

Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies



This update focuses on the development of Advanced Higher, with information relevant to your subject and details of the support available to you.

Updates regarding National 3 to National 5 and Higher can be found in the 'Updates and Announcements' section of the relevant **subject pages**. I would encourage you to make regular use of our subject pages, where you will find support documents, answers to common questions, and links to other areas of interest. You can also sign up for 'My Alerts', SQA's e-mail update service, that notifies you whenever content you are interested in is added or updated on SQA's website. Visit **www.sqa.org.uk/myalerts** to register.

I hope you find the following update helpful, and please contact me if you have any questions.

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The Qualifications Development Team

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Assessment support

Package 1 of Unit assessment support for Advanced Higher is available now from SQA's secure website. You can arrange access to secure materials through your SQA Co-ordinator; these must be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Over the coming year, we will publish the following assessment support materials for Advanced Higher Courses:

January 2015	Course Comparison document Guidance on the use of past papers
February 2015	Specimen Question Paper and Marking Instructions Unit assessment support package 2
March 2015	Coursework information
April 2015	Unit assessment support package 3
December 2015	Exemplar Question Paper and Marking Instructions

Updates to documents

We will make planned updates to the Advanced Higher documents, following the publication of Advanced Higher Specimen Question Papers, Coursework information and Unit assessment support packs. We will also finalise package 1 of Unit assessment support, following the publication of packages 2 and 3.

The schedule for publishing the updated documents is as follows:

April 2015	Mandatory documents (Unit Specifications, Course Specifications and Course Assessment Specifications)
May 2015	Advice and guidance documents (Course and Unit Support Notes) and Unit assessment support packs

These updates are to ensure consistency between the assessment support materials, advice and guidance documents and the documents containing mandatory information.

The Notification of Changes spreadsheet will be updated for Advanced Higher following the publication of any revised documents.

Planned changes to Advanced Higher RMPS documents:

Unit Specifications

The Unit Specifications will be aligned with Unit assessment support packages 1, 2 and 3. These changes are being made to minimise over-assessment and are as follows:

Philosophy of Religion Unit:

Original Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Revised Outcomes and Assessment Standards
<p>Critically evaluate arguments from the philosophy of religion.</p> <p>1.1 Explaining the philosophical reasoning behind two key arguments within the philosophy of religion and responses to them, in depth and including their a priori or a posteriori basis</p> <p>1.2 Analysing the strengths and limitations of the philosophical reasoning involved in each argument and response, in depth and explaining relevant theoretical or abstract ideas</p> <p>1.3 Synthesising information to express a well-reasoned conclusion on the impact of the arguments and responses on relevant religious beliefs</p> <p>1.4 Analysing the potential ways in which the philosophy of religion contributes to the development of a stance for living</p>	<p>Critically evaluate arguments from the philosophy of religion.</p> <p>1.1 Analysing the philosophical reasoning behind two key arguments within the philosophy of religion</p> <p>1.2 Analysing the philosophical reasoning behind one key response to each argument</p> <p>1.3 Evaluating the strengths and limitations of the philosophical reasoning involved in each argument and response, in depth</p> <p>1.4 Synthesising information to produce a well-reasoned conclusion on the validity of the arguments and responses, in depth and taking full account of a range of viewpoints, explaining supporting evidence and responding to relevant counter-arguments</p>

Medical Ethics Unit:

Original Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Revised Outcomes and Assessment Standards
<p>Critically evaluate complex issues involving religion and medical ethics.</p> <p>1.1 Explaining a complex issue involving religion and medical ethics, in depth and explaining relevant scientific, religious and philosophical ideas</p> <p>1.2 Explaining the philosophical reasoning behind a range of responses to the issue, including one religious response</p>	<p>Critically evaluate complex issues involving medical ethics.</p> <p>1.1 Analysing scientific, religious and philosophical ideas on a complex issue involving medical ethics, in depth</p> <p>1.2 Analysing the philosophical reasoning behind a range of responses to the issue, including one religious response</p>

<p>1.3 Analysing the strengths and limitations of the philosophical reasoning involved in each response, in depth and explaining relevant theoretical or abstract ideas</p> <p>1.4 Analysing the potential ways in which religious responses to the issue affect the place of religion in the contemporary world</p> <p>1.5 Synthesising information to express a well-reasoned conclusion on the validity of the responses, in depth and taking full account of a range of viewpoints, explaining supporting evidence and responding to relevant counter-arguments</p>	<p>1.3 Evaluating the strengths and limitations of the philosophical reasoning involved in each response, in depth</p> <p>1.4 Synthesising information to produce a well-reasoned conclusion on the issue in depth and taking account of a range of responses, explaining supporting evidence and responding to relevant counter-arguments</p>
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Religious Experience Unit:

Original Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Revised Outcomes and Assessment Standards
<p>Critically evaluate complex issues involving religious experience</p> <p>1.1 Explaining religious, scientific and sociological perspectives on a complex issue involving religious experience, in depth and explaining relevant theoretical or abstract ideas</p> <p>1.2 Analysing the impact of these different perspectives on the lives of religious followers and others, in depth</p> <p>1.3 Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the different perspectives and the implications of these, in detail and explaining the relevant theoretical or abstract ideas involved</p> <p>1.4 Analysing the potential ways in which religious experiences contribute to the development of a religious faith</p> <p>1.5 Synthesising information to produce a well-reasoned conclusion about the issue and perspectives, in depth and taking full account of a range of viewpoints, explaining supporting evidence and responding to relevant counter-arguments</p>	<p>Critically evaluate complex issues involving religious experience</p> <p>1.1 Analysing religious, psychological and sociological perspectives on a complex issue involving religious experience, in depth</p> <p>1.2 Evaluating religious, psychological and sociological perspectives on a complex issue involving religious experience, in depth</p> <p>1.3 Analysing the potential ways in which religious experiences contribute to the development of a religious faith</p> <p>1.4 Synthesising information to produce a well-reasoned conclusion about the issue, in depth and taking account of a range of perspectives, explaining supporting evidence and responding to relevant counter-arguments</p>

Researching Unit:

Original Outcomes and Assessment Standards	Revised Outcomes and Assessment Standards
Develop independent research skills in the context of complex religious, moral or philosophical issues	Develop independent research skills in the context of complex religious, moral or philosophical issues
1.1 Identifying an appropriate, complex religious, moral or philosophical issue for research	1.1 Justifying an appropriate, complex religious, moral or philosophical issue for research
1.2 Planning a programme of research	1.2 Planning a programme of research
1.3 Researching, collecting and recording information	1.3 Researching, collecting and recording information in an organised way
1.4 Evaluating, analysing and synthesising evidence	1.4 Explaining approaches to organising, presenting and referencing findings Correctly referencing a source using appropriate conventions
1.5 Understanding approaches to organising, presenting and referencing findings using appropriate conventions	1.5 Correctly referencing a source using an appropriate referencing system

Please note that these changes have been incorporated into Unit assessment support package 1, and will also be incorporated into packages 2 and 3.

It is important that staff delivering the new Advanced Higher Courses in session 2015-16 read the full suite of documents for their subjects, as well as those relating to assessment. We also advise staff attending the Advanced Higher support events to read these documents in preparation. For more information on documents and assessment support materials, visit www.sqa.org.uk/supportdocuments

Looking ahead to 2015–16

The new Advanced Higher Courses go live from August 2015. SQA will continue to work closely with centres throughout the implementation of these Courses to ensure you have the support you need to prepare your learners for assessment.

We will also work closely with centres during the verification process to identify exemplar materials for Advanced Higher that can be shared with you, to help enhance your understanding of the standards required.

A series of implementation events for Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies will take place on the following dates:

- Wednesday 11th March (Glasgow)
- Friday 13th March (Aberdeen)

If you wish to attend these events, please follow this [link](#).

Contact SQA

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