

-SQA- SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

**Hanover House
24 Douglas Street
GLASGOW G2 7NQ**

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE MODULE DESCRIPTOR

-Module Number-	7176071	-Session-1991-92
-Superclass-	DE	

-Title-	PRACTICAL INVESTIGATION IN PHILOSOPHY
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-DESCRIPTION-

Purpose	A student completing this module will have been introduced to the practice of philosophical argument and criticism. The module will prepare students for entry to modes of study in most areas of Higher Education.
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This module has been designed as part of a series of modules at different levels of demand which accredit competence in Philosophy. The series was designed to facilitate entry to Higher Education. However, the modules in the series may be used in their own right with senior school pupils, adult returners and those whose employment requires them to develop reasoning and thinking skills. Philosophy modules are also useful in adding breadth and ensuring balance in modular programmes.

Preferred Entry Level	Students should have studied at least one of the modules from the Philosophy series. A level of communication skills such as is required by 7110041: Communication 3 is also desirable.
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Outcomes	The student should: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. plan a practical investigation in philosophy;2. analyse and evaluate a philosophical issue;3. participate in rational discussion;4. present a report appropriate to the aims of the investigation.
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Assessment Procedures Acceptable performance in the module will be satisfactory achievement of all the Performance Criteria specified for each Outcome.

The following abbreviations are used below:

PC Performance Criteria
IA Instrument of Assessment

Note: The Outcomes and PCs are mandatory and cannot be altered. The IA may be altered by arrangement with SQA. (Where a range of performance is indicated, this should be regarded as an extension of the PCs and is therefore mandatory).

**OUTCOMES 1, 2
& 4**

IA Restricted Response, Project and Personal Interview

In the project, the student is required to undertake an investigation. This investigation includes analysing and evaluating a philosophical issue and presenting a report of the investigation of approximately 2,000 words. Personal interviews are central to the assessment and will be used to elicit information concerning the student's progress in relation to the stated Outcomes and Performance Criteria.

Personal interviews will be conducted by the tutor with individual students. The interviews should focus on the Performance Criteria for each Outcome.

OUTCOME 1

PLAN A PRACTICAL INVESTIGATION IN PHILOSOPHY

PCs

- (a) The plan includes a statement of the issue to be investigated.
- (b) The identification of relevant texts and other sources of material is accurate in terms of the investigation.
- (c) An outline is given of the method of approach to the issue.

IA Restricted Response and Personal Interview

The student will be tested on his/her ability to plan a practical investigation in Philosophy. The personal interview will focus on the above Performance Criteria. The student will also be required to provide a report on his/her planning of the investigation.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all Performance Criteria in terms of the studied topic.

OUTCOME 2 ANALYSE AND EVALUATE A PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUE

- PCs
- (a) Different views of the philosophical issue are stated clearly.
 - (b) Arguments for and against different views are stated accurately.
 - (c) The assessment of the arguments is accurate.

IA Personal Interview

The student will be tested on his/her ability to analyse and evaluate a philosophical issue. The personal interview will focus on the above Performance Criteria.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all Performance Criteria in terms of the studied topic.

OUTCOME 3 PARTICIPATE IN RATIONAL DISCUSSION

- PCs
- (a) The presentation is made of a case for a particular point of view.
 - (b) The defence of a particular point of view against objections is made by rational argument.
 - (c) Participation in reasoned debate is demonstrated with positive responses to alternative points of view.

IA Practical Exercise

The student will be tested on his/her ability to participate in a rational discussion by taking part in a seminar with other members of a group. The use of video or audio recording of the discussion may be useful for assessment purposes.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all Performance Criteria in terms of the studied topic.

OUTCOME 4 PRESENT A REPORT APPROPRIATE TO THE AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

- PCs
- (a) The interpretation of the information is valid and justified and conforms to the practices of the discipline.
 - (b) The evaluation of the information is valid in terms of the aims of the investigation.
 - (c) Conclusions are relevant to the aims of the investigation.

IA Project

The student will be tested on his/her ability to present a report appropriate to the aims of the investigation.

The length of the report should be approximately 2,000 words of text and not exceed 30 sides of A4 paper.

In addition the report should contain appropriate acknowledgements and bibliography.

The report should include valid interpretation of the information selected in the investigation and evaluation of the information.

Satisfactory performance will be that the student achieves all Performance Criteria in terms of the studied topic.

**The following sections of the descriptor are offered as guidance.
They are not mandatory.**

CONTENT/CONTEXT

Corresponding to Outcomes 1-4:

In this module, practical investigation methods will be used to produce individual projects relating to the philosophy series of modules. The content of this module will be negotiated with the student. Each student will have an individual investigation to undertake relating to the Philosophy series of modules. Each student will also participate in a seminar to demonstrate his/her ability to engage in rational discussion.

The student will be able to demonstrate practical investigation skills of a high order by the application of previous learning to an actual issue. Skills developed in the investigation are those recognised as preparing students for entry to modes of study used in Higher Education.

Issues for study could include:

- (a) further investigation of issues previously studied in the Philosophy series of modules

OR

- (b) new issues appropriate to the Philosophy series of modules, such as those of Existentialism, Relativism, or the work or aspects of the work of a particular philosopher.

The issue selected should be manageable in scale and should provide opportunities to identify different views and problems and should offer findings which can be justified within the limits of the module.

It is important that the issue selected for study has appropriate and accessible resources available for the individual student.

In the investigation, the student will be analysing and evaluating a philosophical issue and preparing a report with conclusions of his/her investigation, the specific content of which will be dictated by the issue.

SUGGESTED LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES

This module emphasises student participation and group discussion. The student should select the issue he/she wishes to investigate in consultation with the tutor. The tutor should give guidance to the student over both the choice of issue and the procedure of investigation. The issue chosen should be manageable in scale. Normally, the plans of individual students should be co-ordinated with a group project. Group discussion is an integral part of the learning and teaching approach of this module. Detailed study of a particular philosophical text or texts is recommended.

At a later stage in the module, students will have to devote time to the presentation of their project. The student should consult the tutor at this stage though the project should be presented by the student alone.

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