



National
Qualifications

Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Project-dissertation General assessment information

This pack contains general assessment information for centres preparing candidates for the Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies Component of Advanced Higher Course assessment.

It must be read in conjunction with the specific assessment tasks for this Component of Course assessment which may only be downloaded from SQA's designated secure website by authorised personnel.

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Introduction

This is the general assessment information for the Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies project-dissertation.

This project-dissertation is worth 40 marks out of a total of 100 marks. This is 40% of the overall marks for the Course assessment. The Course will be graded A-D.

Marks for all Course Components are added up to give a total Course assessment mark which is then used as the basis for grading decisions.

This is one of two Components of Course assessment. The other Component is a question paper.

This document describes the general requirements for the assessment of the project-dissertation Component for this Course. It gives general information and instructions for assessors.

It must be read in conjunction with the assessment task for this Component of Course assessment.

The assessment task will be set and conducted by centres and externally marked under conditions specified by SQA.

Equality and inclusion

This Course assessment has been designed to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to assessment. Assessments have been designed to promote equal opportunities while maintaining the integrity of the qualification.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the Assessment Arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/14977.html

Guidance on inclusive approaches to delivery and assessment in this Course is provided in the *Course/Unit Support Notes*.

What this assessment covers

This assessment contributes 40% of the total marks for the Course.

The assessment will assess the skills, knowledge and understanding specified for the project-dissertation in the *Course Assessment Specification*. These are:

- ◆ choosing and justifying an appropriate, religious, moral or philosophical issue for research
- ◆ planning a programme of research
- ◆ identifying relevant sources for the programme of research
- ◆ researching, collecting and recording information

Assessment

Purpose

The purpose of this assessment is to generate evidence for this Component of the Added Value of this Course by means of a project-dissertation.

This project-dissertation will demonstrate challenge and application by demonstrating skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of a religious, moral or philosophical question or issue. This may be related to an area candidates have studied as part of the mandatory content of the Course, but they are free to research any relevant question or issue.

Assessment overview

Candidates should identify a complex religious, moral or philosophical question or issue which allows them to research a wide range of views. They should research the question or issue, and record and organise their response to address the question or issue.

Assessors should provide reasonable guidance on the types of question or issue which will enable candidates to meet all of the requirements of this project-dissertation. They may also give guidance to candidates on the likely availability and accessibility of resources for their chosen question or issue.

Candidates should work on their project-dissertation with minimum support from the assessor.

Assessment conditions

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

This project-dissertation will be managed by centres within SQA guidelines and conducted under some supervision and control. The evidence for assessment will be produced independently by the candidate in time to meet a submission date set by SQA.

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking. All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

This assessment will be carried out over a period of time. Candidates should start at an appropriate point in the Course. This will normally be after they have started work on the Units in the Course.

There are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

Centres must ensure that each candidate's evidence for their project-dissertation is their own work. However, reasonable assistance may be

provided. The term ‘reasonable assistance’ is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If any candidates require more than what is deemed to be ‘reasonable assistance’, they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, for example, advice on submission dates. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something the candidate has already produced or demonstrated, assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

Clarification may be sought by candidates regarding the wording of a brief or specification or instructions for the assessment if they find them unclear. In this case, the clarification should normally be given to the whole class.

Assessor input and advice is acceptable in order to allow the candidate to progress to the next stages of the assessment.

The project-dissertation will be conducted under some supervision and control. This means that although candidates may complete part of the work outwith the learning and teaching setting, assessors should put in place processes for monitoring progress and ensuring that the work is the candidate’s own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

Assessors should put in place mechanisms to authenticate candidate evidence. For example:

- ◆ regular checkpoint/progress meetings with candidates
- ◆ short spot-check personal interviews
- ◆ checklists which record activity/progress

Group work approaches are acceptable during the research phase of the project-dissertation. However, the completed project-dissertation must be the candidate’s own work.

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ candidate’s completed project-dissertation

General marking instructions

In line with SQA's normal practice, the following general marking instructions are addressed to the marker. They will also be helpful for those preparing candidates for Course assessment.

Evidence will be submitted to SQA for external marking. All marking will be quality assured by SQA.

General marking principles for Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies project-dissertation

This information is provided to help you understand the general principles you must apply when marking candidate responses to this project-dissertation. These principles must be read in conjunction with the detailed marking instructions, which identify the key features required in candidate responses.

- (a) Marks for each candidate response will **always** be assigned in line with these general marking principles and the detailed marking Instructions for this assessment.
- (b) Marking will always be positive. This means that, for each candidate response, marks are accumulated for the demonstration of relevant skills, knowledge and understanding: they are not deducted from a maximum on the basis of errors or omissions.
- (c) Candidates can structure their project-dissertation in a variety of ways and may also demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways and at different points in their project-dissertation. Markers will credit relevant and appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding wherever they appear in the project-dissertation.
- (d) Principal Assessors will provide guidance on marking specific candidate responses which are not covered by either these principles or detailed marking instructions.
- (e) The word count for the project-dissertation is 3,000-4,000 words (excluding references and appendices). The word count will be submitted with the completed project-dissertation evidence. If the word count exceeds the maximum by 10% a penalty will be applied. No marks will be awarded for the content of references and appendices. Bibliography and appendices do not count towards the word count.

	7-8		5-6		3-4		0-2	
Research and Presentation	A wide range of sources has been used		A range of sources has been used		A limited range of sources has been used		A narrow range of sources has been used	
	Sources have been clearly referenced throughout		Sources have been referenced regularly		Some referencing of sources		Inconsistent referencing of sources	
	The structure is coherent, clear and logical		The structure is clear but lacks coherence at times		Some structure is evident		The structure lacks clear direction	
	The aims of the dissertation have been clearly explained and achieved		The aims of the dissertation have been explained and mainly achieved		The aims of the dissertation have been explained and partially achieved		The aims are inadequately expressed	
	Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given	

	7-8		5-6		3-4		0-2	
Knowledge and Understanding	KU is consistently relevant, accurate and in-depth		KU is mainly relevant, accurate and in-depth		KU lacks relevance or accuracy or depth		KU lacks relevance, accuracy and depth	
	KU is consistently supported by strong research		KU is supported by some strong research		KU is inconsistently supported by research		KU is under-researched	
	Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given	
Analysis	10-12		7-9		4-6		0-3	
	Analysis is relevant, accurate and in-depth		Analysis is mainly relevant, accurate and in-depth		Analysis is mainly relevant and accurate but lacks depth		Analysis lacks depth and/or relevance	
	Analysis is consistently used to develop KU and evaluation points		Analysis is regularly used to develop KU or evaluation points		Analysis is inconsistently used to develop KU or evaluation points		Analysis is occasionally used to develop KU or evaluation points	
	Analysis is consistently supported by strong research		Analysis is supported by some strong research		Analysis is inconsistently supported by research		Analysis is under-researched	
	Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given		Total mark given	

		10-12	7-9	4-6	0-3
Evaluation		Evaluation consistently includes counter arguments and/or the clear development of a case	Evaluation includes some counter arguments and/or the development of a case	Evaluation includes brief counter arguments and/or the development of a case	Evaluation rarely has any counter arguments and/or the development of a case
		Evaluation is sophisticated, relevant and in-depth	Evaluation is relevant and detailed	Evaluation is insufficient but it is relevant although under-developed	Evaluation is lacking but is relevant although superficial
		Clear, supported and developed conclusions are evident throughout the dissertation	Clear and supported conclusions are evident at times in the dissertation	Conclusions are evident but lack support at times	Conclusions are brief and lack support
		Total mark given	Total mark given	Total mark given	Total mark given

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Amendments to marking instructions and 'what this assessment covers' section.	Qualifications Manager	September 2016

Security and confidentiality

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