

## National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

<b>Course code:</b>	C864 75
<b>Course assessment code:</b>	X864 75
<b>SCQF:</b>	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
<b>Valid from:</b>	session 2017–18

The course specification provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver the course.

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# Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for a candidate to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has two components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper	80	2 hours and 20 minutes
Component 2: assignment	20	See course assessment section

Recommended entry	Progression
<p>Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre.</p> <p>Candidates should have achieved the fourth curriculum level or the National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course</li><li>◆ further study, employment or training</li></ul>

## Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across all course assessment components.

## Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

The National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course helps candidates to develop an understanding of the society in which they live and work through learning about, and from, religious beliefs, non-religious viewpoints and personal experience.

The course encourages candidates to develop values and beliefs and learn how to express them. It helps them to develop respect for others and an understanding of beliefs and practices which are different from their own. They develop an understanding of human beliefs, values and behaviour; and examine how religion, morality and philosophy might help people find meaning and purpose in life.

Candidates have opportunities to develop literacy, personal learning and thinking skills as well as a sense of responsible citizenship.

## Purpose and aims

The course develops knowledge and understanding of religious, moral and philosophical issues that affect the world. The course explores the questions they raise and the solutions or approaches they offer. It includes both religious and non-religious perspectives.

Candidates have opportunities to reflect on these and on their own experience and views.

Candidates are required to study a world religion, contemporary moral issues and responses, and key aspects of answers to religious and philosophical questions.

Candidates develop a range of skills at a straightforward level, including the ability to:

- ◆ give accurate accounts of factual information relating to aspects of religion, morality and philosophy
- ◆ demonstrate an understanding of aspects of religion, morality and philosophy
- ◆ analyse beliefs and practices related to world religions, moral issues and philosophical questions
- ◆ evaluate beliefs and practices related to world religions, moral issues and philosophical questions

## Who is this course for?

The course is appropriate for a wide range of learners including those who wish to: achieve a greater understanding of religion and its place in society; learn more about traditions, beliefs and values; progress to more specialised study, further education, training or employment.

# Course content

The course develops a range of cognitive skills. It encourages active learning in the process of investigating religious, moral and philosophical issues. Candidates learn to express viewpoints and have the opportunity for personal reflection.

Candidates develop a wide range of important and transferable skills including accurate recording of information, researching resources, analysing and evaluating beliefs and values, and expressing reasoned personal opinions in a variety of contexts.

The National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course has three areas of study. In each area, candidates focus on one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism). The range of contexts for study is flexible to allow for personalisation and choice. Each area offers opportunities for candidates to focus on particular skills.

The areas of study are:

## **World Religion**

Candidates study religion and its impact, relevance and significance through studying some key beliefs and practices found in one major world religion, and the contribution these make to the lives of followers.

## **Morality and Belief**

Candidates study moral issues and their background, implications and responses through studying one major moral issue and responses to it.

## **Religious and Philosophical Questions**

Candidates study the issues raised by religious and philosophical questions, their implications and responses by studying one question and responses to it.

# Skills, knowledge and understanding

## Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course, at a straightforward level:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding of the impact, relevance and significance of religion through studying some beliefs and practices found within one of the world's six major religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism or Sikhism) and the contribution these make to the lives of followers
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of moral issues and responses
- ◆ knowledge and understanding of religious and philosophical issues and responses
- ◆ analysing and evaluating religious, moral and philosophical issues and responses
- ◆ expressing views about religious, moral and philosophical issues and responses
- ◆ researching sources to present an analysis and evaluation of some viewpoints of a religious, moral or philosophical issue

## Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment.

### Component 1: question paper

The question paper contains three sections. Candidates must answer one part from each section.

#### Section 1: World Religion

In each world religion, the beliefs, practices and sources are closely related and interconnected. Candidates are not required to learn specific sources for each religious belief and practice. However, they should be able to use examples of sources that inform beliefs and practices, where appropriate.

All candidates should be able to:

- ◆ demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices
- ◆ analyse religious beliefs and practices
- ◆ evaluate the relevance, significance and impact of religious beliefs and practices

Candidates study **one** of the following parts (parts A to F):

**Part A: Buddhism**

- ◆ Three Marks of Existence
- ◆ Four Noble Truths
- ◆ Three Poisons
- ◆ Beliefs about the Buddha
- ◆ Three Jewels
- ◆ Karma
- ◆ Samsara
- ◆ Nibbana
- ◆ Living according to the Eightfold Path
- ◆ Five Precepts
- ◆ Meditation and puja

**Part B: Christianity**

- ◆ Nature of God
- ◆ Humans created in God's likeness
- ◆ Free will
- ◆ Sin
- ◆ Jesus as an incarnation of God
- ◆ Death and resurrection of Jesus
- ◆ Judgement
- ◆ Heaven and Hell
- ◆ Following Jesus' teachings and example
- ◆ Worship

**Part C: Hinduism**

- ◆ Nature of God
- ◆ Atman
- ◆ Avidya
- ◆ Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu
- ◆ Stories about Krishna
- ◆ Krishna and Arjuna
- ◆ Karma
- ◆ Samsara
- ◆ Moksha
- ◆ Dharma
- ◆ Three Margas
- ◆ Worship

#### **Part D: Islam**

- ◆ Nature of God
- ◆ Khaliphas (stewardship)
- ◆ Free will
- ◆ Sin
- ◆ Seal of the prophets
- ◆ Muhammed as a role model
- ◆ Revelation of the Qur'an
- ◆ Judgement
- ◆ Al-Jannah and Jahannam
- ◆ The Five Pillars
- ◆ Living according to the Qur'an
- ◆ Worship

#### **Part E: Judaism**

- ◆ Nature of God
- ◆ Dual nature of human beings
- ◆ Free will
- ◆ Sin
- ◆ The Exodus
- ◆ The Covenant
- ◆ Judgement
- ◆ Messiah
- ◆ Olam Ha-Ba
- ◆ Living according to the Torah
- ◆ Worship

#### **Part F: Sikhism**

- ◆ Nature of God
- ◆ Atma
- ◆ Maya
- ◆ Haumai
- ◆ The Five Evils
- ◆ Following the Gurus' teachings
- ◆ Guru Granth Sahib
- ◆ Jivan Muhkti
- ◆ Karma
- ◆ Free will
- ◆ Sewa and Simran
- ◆ Khalsa
- ◆ Worship



## **Section 2: Morality and Belief**

Candidates must study one of the following parts (A to E). Responses should be drawn from **religious and non-religious perspectives**.

In each part, candidates should be able to do the following at a straightforward level:

- ◆ present factual knowledge and understanding of the moral issues
- ◆ present factual knowledge and understanding of a **religious and non-religious** viewpoint on the moral issues
- ◆ analyse the different moral issues
- ◆ evaluate a **religious and non-religious** response to the moral issues
- ◆ present a reasoned viewpoint on the moral issues

Candidates study **one** of the following parts:

### **Part A: Morality and Justice**

- ◆ the purposes of punishment: retribution, deterrence, reformation, protection
- ◆ causes of crime: poverty, environment, psychological factors
- ◆ UK responses to crime: custodial sentences, non-custodial sentences, crime prevention
- ◆ capital punishment and life tariffs: humaneness, human rights

### **Part B: Morality and Relationships**

- ◆ gender roles: family, employment, religion
- ◆ sexual relationships: purpose of sex, sexual consent, same sex
- ◆ marriage: arranged marriages, co-habitation, same-sex marriages, divorce
- ◆ equality and exploitation: religion, media

### **Part C: Morality, Environment and Global Issues**

- ◆ resource management: purpose, natural resources, world economy
- ◆ environmental crises: global warming, depletion of resources, biodiversity
- ◆ poverty: causes, effects, solutions
- ◆ trade and aid: types of aid, types of trade, charity

### **Part D: Morality, Medicine and the Human Body**

- ◆ the value of life: right to life, right to die, sanctity of life, personal autonomy
- ◆ use of embryos: reproductive, research, therapeutic
- ◆ end-of-life care: palliative, hospice
- ◆ euthanasia and assisted dying: voluntary euthanasia, non-voluntary euthanasia, assisted dying provided by individuals or organisations

### **Part E: Morality and Conflict**

- ◆ conflict: causes of war, types of war, Geneva conventions, justifications
- ◆ consequences of war: human cost, environment, economic

- ◆ modern armaments: weapons of mass destruction, smart weapons, conventional weapons
- ◆ alternatives to war: sanctions, diplomacy, pacifism

### **Section 3: Religious and Philosophical Questions**

Candidates must study one of the following parts (A to D). **Responses should be drawn from religious and non-religious perspectives.**

In each part, candidates should be able to do the following at a straightforward level:

- ◆ present factual knowledge and understanding of a religious and philosophical question
- ◆ present factual knowledge and understanding of contrasting responses to a religious and philosophical question
- ◆ analyse a religious and philosophical question and responses to it
- ◆ evaluate responses to a religious and philosophical question
- ◆ present a reasoned viewpoint on the religious and philosophical question

#### **Part A: Origins**

- ◆ role of creator
- ◆ origins of the universe
  - big bang
  - literal and non-literal interpretation of creation stories
  - view that sees a role for religious explanations only
  - view that sees a role for scientific explanations only
  - view that sees a role for both religious and scientific explanations
- ◆ origins of life
  - evolution
  - interpretation of creation stories
  - literal and non-literal interpretation of creation stories
  - view that sees a role for religious explanations only
  - view that sees a role for scientific explanations only
  - view that sees a role for both religious and scientific explanations

#### **Part B: The Existence of God**

- ◆ nature of God
- ◆ cosmological argument
  - Aquinas' cosmological argument
  - counter-arguments
  - science and the cosmological argument
  - viewpoints supporting the arguments
  - viewpoints criticising the arguments

- ◆ teleological argument
  - Paley's teleological argument
  - counter-arguments
  - science and the teleological argument
  - viewpoints supporting the arguments
  - viewpoints criticising the arguments

### **Part C: The Problem of Suffering and Evil**

- ◆ types of suffering and evil
- ◆ explanations of suffering and evil
  - free will and responsibility
  - determinism
  - natural causes
  - role of God
- ◆ problems for beliefs about God
  - nature of God
  - challenge to the nature of God
  - challenge to the existence of God
  - theodicies

### **Part D: Miracles**

- ◆ divine intervention
- ◆ fixed laws of nature
- ◆ scriptural miracles
  - literal and non-literal explanations
  - miracles in nature
  - healing miracles
  - view that sees a role for religious explanations only
  - view that sees a role for scientific explanations only
  - view that sees a role for both religious and scientific explanations
- ◆ non-scriptural miracles
  - religious and non-religious explanations
  - miracles in nature
  - healing miracles
  - view that sees a role for religious explanations only
  - view that sees a role for scientific explanations only
  - view that sees a role for both religious and scientific explanations

### **Component 2: assignment**

Candidates have an open choice of religious, moral or philosophical issue. Their choice is not constrained by the content of the question paper.

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level ([www.scqf.org.uk](http://www.scqf.org.uk)).

## **Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work**

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#) and draw from the following main skills areas:

### **1 Literacy**

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing

### **3 Health and wellbeing**

- 3.1 Personal learning

### **4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship**

- 4.6 Citizenship

### **5 Thinking skills**

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluating

These skills must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities and the level should be appropriate to the level of the course.

Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the course support notes.

# Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
- ◆ challenge — requiring greater depth or extension of knowledge and/or skills
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to:

- ◆ draw on, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired during the course, assessed by a question paper and an assignment
- ◆ demonstrate breadth of skills, knowledge and understanding and apply skills from across the course, in the question paper
- ◆ demonstrate challenge and application related to an appropriate religious, moral or philosophical issue, in the assignment

Over the course assessment there is broad parity between the assessment of skills and the assessment of knowledge and understanding.

## Course assessment structure: question paper

### Question paper

**80 marks**

The question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate application of the following skills and breadth of knowledge and understanding from across the course:

- ◆ analysing religious, moral and philosophical questions
- ◆ presenting detailed and reasoned views

The question paper has 80 marks out of a total of 100 marks. The question paper is therefore worth 80% of the overall marks for the course assessment. It has a greater emphasis on the assessment of knowledge and understanding than the assignment, with approximately 50% of the marks being awarded for the demonstration of knowledge and understanding. The other marks are awarded for the demonstration of skills.

The question paper has three sections and each section has a number of parts. Each part has a minimum of 25 marks available. There are 4–6 questions in each part, worth between 3–8 marks per question.

### **Section 1: World Religion** (minimum of 25 marks)

This section has six parts. Candidates answer questions from one part.

- ◆ Part A — Buddhism
- ◆ Part B — Christianity
- ◆ Part C — Hinduism
- ◆ Part D — Islam
- ◆ Part E — Judaism
- ◆ Part F — Sikhism

Candidates can be asked to do the following, at a straightforward level, in relation to the religion they have studied:

- ◆ describe, explain and analyse aspects of the religion
- ◆ describe, explain and analyse the relationship between different aspects of the religion
- ◆ present reasoned views about the meaning and significance of aspects of the religion
- ◆ evaluate the importance, relevance and impact of aspects of the religion

### **Section 2: Morality and Belief** (minimum of 25 marks)

This section has five parts. Candidates answer questions from one part.

- ◆ Part A — Morality and Justice
- ◆ Part B — Morality and Relationships
- ◆ Part C — Morality, Environment and Global Issues
- ◆ Part D — Morality, Medicine and the Human Body
- ◆ Part E — Morality and Conflict

Candidates can be asked to do the following, at a straightforward level, in relation to the moral issue they have studied:

- ◆ describe, explain and analyse aspects of the issue
- ◆ describe, explain and analyse religious and non-religious responses to the issue
- ◆ present reasoned views about the religious and non-religious responses to the issue
- ◆ evaluate the issue and religious and non-religious responses to it

### **Section 3: Religious and Philosophical Questions** (minimum of 25 marks)

This section has four parts. Candidates answer questions from one part:

- ◆ Part A — Origins
- ◆ Part B — The Existence of God
- ◆ Part C — The Problem of Suffering and Evil
- ◆ Part D — Miracles

Candidates can be asked to do the following, at a straightforward level, in relation to the religious and philosophical question they have studied:

- ◆ describe, explain and analyse aspects of the religious and philosophical question
- ◆ describe, explain and analyse religious and non-religious responses to the question
- ◆ present reasoned views about the religious and non-religious responses to the question
- ◆ evaluate the question and religious and non-religious responses to it

### **Setting, conducting and marking the question paper**

The question paper is set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Candidates complete this in 2 hours and 20 minutes.

Specimen question papers for National 5 courses are published on SQA's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

## **Course assessment structure: assignment**

### **Assignment**

**20 marks**

The assignment allows candidates to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of religious, moral and philosophical questions:

- ◆ identifying an appropriate religious, moral or philosophical issue for study, about which there are alternative or different points of view
- ◆ commenting on the significance or impact of the issue
- ◆ using sources of information
- ◆ drawing on knowledge and understanding to explain and analyse the issue and viewpoints, one of which must be religious, moral or philosophical
- ◆ drawing and presenting a detailed and reasoned conclusion on the issue

The assignment has 20 marks out of a total of 100 marks. The assignment is therefore worth 20% of the overall marks for the course assessment. 50% of the marks cover skills.

### **Setting, conducting and marking the assignment**

The assignment is set by centres within SQA guidelines. SQA provides a brief for the generation of evidence to be assessed. Candidates have an open choice of topic/issue to be researched. Evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking. All marking is quality assured by SQA.

## **Assessment conditions**

The assignment has two stages:

- ◆ research
- ◆ production of evidence

### **Time**

The research stage includes choosing an issue, collecting evidence, organising, evaluating and preparation time for the production of evidence. Candidates should choose an issue which allows them to research different views, including a relevant religious, moral or philosophical viewpoint. The issue must be clearly religious, moral or philosophical or a combination of these. This stage has been designed to be capable of completion over a notional period of 8 hours.

The production of evidence stage is when the candidate produces a report on the issue studied. This must be completed within 1 hour and in one sitting. Candidates should undertake the production of evidence stage in time to meet the submission date set by SQA.

### **Supervision, control and authentication**

The research stage is 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. For example:

- ◆ interim progress meetings with candidates
- ◆ questioning
- ◆ candidate's record of activity/progress
- ◆ assessor observation

Group work approaches are acceptable as part of the research stage. However, there must be clear evidence for each candidate to show that they have met the evidence requirements.

The production of evidence stage is conducted under a high degree of supervision and control. This means that:

- ◆ candidates must be in direct sight of the assessor (or other responsible person) during the period of the assessment
- ◆ candidates must not communicate with each other
- ◆ candidates may use their RMPS Resource Sheet for support but must enclose it with their report



## **Resources**

During the research stage, there are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

During the final production of evidence stage, candidates should only have access to evidence collected during the research stage and recorded on the RMPS Resource Sheet.

## **Reasonable assistance**

Assessors should provide reasonable guidance on the types of issue which enable candidates to meet all the requirements of the assignment. They may also give guidance to candidates on the likely availability and accessibility of resources for their chosen issue.

Candidates should work on their research with minimum support from the assessor.

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

Candidates must undertake the production of evidence independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the production of evidence taking place.

The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If a candidate requires 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, eg advice on how to develop a project plan. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something that a candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger that it becomes support for assessment and assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

In the research stage, reasonable assistance may include:

- ◆ directing candidates to the instructions for candidates
- ◆ clarifying instructions/requirements of the task
- ◆ advising candidates on the choice of issue
- ◆ advising candidates on possible sources of information
- ◆ arranging visits to enable gathering of evidence
- ◆ interim progress checks

In preparing for the production of evidence stage, reasonable assistance may include advising candidates of the nature and volume of specified resources which may be used to support the production of evidence.

At any stage, reasonable assistance does not include:

- ◆ providing the issue
- ◆ directing candidates to specific resources to be used
- ◆ providing model answers
- ◆ providing detailed feedback on drafts, including marking

### **Resource Sheet**

The purpose of the RMPS Resource Sheet is to support the candidate during the writing stage. It should be no more than 200 words in length. It may contain:

- ◆ a plan of the assignment
- ◆ quotes, extracts, diagrams, charts, tables
- ◆ bullet lists

The Resource Sheet is not assessed. However, it must be included with the written report from the candidate.

### **Evidence to be gathered**

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ RMPS Resource Sheet: this must be a single side of A4 paper of no more than 200 words
- ◆ candidate assignment evidence produced under a high degree of supervision

### **Volume**

There is no word count for the assignment; however the Resource Sheet must have no more than 200 words on it.

## **Grading**

A candidate's overall grade is determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

### **Grade description for C**

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

### **Grade description for A**

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

# Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

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/assessmentarrangements](http://www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements).

# Further information

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ◆ [National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies subject page](#)
- ◆ [Assessment arrangements web page](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Framework and SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)
- ◆ [Educational Research Reports](#)
- ◆ [SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools](#)
- ◆ [SQA e-assessment web page](#)

# Administrative information

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## History of changes to course specification

Version	Description of change	Authorised by	Date

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