



## National Unit Specification: general information

**UNIT** The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

**CODE** F59M 11

**COURSE** Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (Intermediate 2)

### SUMMARY

This Unit is designed to offer progression for candidates who have studied core Religious and Moral Education, the Intermediate 1 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Course or Units, or Standard Grade Religious Studies at General level. Candidates develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand religious beliefs and classical philosophical arguments which are relevant to the question of the existence and nature of God.

Candidates will develop knowledge and understanding of three important religious beliefs and classical philosophical arguments which have been used to support these beliefs. Important elements of the skills of analysis and evaluation are developed by examining objections and replies in relation to these arguments. While investigating these issues candidates have frequent opportunities to reflect upon their own beliefs and those of others. This Unit therefore makes a significant contribution to personal and social development.

Specific beliefs, classical philosophical arguments, objections and replies are studied in this Unit. However, the skills and understanding which candidates develop can be applied to a wide range of philosophical and/or theological issues. This prepares candidates for a more in-depth study of philosophical and/or theological issues at Higher or in alternative Courses in Further Education colleges. It also prepares candidates for entry to any field of employment where the ability to reach reasoned conclusions, after an investigation of two sides of an issue, is required.

### OUTCOMES

- 1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of classical philosophical arguments.
- 2 Compare and contrast objections and replies in relation to classical philosophical arguments.
- 3 Justify conclusions about objections and replies in relation to classical philosophical arguments.

---

### Administrative Information

**Superclass:** DD

**Publication date:** October 2008

**Source:** Scottish Qualifications Authority

**Version:** 01

© Scottish Qualifications Authority 2008

This publication may be reproduced in whole or in part for educational purposes provided that no profit is derived from reproduction and that, if reproduced in part, the source is acknowledged.

Additional copies of this Unit Specification can be purchased from the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Please contact the Customer Contact Centre, telephone 0845 279 1000.

## **National Unit Specification: general information (cont)**

**UNIT**        The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

### **RECOMMENDED ENTRY**

While entry is at the discretion of the centre, candidates would normally be expected to have attained one of the following, or equivalent:

- ◆ Standard Grade Religious Studies at Grade 3 or 4
- ◆ Intermediate 1 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Course
- ◆ a pass in an Intermediate 1 Unit
- ◆ a social subject at Intermediate 1

### **CREDIT VALUE**

1 credit at Intermediate 2 (6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 5\*).

*\*SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

### **CORE SKILLS**

There is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components in this Unit.

Opportunities to develop aspects of Core Skills are highlighted in the support notes of this Unit Specification.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards**

### **UNIT        The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)**

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 SQA.

#### **OUTCOME 1**

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of classical philosophical arguments.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Describe specific religious beliefs which are relevant to the question of the existence and nature of God.
- (b) Describe specific classical philosophical arguments which are cited in support of these beliefs.

#### **OUTCOME 2**

Compare and contrast objections and replies in relation to classical philosophical arguments.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Describe objections to specific classical philosophical arguments which are relevant to the question of the existence and nature of God.
- (b) Describe replies to these objections.
- (c) Explain the reasons for these objections and replies.

#### **OUTCOME 3**

Justify conclusions about objections and replies in relation to classical philosophical arguments.

#### **Performance Criteria**

- (a) Explain strengths and weaknesses of objections to specific classical philosophical arguments which are relevant to the question of the existence and nature of God.
- (b) Explain strengths and weaknesses of replies to these objections.
- (c) State opinions about the force of these objections and replies in damaging or supporting the arguments.
- (d) Give reasons to support the opinions stated.

## **National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont)**

### **UNIT        The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)**

#### **EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS UNIT**

Details of Content and Context for this Unit are provided in the appendix.

To demonstrate satisfactory attainment of all the Outcomes and Performance Criteria candidates must produce written and/or recorded oral evidence which samples across the mandatory content in relation to **one** classical philosophical argument. The evidence should be in the form of a closed-book, supervised test with a time limit of 1 hour.

The Unit should be assessed by a one-part test which contains an interpretation passage and 6–8 related questions. The questions should sample across the mandatory content. The questions should allow the candidate to generate answers which demonstrate competence in all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. 60% of the marks should be awarded for knowledge and understanding in line with Outcomes 1 and 2. The remaining 40% of the marks available should be awarded for Analysis and Evaluation in line with Outcomes 2 and 3.

If re-assessment is required, it should sample across a different range of mandatory content.

The standard to be applied and the breadth of coverage are illustrated in the National Assessment Bank items available for this Unit. If a centre wishes to design its own assessments for this Unit they should be of a comparable standard.

## National Unit Specification: support notes

### UNIT The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

This part of the Unit Specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

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

#### GUIDANCE ON THE CONTENT AND CONTEXT FOR THIS UNIT

This Unit is one option from a choice of two Intermediate 2 Units. Candidates choosing this Unit develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand classical philosophical arguments which are relevant to the existence and nature of God. Knowledge and skills are developed through an investigation of the Cosmological and Teleological arguments for God's existence and the Freewill Defence in relation to the Problem of Evil. Objections to these arguments and replies to these objections are also studied.

All content for this Unit is mandatory. Questions in Unit and Course assessment will sample across the mandatory content. It is therefore of vital importance that candidates cover all mandatory aspects of the Unit. A detailed outline of the mandatory areas of study and content can be found in the appendix at the end of these support notes.

#### GUIDANCE ON LEARNING AND TEACHING APPROACHES FOR THIS UNIT

There is no choice of areas of study in this Unit. Centres choosing this optional Unit are therefore strongly advised to make sure that they are familiar with all aspects of the Unit Specification and mandatory content when planning its delivery.

Summaries of the ideas of specific theologians and philosophers should be used to illustrate the areas studied. Named individuals or texts are not prescribed. Centres are therefore free to select the ideas of specific writers in light of the resources available and the range of candidates studying the Unit. A list of suggested writers appears below:

Area	Suggested writers
1 <i>The Cosmological Argument</i>	Thomas Aquinas, Bertrand Russell, David Hume, Richard Dawkins, Immanuel Kant, GW von Leibniz.
2 <i>The Teleological Argument</i>	Thomas Aquinas, Bertrand Russell, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, William Paley, Richard Swinburne, Richard Dawkins.
3 <i>The Problem of Evil</i>	Thomas Aquinas, Bertrand Russell, Augustine of Hippo, David Hume, Richard Dawkins, John Hick, Richard Swinburne.

Candidates are not expected to read specific texts by named theologians or philosophers. Summaries of the ideas of appropriate writers can be found in a wide range of textbooks on the philosophy of religion. The internet, newspaper/magazine articles, television or radio discussion programmes and public debates will also provide a rich source of information.

## National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)

### UNIT      The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

This Unit is one of two optional Units in the Intermediate 2 Course. It provides good continuity and progression from the Intermediate 1 *The Existence of God* Unit. The alternative optional Unit, *Christianity: Belief and Science*, allows for good continuity and progression to the Higher Unit of the same name. The choice of optional Unit is at the discretion of the centre: issues of bi-level teaching and likely progression in future years should be taken into account when deciding which optional Unit is studied. Some guidance on these matters appears below.

All areas of study for this Unit are also covered in the Intermediate 1 *The Existence of God* Unit. If a centre makes the judgement that an Intermediate 1 Unit would be more appropriate for a particular candidate, this candidate can be assessed at that level without difficulty. However, it should be noted that there are differences in the amount of mandatory content and the skills being assessed at that level. For candidates who are expected to progress to Higher level in a subsequent year the knowledge and skills acquired will provide a relevant foundation for studying the Higher *Christianity: Belief and Science* Unit or the Course.

In some centres candidates may have already studied the *The Existence of God* Unit at Intermediate 1 level. If this is the case it may be advisable for the centre to choose the alternative Unit at Intermediate 2 level in order to maintain candidate motivation and interest. This is a matter for the professional judgement of the teacher or lecturer. It should also be noted that there is no *Existence of God* Unit option at Higher level. When a centre plans to teach RMPS Intermediate 2 and Higher Units or Course in a bi-level setting, it is strongly advised that the alternative optional Unit (*Christianity: Belief and Science*) is chosen.

When candidates study this Unit as part of the Intermediate 2 Course, there are significant opportunities to integrate knowledge and/or skills with those in the two mandatory Units in the Course.

Knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs in relation to the existence and nature of God will be familiar to candidates who have studied the *World Religion* Unit. Additionally, the skills of analysis and evaluation are relevant to all three Units in the Course. By applying these skills in a variety of contexts candidates will have many opportunities to develop and refine them.

Guidance on setting the climate for effective learning and teaching, and a variety of classroom activities, can be found in the 'Approaches to Learning and Teaching' section of the Course Details.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR CORE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Throughout this Unit candidates will have the opportunity to develop the skills of Critical Thinking and Written Communication. Throughout the Unit and in assessment candidates critically assess various viewpoints on traditional philosophical arguments for the existence of God and will express their opinions and viewpoints in both Written and Oral Communication.

## **National Unit Specification: support notes (cont)**

### **UNIT        The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)**

#### **GUIDANCE ON APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT FOR THIS UNIT**

##### **Opportunities for the use of e-assessment**

E-assessment may be appropriate for some assessments in this Unit. By e-assessment we mean assessment which is supported by information and communications technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or e-checklists. Centres which wish to use e-assessment must ensure that the national standard is applied to all candidate evidence and that conditions of assessment as specified in the Evidence Requirements are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence. Further advice is available in *SQA Guidelines on Online Assessment for Further Education (AA1641, March 2003)*, *SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools (BD2625, June 2005)*.

Details of the appropriate conditions for assessment of competence in this Unit are outlined in the 'Evidence Requirements for the Unit' in the statement of standards. Centres must make sure that all Unit assessment is carried out under the stated conditions.

The timing of assessment is at the discretion of the centre. However, candidates will develop their knowledge and skills during their study of all mandatory content. This would suggest that appropriate instruments of assessment may best be attempted as an 'end of Unit' test.

An appropriate instrument of assessment would be a one-part test which contains a stimulus and 6-8 structured questions. The questions should sample across the mandatory content. The questions should allow the candidate to generate answers which demonstrate competence in all Outcomes and Performance Criteria. 60% of the marks should be awarded for knowledge and understanding in line with Outcomes 1 and 2. The remaining 40% of the marks available should be awarded for Analysis and Evaluation in line with Outcomes 2 and 3.

Unit assessment is holistic in nature. When reassessment is required individual candidates should therefore attempt a new instrument of assessment in its entirety to ensure that a different range of mandatory content is sampled.

Appropriate instruments of assessment and marking schemes are contained in the National Assessment Bank.

#### **CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS**

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative Outcomes for Units. Further advice can be found in the SQA document *Guidance on Assessment Arrangements for Candidates with Disabilities and/or Additional Support Needs* ([www.sqa.org.uk](http://www.sqa.org.uk)).

## National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont) — Appendix

### UNIT Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

**NB:** This appendix is within the statement of standards, ie. the mandatory requirements of the Unit.

In this optional Unit candidates develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand classical philosophical arguments which are relevant to the question of the existence and nature of God. Knowledge and skills are developed through an investigation of the Cosmological and Teleological arguments for God’s existence and the Freewill Defence in relation to the Problem of Evil. Objections to these arguments and replies to these objections are also studied.

The areas of study for this Unit are outlined below and **all candidates choosing this Unit must study all three areas:**

Area 1	First cause	Content
1 <i>Religious Belief</i>	1 The universe was created by God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The creation story in Genesis 1</li> <li>◆ The meaning of God as the Creator</li> </ul>
2 <i>Philosophical Argument</i>	2 First Cause Argument for the existence of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Thomas Aquinas’ argument — first cause</li> </ul>
3 <i>Objections</i>	3 There are arguments against the First Cause Argument for the existence of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Big Bang theory</li> <li>◆ One other argument against</li> <li>◆ Supporting evidence</li> </ul>
Area 2	Design and purpose	Content
1 <i>Religious Belief</i>	1 All life is created by God with a definite purpose and goal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ The creation story in Genesis 1</li> <li>◆ The purpose of the creation of all life</li> </ul>
2 <i>Philosophical Argument</i>	2 The Design Argument for the existence of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Thomas Aquinas’ argument from Design</li> <li>◆ Paley’s Watch analogy</li> </ul>
3 <i>Objections</i>	3 Objections to the religious belief that God exists as a result of design in nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Evolutionary Theory</li> <li>◆ One other argument against</li> <li>◆ Supporting evidence</li> </ul>

## National Unit Specification: statement of standards (cont) — Appendix

### UNIT The Existence of God (Intermediate 2)

Area 3	Evil and suffering	Content
1 <i>Religious Beliefs</i>	1 The nature of God — all knowing, all powerful, all loving.	◆ Beliefs about God — just compassionate and merciful
2 <i>Philosophical Argument</i>	2 Evil and suffering does not challenge the existence of God.	◆ The story of the Fall in Genesis 3 ◆ Freewill defence
3 <i>Objections</i>	3 Evil and suffering does challenge the existence of God.	◆ Moral evil ◆ Suffering through nature ◆ Supporting evidence

In areas 1 and 2 candidates must study how Big Bang and Evolutionary theory impact on the arguments for the existence of God. In each area candidates must also study **one** objection to each argument and the relevant religious replies. A major reason for the decline in the force of these arguments was the development of scientific methods and theories. Scientific theories offered persuasive alternative explanations for the existence of the universe and the apparent design in nature.

Summaries of the ideas of specific theologians and philosophers should be used to illustrate the areas studied. Named individuals or texts are not prescribed. Centres are therefore free to select appropriate writers in light of the resources available and the range of candidates studying the Unit. Care must be taken to ensure that the writers chosen are relevant to the mandatory content. Detailed guidance on appropriate writers appears in the support notes for this Unit.

Candidates must state opinions about the force of objections and replies in damaging or supporting the arguments studied. It is important that the opinions stated are based on a reasoned assessment of both objections and replies. For this reason candidates must explain strengths and weaknesses of each objection and reply as part of evaluation.