level
- ◆ further study or training in humanities, social science or theology
- ◆ employment in areas such as police, health, education, science, care, local government or voluntary sectors

Philosophy has applications in many other subject areas as well as life and work. The skills, knowledge and understanding developed in this Unit could therefore support both vertical and lateral progression in other curriculum areas as well as life and work contexts.

Approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

The purpose of this section is to provide general advice and guidance on approaches to learning, teaching and assessment.

Overarching guidance

This Unit offers scope for personalisation and choice when selecting content for learning, teaching and Unit assessment. It is recommended that teachers/lecturers select content and contexts that will be relevant and motivating for the learner. Learning should, where possible be relevant to the learner's domestic and everyday life, their overall learning programme and/or work and leisure.

Sequencing and timing

This Unit consists of two Outcomes which can be delivered and assessed in a holistic way, where learners gain skills in both explaining and evaluating each moral theory. Or, this may be done sequentially, where learners focus on explaining different moral theories before turning attention to evaluating these theories. The application of the theory to a moral scenario or dilemma could also be carried out holistically throughout the Unit. The scenario or dilemma may provide a useful learning context for the explanation, and evaluation of the theory. Equally centres may decide to teach the explanation and evaluation of the theory prior to its application.

Appropriate attitudes and conduct are important to effectively participate in debates and discussions in philosophy. Some topics can raise strong opinions but teachers should take time to create an environment where learners feel safe to express their thoughts and ideas and question their own ideas and those of others. It is therefore recommended that teachers establish ground rules designed to provide a safe environment. Learners should be encouraged to:

- ◆ respect the right of others to express values and positions which may conflict with their own
- ◆ listen patiently and allow others to express their views uninterrupted
- ◆ develop the confidence to share their own values and positions with others who may not agree with them
- ◆ critically assess their own values and positions, as well as those of others, in a structured manner
- ◆ reach conclusions about philosophical issues, theories and positions based on the information and evidence they have studied
- ◆ be prepared to explain the reasoning they have used in order to reach these conclusions
- ◆ use appropriate language

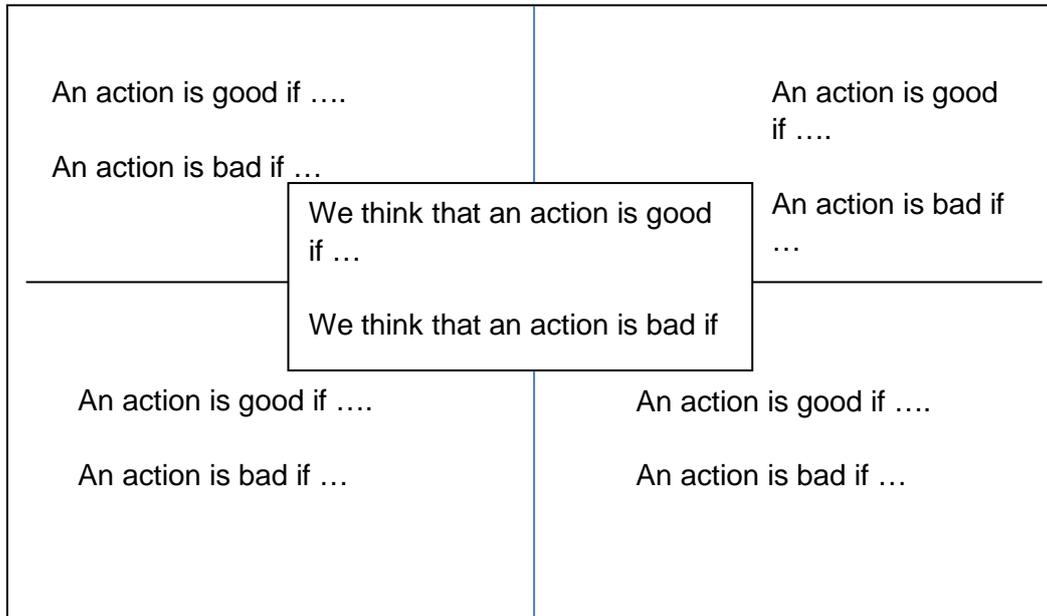
Possible approaches to learning, teaching and assessment

A useful strategy for generating evidence of learner progress could be to produce individual portfolios of responses. This portfolio will help teachers/lecturers gain a good appreciation of how well their students are engaging with the Course and also provide a useful tool to encourage engagement with collaborative activities.

This Unit provides considerable opportunity for learners to engage in collaborative and skills based learning activities. These activities can develop the

learner's basic knowledge of philosophy by encouraging them to evaluate the ideas more effectively.

Before introducing the learners to the philosophical positions they will be studying it might be helpful to spend some time considering what normative ethics is about. A useful way of doing this could be through the use of the following placemat activity. Each member of the group should write some notes concerning what they think makes an action right or wrong in their own corner of the paper. The group should then discuss the various ideas and try to come up with an agreed statement.



The teacher/lecturer could then discuss the various ideas that come out and if possible relate them to the philosophers the class will soon be learning about.

There will be considerable opportunity for learners to discuss and debate a variety of moral issues. The natural enthusiasm for debating moral issues means that the *Philosophy: Moral Philosophy* Unit is a particularly helpful area of the philosophy Course to develop debating and evaluative skills. Care should be taken to find a balance between evaluation that is too complex for National 5 and evaluation that is progressing on from the expectation required at a relevant fourth level experience and outcome.

Early in the Unit the class could be encouraged to debate a topical moral issue. It might be helpful to deliberately allow the class the freedom to participate in any way they choose. After the debate the class could reflect back on what parts of the debate worked well and what parts were less effective. Hopefully learners may begin to identify some rules that could be applied to help ensure that future discussions are more effective.

A simple rule that could be encouraged is that each learner should begin their contribution by either agreeing or disagreeing with the person who spoke last. This will help develop their listening and evaluative skills and encourage a much more coherent discussion. It's also important that the learners are encouraged to

give reasons for their opinions. When a class debate ends it is important that the contributions of the learners are remembered and valued.

As well as the development of evaluative, thinking skills, care must always be taken to ensure that learners develop good knowledge of the key content required for the successful completion of the Course. Care should be taken to ensure that a variety of approaches are used to ensure the different learning styles present in an average class are accommodated.

A holistic approach may be taken to learning and teaching the Outcomes for this Unit by using activities that enable learners to describe and evaluate moral theories. Alternatively, each Outcome may have a separate focus.

The following table provides a framework that could be used to form the basis of learning and teaching approaches. Included are some suggested assessment ideas that can be used to help gather evidence of the learner's progress.

<p>Outcome 1 of this Unit requires the learner to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of moral theories by:</p> <p>1.1 Describing the main features of a moral theory 1.2 Describing how a moral theory might respond to a specific situation or issue</p> <p>This may be achieved in a variety of ways as the Unit offers scope to look at ancient and more recent philosophers and theories. At National 5 the study of Utilitarianism is mandatory. Learners should understand how this theory has developed by considering both Act and Rule Utilitarianism.</p>	
<p>Course content</p>	<p>Ways to generate evidence of ability to describe the main features of a moral theory</p>
<p>For Utilitarianism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Greatest Happiness Principle: consequentialism; equity; hedonism ◆ Bentham's hedonic calculus ◆ Mill's higher and lower pleasures <p>For the other moral theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the main features 	<p>Learners could be asked to produce revision cards that contain all the key aspects of the Unit content. These can be used to show clearly that the learner has knowledge of the content required at National 5.</p> <p>To help establish whether the learner has developed from learning factual knowledge of the moral theories to gaining a deeper understanding, the learners should be able to show that they can apply their knowledge to new situations.</p> <p>The learners should be presented with a number of situations or issues and then encouraged to apply approaches from a moral theory.</p> <p>To do this candidates could be asked to consider the following questions in relation to Utilitarianism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What are the consequences in relation to the issue? ◆ How would Bentham calculate pain/pleasure in relation to the issue? ◆ Would Mill's approach differ?

Outcome 2 of this Unit requires the learner to evaluate moral theories by:

2.1 Describing the strengths and weaknesses of a moral theory

2.2 Expressing a supported opinion on a moral theory

At this level, evaluation requires learners to explain strengths and weaknesses of theories and be able to express their own opinion, which takes account of a range of views, some of which may be different from their own.

Course content	Ways to generate assessment evidence of ability to evaluate a moral theory
<p>For Utilitarianism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ common criticisms of Utilitarianism: evil pleasures; difficulty of predicting consequences; tyranny of the majority <p>For the other moral theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ at least three common criticisms 	<p>At National 5 it is expected that learners become familiar with the traditional responses to the moral theory. Rather than just supplying the learners with lists of strengths and weaknesses, good teaching should encourage classes to work collaboratively to produce their own responses. ‘Think, pair, share’ activities are particularly useful for learners to develop their ideas and learn from each other. If this is done well a class could produce a good number of evaluative points that could be used by learners when completing assessments.</p> <p>Again, what has been produced by learners could be recorded within a portfolio of evidence to show understanding of the necessary evaluative points.</p> <p>Good evaluation should involve more than simply learning the standard criticisms. At National 5 candidates should try to justify their view by using the identified strengths and weaknesses appropriately. Good evaluation should be balanced and show awareness of views that are different from their own. For example, if a learner is persuaded that Utilitarianism is a good theory they should at least attempt to give some comment concerning the problems associated with a utilitarian approach.</p> <p>At National 5 level it is not expected that learners need to evaluate to any great depth. Evidence of suitable evaluation could be the ability to make use of the identified strengths and weakness to justify a coherent conclusion.</p> <p>Learners could work with peer buddies to help them decide whether they have produced a good, coherent response to the theories studied.</p>

Assessment strategies and methods

It would normally be expected that considerable learning and teaching will have taken place prior to the assessment evidence being collected. Learners should have successfully completed tasks and exercises of a similar demand to those in the assessment. In other words the assessor must be confident that the learner is ready for, and can achieve, the assessment.

If the Unit assessment is designed as an evidence portfolio or a project, it is recommended that all evidence generated by the learner over a period of time is kept together in a secure place. With this approach there could be opportunities to collect and store evidence electronically thereby opening up more opportunities to develop ICT skills.

Assessment could take the form of a series of short questions that sample knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills. Alternatively, learners could be asked to complete a short essay that allows them to provide evidence of their knowledge and understanding and ability to produce a coherent evaluative response to a particular topic.

Assessors should use their professional judgement, subject knowledge and experience, and understanding of their learners, to determine the most appropriate ways to generate evidence and the conditions and contexts in which they are used.

Learners completing this Unit as part of the National 5 Philosophy Course should have covered the mandatory content for this Unit which is set out in the *Course Assessment Specification*.

Assessment for this Unit requires the learner to provide evidence of the ability to give a straightforward explanation and evaluation of a moral theory.

For information on assessment and reassessment, teachers and lecturers should refer to SQA's *Guide to Assessment*, available on SQA's website.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Information about developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work in this Unit, is given in the relevant *Course Support Notes*.

Equality and inclusion

The *Philosophy: Moral Philosophy* Unit will inevitably encounter a number of sensitive issues such as disability, prejudice, racism, abortion. The use of this Unit as a vehicle for exploring these issues is part of its value in the curriculum; however teachers should approach these issues with sensitivity and professionalism, taking into account the background and composition of learners and managing discussions appropriately.

It is recognised that centres have their own duties under equality and other legislation and policy initiatives. The guidance given in these *Unit Support Notes* is designed to sit alongside these duties but is specific to the delivery and assessment of the Unit.

Alternative approaches to Unit assessment to take account of the specific needs of learners can be used. However, the centre must be satisfied that the integrity of the assessment is maintained and that the alternative approach to assessment will, in fact, generate the necessary evidence of achievement.

Appendix 1: Reference documents

The following reference documents will provide useful information and background.

- ◆ Assessment Arrangements (for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs) — various publications on SQA's website: <http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14976.html>
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 4: Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work*](#)
- ◆ [*Building the Curriculum 5: A framework for assessment*](#)
- ◆ [Course Specifications](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment \(June 2008\)](#)
- ◆ [Overview of Qualification Reports](#)
- ◆ *Principles and practice papers for curriculum areas*
- ◆ *Research Report 4 — Less is More: Good Practice in Reducing Assessment Time*
- ◆ *Coursework Authenticity — a Guide for Teachers and Lecturers*
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook: User Guide](#) and [SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [*SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work*](#)
- ◆ *Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work: Using the Curriculum Tool*
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools
- ◆ SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education
- ◆ SQA e-assessment web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/5606.html

Administrative information

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Superclass: DE

History of changes to Unit Support Notes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
2.0	Changes throughout to reflect the amended Unit Specification.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

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