

National Unit Specification: general information

UNIT	Philosophy of Mind (Advanced Higher)
NUMBER	D426 13
COURSE	Philosophy (Advanced Higher)

SUMMARY

This unit seeks to develop knowledge and understanding of the some issues and problems in the philosophy of mind, analysing and critically evaluating them in a reasoned and structured manner.

OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the problem or issue.
- 2 Analyse in a reasoned and structured manner one response to the problem or issue.
- 3 Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the response to the problem or issue.

RECOMMENDED ENTRY

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have completed a course or units where appropriate:

- in Philosophy at Higher
- in Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies at Higher
- in a social subject at an equivalent level

This unit will be available to more mature candidates who have an interest in the subject matter and can demonstrate appropriate ability at this level.

Administrative Information

Superclass:	DE
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National Unit Specification: general information (cont)

UNIT Philosophy of Mind (Advanced Higher)

CREDIT VALUE

1 credit at Advanced Higher.

CORE SKILLS

Core skills for Advanced Higher remain subject to confirmation and details will be available at a later date.

Additional information about core skills is published in *Automatic Certification of Core Skills in National Qualifications* (SQA, 1999).

National Unit Specification: statement of standards

UNIT Philosophy of Mind (Advanced Higher)

Acceptable performance in this unit will be the satisfactory achievement of the standards set out in this part of the unit specification. All sections of the statement of standards are mandatory and cannot be altered without reference to the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

In relation to (a) the mind/body problem, (b) theories of personal identity:

OUTCOME 1

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present a detailed description of the problem of issue.
- (b) Make relevant reference to appropriate sources.

OUTCOME 2

Analyse in a reasoned and structured manner one response to the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Present a detailed account of the response.
- (b) Explain how the response can be seen as an attempt to deal with the problem or issue.

OUTCOME 3

Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the response to the problem or issue.

Performance criteria

- (a) Evaluate in a reasoned and structured manner the merits and deficiencies of the response.
- (b) Present a conclusion with supporting arguments.

Evidence requirements

Evidence for all outcomes will be provided in the form of an essay for each prescribed issue. Therefore two essays are required: one on the mind/body problem, and one on the criterion of personal identity.

National Unit Specification: support notes

UNIT Philosophy of Mind (Advanced Higher)

This part of the unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the time allocated to this unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 40 hours.

GUIDANCE ON CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This mandatory unit will explore some of the major issues in the Philosophy of Mind. It considers what it is to be a human being and a person. Are we minds? Are we bodies? Are we both? Are we free agents or do we act out of necessity? Answering these questions involves careful analysis of key concepts and arguments. Candidates will investigate and evaluate all the following areas: theories in the mind/body problem; personal identity.

Candidates will study the Mind/Body Problem by exploring the following:

- Substance Dualism
- Identity Theory
- Functionalism

Candidates will study Theories of Personal Identity in relation to:

- Psychological Continuity Theory
- Body/Brain Theory
- Soul Theory

GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

Each outcome is linked to the others in the sense that what is said in one area, eg the mind/body problem may affect what can be said in another. Teachers/lecturers must make sure that the logical connections between the areas are made explicit.

Candidates should be made aware of Descartes' form of substance dualism (interactive substance dualism), other forms of substance dualism (occasionalism and pre-established harmony) and the standard difficulties with each. Candidates should consider the possibility of artificial intelligence when discussing functionalism.

Candidates should consider associated problems with each position. For example, dualism faces the causal interaction problem, its explanatory impotence and the problem of neural dependence; for the identity theory there is the problem of qualia and its failure to account for subjectivity; for functionalism there is the problem of qualia and the possibility of machine intelligence.

Candidates will explore contemporary theories of personal identity and associated problems. The Body criterion faces the Robinson/Brown case; the Brain criterion is challenged by the cases of fusion and fission; the psychological continuity criterion encounters the circularity objection and the problem of reduplication; the Soul criterion has to deal with the problem of interaction.

When candidates are evaluating one of the theories of personal identity they must take into consideration what implications they have for the mind/body problem.

National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

UNIT Philosophy of Mind (Advanced Higher)

GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT

Teaching staff should use assessment judiciously and efficiently. It should be used to provide evidence of the achievement of all the learning outcomes in the units. A balance must be struck between the need for some targeted assessment of specific knowledge and skills.

It is not necessary for a separate piece of assessment to be set for each performance criterion, although responses of some length are required at this level. The evidence can be gathered during and/or at the end of the unit. The evidence should be composed of assessments relating to each of the outcomes with equal weighting being given to each outcome.

SPECIAL NEEDS

This unit specification is intended to ensure that there are no artificial barriers to learning or assessment. Special needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments or considering alternative outcomes for units. For information on these, please refer to the SQA document *Guidance on Special Assessment and Certification Arrangements for Candidates with Special Needs/Candidates whose First Language is not English* (SQA, 1998).