

Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies



Subject-specific guidance on gathering key evidence in session 2020–21

Please read this guidance alongside [National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates](#) and the SQA Academy resource, [Quality assurance of estimates for National Courses](#).

Gathering key evidence for Advanced Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies (RMPS)

This document and *National Courses: guidance on gathering evidence and producing estimates* will give you additional support and guidance to support your decision making for session 2020–21. Evidence should be gathered later in the course, as a realistic reflection of a candidate's attainment. It is important to note that it is not the **quantity** of evidence, but the **quality** of evidence, in relation to its predictive value, that will support you during this process.

The following types of key evidence are likely to provide a good predictive value and may be helpful to you, although there may be other types of key evidence you would like to use.

Types of key evidence

For Advanced Higher RMPS in session 2020–21, key evidence needs to come from the question paper component and project–dissertation component.

There is flexibility in how you gather evidence. The most robust evidence for the question paper component, in terms of providing breadth, depth and level of challenge, is that which has been generated using an assessment that replicates, as far as possible, the SQA question paper. The evidence does not need to be produced on a single occasion if this is not practical under restrictions current at the time of the assessment. However, it should be produced under supervision and control, where possible.

Other evidence relating to the question paper component may include unseen shorter assessments that have appropriate timings and that are conducted under supervision and control, where possible. For example, an assessment which replicates one section of the question paper, or class tests that cover knowledge and understanding content from a context once it has been taught. It should be noted that shorter assessments are likely to provide less breadth, depth and challenge than a full assessment, and this should be considered if they are being combined and used for provisional results purposes.

Component 1: question paper

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

You should aim to deliver the course as normal, although learning and teaching may be disrupted this session, which will make this more challenging. You are free to decide the timing and depth of delivery of the course content. However, it is important that candidate evidence for provisional results samples content from each of the sections of the course:

- ◆ Section 1 — philosophy of religion (mandatory)
- ◆ Section 2 — part A: medical ethics OR part B: religious experience

The Advanced Higher RMPS Course Specification explains the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with the question paper in more detail.

Assessment advice

Challenge within the knowledge and understanding element of the question paper is embedded in the types and range of questions across the paper and the marks available for each.

In each section, candidates answer one essay question from a choice of two (30 marks), and three questions in response to a source (15 marks). The responses are marked holistically.

It is important that the evidence accurately reflects the mandatory content, as detailed in pages 3 to 6 of the Advanced Higher RMPS Course Specification. All questions should be based on this content.

Component 2: project–dissertation

Candidates are required to complete a project–dissertation for session 2020–21 and this will be considered when deciding provisional results. Candidates must carry out independent research and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding within the context of a dissertation on a complex religious, moral or philosophical question or issue.

Candidates tend to perform better in the project–dissertation than the question paper and you should take this into consideration when producing your provisional results.

You can use complete or incomplete dissertation evidence from candidates to make holistic judgements on which to base your provisional results. Incomplete evidence, however, will not be as strong an indicator of performance as a completed dissertation, and you should take this into consideration when producing your provisional results. In a normal year, some candidates submit incomplete dissertation evidence. In this situation marks are awarded where possible, in line with the marking instructions.

The Advanced Higher RMPS Course Specification and the Coursework Assessment Task explain in detail the skills, knowledge and understanding associated with the project–dissertation.

Using additional assessment resources for session 2020–21: key information

It is important that you use valid and reliable assessment when gathering evidence in session 2020–21.

In Advanced Higher RMPS, SQA will provide a question paper for session 2020–21. Please note that the marking instructions have not been standardised based on candidate responses. You may therefore need to agree within your centre how to consistently mark an item if a candidate response is not covered by the marking instructions.

The Advanced Higher RMPS question paper will only be available on SQA's secure website — you must treat this confidentially, in the same way as other live assessment materials.

You have the option to use the question paper as an internal assessment for gathering candidate evidence. Question papers can be split to support assessments you carry out during class time.

If you use a question paper in part or in its entirety, you should remind candidates that they must not discuss the content of the paper with anyone, including friends, family or on social media.

Understanding the national standard

Examples of candidate responses from the 2019 Advanced Higher question paper, along with associated commentaries, are available on [SQA's Understanding Standard website](#).

The marking instructions for the question paper and past papers detail how marks are allocated for each question type and provide sample responses that exemplify the allocation of marks.

Project–dissertation candidate exemplars and associated commentaries are also available on the [Understanding Standards website](#).

You may also find the annual course reports useful. These are published on the [Advanced Higher RMPS subject page](#).

Summary

You should base your provisional results for Advanced Higher RMPS on a holistic review of a candidate's performance based on demonstrated attainment of:

- ◆ knowledge and understanding from across the course content
- ◆ responses to the questions
- ◆ project–dissertation evidence, if available