



National 5 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies

Course code:	C864 75
Course assessment code:	X864 75
SCQF:	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2025–26

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
Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre. 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.	♦ Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course ♦ further study, employment or training

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
- ◆ Kamma
- ◆ 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).

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 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 or writing frames specific to the task (such as outlines, paragraph headings or section headings)
- ◆ 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

Candidates must specify the issue they are addressing. No marks will be awarded if the issue has not been stated.

If a candidate does not submit a resource sheet, a penalty of 4 marks out of the total 20 marks is applied.

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.

Further information

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ♦ [Assessment arrangements](#)
- ♦ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- ♦ [Guidance on conditions of assessment for coursework](#)
- ♦ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ♦ [Recent SQA research](#)
- ♦ [Remote assessment](#)
- ♦ [SCQF Handbook](#)
- ♦ [Know Your SCQF Level - Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework](#)
- ♦ [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)

Appendix 1: course support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. They should be read in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and coursework.

Developing skills, knowledge and understanding

This section provides further advice and guidance about skills, knowledge and understanding that could be included in the course. Teachers and lecturers should refer to this specification for the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment. Course planners have considerable flexibility to select coherent contexts which will stimulate and challenge their candidates, offering both breadth and depth.

A broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding that will be assessed in the course includes:

- ◆ 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

See Appendix 3 for more information.

Approaches to learning and teaching

There is no recommended teaching order for the sections in this course. Different combinations or order of delivery will be appropriate in different contexts. This is for centres to manage. Common practice includes:

- ◆ teaching sections sequentially
- ◆ morality and belief, and religious and philosophical questions topics taught first; world religion topic taught last due to the level of technical language
- ◆ two areas of study taught on alternate days, with the final section completed during January-March
- ◆ all sections taught at the same time to facilitate assessments covering all topics
- ◆ morality and belief topic taught first to prepare for the assignment in January/February

Preparing for course assessment

Candidates draw on, extend and apply the skills, knowledge and understanding developed during the course. There is parity between the assessment of skills and knowledge and understanding.

Assignment

Candidates have the opportunity to develop their reading and writing skills as they research the assignment topic and write up the outcomes of the activity in controlled conditions. The assignment may be based on:

- ◆ content covered in the course
- ◆ the development of a class activity into an assignment
- ◆ a religious, moral or philosophical issue of the candidate's choice

Candidates completing the assignment may be supported by initial direction to appropriate sources and help and direction:

- ◆ on the topic
- ◆ on issues related to the topic
- ◆ on the validity of the topic
- ◆ when they encounter difficulties
- ◆ with the assignment structure

Candidates perform well in the assignment when they:

- ◆ answer open-ended questions
- ◆ choose familiar issues within the course
- ◆ have a clear structure in their assignment
- ◆ use more than two sources
- ◆ avoid obscure issues or topics

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Course planners should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

SQA does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work	Suggested approaches for learning and teaching
1 Literacy 1.1 Reading 1.2 Writing	Candidates could be given sources to read, analyse and evaluate on religious beliefs, moral issues and philosophical issues. Candidates could be involved in a variety of writing tasks from note taking during interviews, listening to speakers, discussions and video presentations to extended pieces of writing both descriptive and discursive in nature.
3 Health and wellbeing 3.1 Personal learning	Candidates could discuss the importance of having a clear set of beliefs and values in their lives by recognising the role of beliefs and values in the lives of others. They should also be given the opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs and values in a non-judgemental context in a variety of situations and topics.
4 Employability, enterprise and citizenship 4.6 Citizenship	Candidates could focus on issues affecting adherents of the world religion which they are studying. This could be done in a local context with visits and then in a more global context by studying the impact of Islam, for example, on people living in an Islamic country. A project could be completed on the moral issue which candidates are studying so that they can build up an understanding of the

	beliefs and traditions that underpin different positions on moral issues. Similarly with philosophical issues, an understanding of different approaches to questions from a variety of religious and non-religious perspectives by attending a school, local authority or commercially run conference would be of considerable value. The same activity could be carried out by watching well-chosen videos, eg from YouTube.
5 Thinking skills 5.3 Applying 5.4 Analysing and evaluating	The key teaching technique for thinking skills is the use of case studies. These can be used in a variety of ways in each section of the course. Candidates could apply the beliefs and practices of a religion to their own way of living and then learn about the challenges facing religious people today. Case studies from video material or news websites could be used as part of a discussion of moral issues where candidates identify connections and contradictions. Scientific knowledge could be evaluated in the discussion of philosophical issues along with philosophical and religious assumptions by applying tests to see how valid and consistent viewpoints might be.

During the delivery and assessment of the course, candidates will be involved in identifying, remembering and recalling facts. There will also be opportunities for candidates to develop their communication skills. Communication skills are particularly important for candidates as these skills allow them to access, engage in and understand their learning and to communicate their ideas and opinions.

Appendix 2: teaching the skills

Knowledge and understanding

The level of knowledge expected at National 5 is described as 'straightforward'. This term is used in the SCQF framework and is preceded by 'simple' at National 3 and 'basic' at National 4.

Knowledge and understanding at National 5 should be more advanced than simple general knowledge. It should be more than just widely known general knowledge.

At National 5 there is an expectation that knowledge and understanding will be more than a statement of facts. It will be a statement of facts with some explanation. For example, a simple statement of fact might be 'Christians believe Jesus is important because he died for our sins'. Whereas at National 5, a bit more explanation is needed, 'Christians believe Jesus is important because he is the Son of God and through his death and resurrection, they believe that our sins can be forgiven by God'.

Analysing

The level of analysis expected at National 5 is described as 'straightforward'. Analysis usually involves the following:

- ◆ making connections
- ◆ explaining the background
- ◆ predicting consequences
- ◆ identifying implications
- ◆ interpreting sources and viewpoints

Analysis at National 5 should be more advanced than making a simple comment. It should be the kind of information that requires most candidates to learn it rather than simply being a case of widely known connection, consequence, interpretation etc. At National 5 there is an expectation that analysis will show that candidates have a sound grasp of how and why certain things have, for example, particular consequences. A simple analysis might be 'some religious people disagree with the death penalty because it means a person is getting killed'. However, at National 5, a bit more explanation is needed, eg 'some religious people disagree with the death penalty because it breaks their religion's command not to kill because life is a gift from God and only God decides when a person dies'.

Evaluating

Evaluation occurs when candidates discuss the quality of positions taken on an issue. The skill of evaluation is shown when candidates discuss the quality of any positions taken. This involves:

- ◆ making a supported judgement on an issue
- ◆ making a supported judgement of responses to an issue
- ◆ making a supported measurement of the effects, impact, or significance of an issue
- ◆ presenting a case for or against a position
- ◆ commenting on the quality of positions taken on an issue

For example:

Lynne thinks oranges are the best fruit because they are not too sweet, but at the same time not too sour. Elaine disagrees. She says that oranges are a terrible fruit because they are too sour.

This is not evaluation. This is simply a statement that two people have a different view on the sweetness of oranges.

Example of good evaluation:

Lynne thinks oranges are the best fruit because they are neither too sweet nor too sour. A problem with Lynne's view is that it is down to her opinion. Her idea of sweetness is probably different from Elaine's idea of sweetness, so her view of oranges cannot be taken as absolute fact. Furthermore, Lynne has not offered any convincing evidence that no other fruits are better than oranges. Even then, a fruit's goodness might not be based on how sweet or sour it is.

The criticism that can be made of Elaine's view of oranges is similar. There is no universal measure of sweetness and sourness. She cannot say that they are too sour because she is not comparing them with anything. Also, she simply says that they are not the best fruit and fails to offer any alternatives. In the absence of alternatives, people might be led to believe that Lynne's view is correct.

This is evaluation. Notice that a judgement is being made on the validity of both Lynne's and Elaine's view of whether oranges are the best fruit.

In the context of the course, it would look like this.

Lynne thinks that there is no God because there is not enough evidence. She says that nobody has ever seen God; people who believe in God want to believe in him and they use faith to support their beliefs rather than factual, observable evidence. Elaine disagrees. She says that there is a God because the evidence is there if you look for it. She argues that God

cannot be proved by experiments and observing. Instead, she says that you need to piece the evidence together and when you see that it joins up you can say that God exists.

This is not evaluation. Here, Lynne's view is followed by Elaine's view. In both cases, the reasons for taking the view have been explained but there is no judgement made on the quality of the evidence that supports the views. Therefore there is no evaluation.

For this to change into evaluation, the following has to happen:

Lynne thinks that there is no God because there is not enough evidence. The first question you would have about this reason is 'What amount of evidence would she require to prove that there is a God?' If 'enough' evidence is actually seeing God walk in front of her then she will be disappointed because that is not how evidence supporting God works. She says that nobody has ever seen God. However, in claiming that nobody has ever seen God Lynne is making the assumption that 'seeing is believing'. There are many things that we believe exist by looking at their effects rather than physically seeing them, eg we cannot see atoms but we know they exist by their effects. People who believe in God want to believe in him and use faith to support their beliefs and not factual and observable evidence. There is evidence to support this view. Religious people have a certain world view and they want God to fit into that world view. You can see that with those who think God is all-loving and good, yet there is a world which is full of bad things. They want God to fit into this so they develop ideas of freewill and theodicies to make up for the perceived weaknesses in their beliefs.

This is evaluation because it is making a judgement on the quality of the argument and the evidence for it.

Evaluation can include:

- ◆ strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ benefits and drawbacks
- ◆ relevance and irrelevance
- ◆ advantages and disadvantages
- ◆ realistic and unrealistic
- ◆ helpful and unhelpful

It may be useful to think of evaluation in more specific terms for each of the contexts.

World religions context

Evaluation in this context focuses on three areas: impact, importance and relevance. Rather than simply having a list of benefits and drawbacks, they could be grouped into themes which may lead to more effective evaluation.

Candidates could look at the impact of beliefs and practices on individuals in terms of the psychological effect, the impact on their lifestyle, on how they see the world and how they behave. When evaluating importance; candidates could consider the importance of a belief or practice in relation to an individual, the community, and other beliefs and practices. The same approach could be used with relevance. Candidates may find that using these headings is a manageable way of approaching the task.

See table below.

Impact	Importance	Relevance
Psychological	Individual	Individual
Lifestyle	Community	Community
World view	Beliefs	Practices
Actions	Practices	Today

Morality and belief context

A similar method can be used with Morality and Belief (see table below). Candidates could consider support and criticism for viewpoints based on the importance of consequences in making moral decisions about the rightness or wrongness of an act. They could consider the importance of duty and human rights and whether they should have an impact on judging the quality of a decision. They could also consider whether there is any hard and fast rule for moral decision-making on their issue, or if they should make a decision based on the view of religious or non-religious authority.

Useful headings
Consequences
Duty
Situation
Human rights
Authority

Religious and philosophical questions context

A similar method can be used with religious and philosophical questions topics (see table below). Candidates could consider whether or not it is realistic to expect an answer to the questions raised by their topic. They could evaluate the basis of the argument (which will probably be around the use of observable evidence, reason and faith), consider the problems with each of these and apply it to their topic. They could then evaluate the consistency of the viewpoint, making a judgement on how well the whole response fits together and the extent of the contradictions within it, before looking at the effectiveness of the methods of proving the truth of a claim. Finally, they could consider whether there are more likely answers.

Not all of the headings need be used in each example. There will be restrictions based on appropriateness, difficulty and time.

See table below.

Useful headings
Answerable
Basis
Consistency
Verifiable
Alternatives

Language of skills

It may be useful for candidates to develop an awareness of the language used when deploying particular skills. It is sometimes helpful to refer to these as 'switches' so that the candidate knows that they have to start doing something. Some centres have adopted switch phrases and encouraged candidates to select those phrases that they are most likely to use. Further development of the skills can be achieved by instructing candidates to highlight the phrases when they write answers so that they have a visual check that they are using the right skill.

Typical phrases include the following list. Please note that some switches can be used for two different skills.

Knowledge and Understanding: being able to show that they know and understand beliefs, ideas, concepts and issues through descriptions of facts and relevant information
Refer to the words of the question, eg a moral issue arising from ... is ...
One way Buddhists practise meditation is . Another is ...
One key principle is ...
An example of this is ...
One religious viewpoint on X is ...
A secular view is ...
The Buddha said/the Bible states (or other source) ...
Hindus believe ...
X think this is an issue because ...
Other Jews believe ...
55% of people ...
Christians believe that ...
The Bible describes X as ...
This is also called ...
There is also the fact that ...
There is also ...
X is one example of ...
Some would argue that ...

Knowledge and Understanding: being able to show that they know and understand beliefs, ideas, concepts and issues through descriptions of facts and relevant information
X involves ...
One argument is ...
Another argument is ...
X is an example of ...
X is when you ...
The main argument for this is ...
X is one of ...
It is believed that ...
This is illustrated by ...
An influence is ...
One factor is ...
One aspect is ...
The explanation offered by X is ...
The argument for/against X offered by Y is ...
X tells us that ...
X also offers another explanation of ...
X is backed up by evidence such as ...
This is known as ...
To explain: ...
Many people would also believe ... because ... This shows that ...

Analysis: being able to show that they can pull apart a belief, make connections between beliefs, explain consequences, explain issues, explain implications
Mirror the question!
One way practice/viewpoint X links with practice/ viewpoint Y is ...
Some people think that ...
Other people think that ...
One way practice/viewpoint X is similar to practice/ viewpoint Y is ...
A consequence of this might be ... Another could be ...
One way this source can be interpreted is ...
As a result of this ...
This could cause ...
This is related to ... because ...
An implication arising from this is ...
They think this because ...
This is because ...
This results in ...
This means that ...
An interpretation of this passage could be ...
This passage could also mean ...
This means that ...
This shapes Muslim views ...
Both would look at ...
Both agree that ...
It might cause ...
Again this shows that ...
X will often use Y as evidence that ...
As a result ...
They would/would not see/agree since ...
This makes people wonder if it is justifiable because ...

Analysis: being able to show that they can pull apart a belief, make connections between beliefs, explain consequences, explain issues, explain implications
It could allow X because ... it says in Y ... which means ...
X is a way of saying ...
However doing X could result in ... because
Nevertheless there are consequences ... because
However, if this is followed ... then ... which means ...
It follows that X would happen because ...
The use of...means that ...
This can also be seen as ... because ...
This view encourages ... because ...
Supporting this idea is the fact that ...
In this way ...
This is an example of X because ...
X is a key concept because ...
Followers of X do Y and therefore become Z because ...
To illustrate that point, X said ... This shows that ...
X's example teaches that ...because ...
This is why/the reason for ...
The importance of this is derived/comes from ...
This shows ...
This highlights ...
This helps them to ...
X differs from Y because ...
X is when someone does Y ... This can be as simple as doing Z ...
It is important to note/point out that ... because ...
This is something X finds difficult to accept because ...
It would seem that X is true because ...
The view of X is mainly centred on the idea that ...

Analysis: being able to show that they can pull apart a belief, make connections between beliefs, explain consequences, explain issues, explain implications
This relates to ...
Another way in which X and Y are linked is ...
Behind this view is the belief that ...
In addition to this it can also be seen that ...
X suggests Y because ...
It is likely/not likely X is the case because ...
An idea to oppose this view is ...
This perhaps suggests that ...
Another issue is created by X because ...
However, there are issues with view X that would suggest ...
X has a problem with this view because ...
However, religious people would respond to this by arguing that ...
Therefore if X believes Y it must mean Z because ...
X poses difficult questions for Y because ...
This is further evidence that ...
X has opened up the possibility/made it harder to ...
X and Y arguably impact on ... because ...
What makes X attractive is ... because ...
Throughout the argument ...
By this reasoning it can be argued that ...
X is based on the idea Y that ...

Evaluation: being able to make a judgement or measurement of: strengths, weaknesses, benefits, drawbacks, advantages, disadvantages, impact, importance, effects, veracity, agreement, disagreement
Mirror the question!
A strength of this belief/practice/viewpoint/argument is ...
One weakness of this belief/practice/viewpoint/ argument is ...
Another strength/weakness is ...
I think a benefit of this is ... because ...
I think a disadvantage of this is ... because ...
A positive way this can affect Buddhists is ...
I think there are advantages and disadvantages of ...
I agree to a certain extent, because ...
An implication of X is ... This is a possible weakness because ...
This is very important/ a key issue because ...
Christians would disagree strongly because ...
This is important/significant because ...
Muslims would not completely accept ...
Belief X is very significant because ...
A negative way this might affect Buddhists is ...
X is very important to Y because ...
X is important, but Y is more important because ...
As an overall conclusion, I would say that ...
This means that ... implication ...
This might make them ...
This could mean ...
They could argue ...
As a result of this ...
This contradicts X because ...
I agree strongly because ...
A major benefit might be ...
I would partly agree ...

Evaluation: being able to make a judgement or measurement of: strengths, weaknesses, benefits, drawbacks, advantages, disadvantages, impact, importance, effects, veracity, agreement, disagreement
This therefore makes clear that ... because ...
They would also not be in favour ... but when ...
Rather than doing X, ... religious people should ... because ...
However, under certain circumstances X is acceptable because ...
If ... then ... because ...
This is the most popular stance because ...
Using this view it can be concluded ... because ...
One of the main criticisms is ...
There are other concerns/criticisms ...
The most prominent issue is ... because ...
This is effective/relevant because ...
This shows that in some cases X is acceptable/unacceptable to an extent because ...
To some this is perfectly reasonable because ...
A view of X would be that X is more effective than Y because ...
However doing X could increase the risk for Y because ...
It is morally wrong because ...
From a religious viewpoint this cannot ever be accepted because ...
Some argue that this is a valid view because ...
Due to this it could be argued that ...
It is not fair that X ... because ...
X is significant because ...
X has a significant influence because ...
This highlights the importance because ...
X is very significant because ...
X is a major influence because ...
This argument is not completely implausible because ...
This concern/objection/criticism can be justified on the grounds of ...
Taking this into consideration it may be reasonable to argue ... because ...
Just because X is true it does not mean that Y is true because ...
Despite this ...

Developing questions

Developing questions is a key teaching skill. Questions should provide an opportunity for candidates to achieve well and be:

- ◆ at an appropriate language level
- ◆ unambiguous
- ◆ brief
- ◆ open

Do not:

- ◆ assume that what sounds like a good question is a good question
- ◆ assume that candidates will understand commonly understood terms and phrases
- ◆ restrict the scope of acceptable answers

When preparing questions, teachers and lecturers should consider the following:

- ◆ What precisely am I looking for in the answer?
- ◆ How will this question guarantee that most candidates will access the right information?
- ◆ What other interpretations can be made for each word in the question?
- ◆ Does the stimulus serve any advantageous purpose for candidates? (If not remove it.)
- ◆ Is there a simpler way of asking for the same information?
- ◆ From the wording, is it clear what skills are being assessed?
- ◆ When the marking instructions have been written, how will candidates know from the questions that they are expected to write certain information?

Other useful checks include:

- ◆ Once a question has been written, the writer gives themselves one minute to state or write down the key points they would put in the answer. If the writer cannot do this, consider whether candidates would manage this in an exam.
- ◆ The writer or another member of staff writes an answer to each question.

The following guidance provides general advice on the characteristics of typical candidate responses. The question stems are examples and should not be viewed as mandatory. Further advice and guidance is provided in the specimen question paper and marking instructions and the coursework and marking instructions.

Level	Possible candidate responses	Possible question types
Higher	♦ extended response ♦ explanation and analysis required ♦ clear and structured expression of complex ideas ♦ extensive use of evidence ♦ able to consider different perspectives on an issue ♦ able to make judgements	♦ discuss ... ♦ to what extent ... ♦ how far ... ♦ assess ... ♦ critically examine ... ♦ comment on ...
National 5	♦ detailed response ♦ description and explanation required with some analysis ♦ clarity in expression of ideas ♦ insightful use of evidence ♦ use of appropriate exemplification	♦ describe, in detail, ... ♦ explain, in detail, ... ♦ to what extent ... ♦ how important ...
National 4	♦ limited response ♦ descriptions and brief explanations ♦ some clarity and structure in response ♦ limited use of evidence ♦ use of obvious exemplification	♦ describe ... ♦ comment on ...
National 3	♦ short response/outline ♦ ability to make limited use of simple evidence ♦ ability to consider consequences	♦ outline ... ♦ comment on ...

Appendix 3: skills audit

These tables cover the main focus of each topic in terms of skills, knowledge and understanding. The headings include some of the possible angles that could be taken in the skill areas. The boxes have been left blank so teachers and lecturers can use the tables to audit their coverage of skills, knowledge and understanding. It should be noted that the skills coverage does not apply equally to all of the course content.

Buddhism

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist											
	Factual information about beliefs and practices											
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices											
Analysis	Connections between beliefs											
	Connections between practices											
	Connections between beliefs and practices											
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices											
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith											
	Influences on beliefs and practices											

Evaluation		3 Marks of Existence	4 Noble Truths	Three Poisons	Beliefs about the Buddha	Three Jewels	Kamma	Samsara	Nibbana	Living according to the Eightfold Path	Five Precepts	Meditation and Puja
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals											
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community											
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community											

	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today											

Christianity

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist										
	Factual information about beliefs and practices										
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices										
Analysis	Connections between beliefs										
	Connections between practices										
	Connections between beliefs and practices										
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices										
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith										
	Influences on beliefs and practices										

Christianity

Evaluation		Nature of God	Humans in God's likeness	Freewill	Sin	Jesus as an incarnation of God	Death and resurrection of Jesus	Judgement	Heaven and Hell	Following Jesus' teaching and example	Worship
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals										
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community										
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today										
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other										
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual										
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community										
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today										
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself										
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual										
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community										
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today										

Hinduism

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
	Factual information about beliefs and practices												
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices												
Analysis	Connections between beliefs												
	Connections between practices												
	Connections between beliefs and practices												
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices												
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith												
	Influences on beliefs and practices												

Hinduism

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist													
Evaluation		Nature of God	Atma	Avidya	Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu	Stories about Krishna	Krishna and Arjuna	Karma	Samsara	Moksha	Dharma	3 Margas	Worship
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals												
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community												
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community												

	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today												

Islam

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
	Factual information about beliefs and practices												
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices												
Analysis	Connections between beliefs												
	Connections between practices												
	Connections between beliefs and practices												
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices												
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith												
	Influences on beliefs and practices												

Islam

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist													
Evaluation		Nature of God	Khaliphas	Freewill	Sin	Seal of the Prophets	Muhummad as a role model	Revelation of the Qur'an	Judgement	Al-Jannah Jahannam	Five Pillars	Living according to the Qur'an	Worship
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals												
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community												
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual												

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist

	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community												
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today												

Judaism

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist											
	Factual information about beliefs and practices											
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices											
Analysis	Connections between beliefs											
	Connections between practices											
	Connections between beliefs and practices											
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices											
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith											
	Influences on beliefs and practices											

Judaism

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
Evaluation		Nature of God	Dual nature of human beings	Freewill	Sin	Exodus	Covenant	Judgement	Messiah	Olam-Ha'ba	Living according to the Torah	Worship
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals											
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community											
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community											
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual											

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community											
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today											

Sikhism

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist													
	Factual information about beliefs and practices													
	Sources relating to beliefs and practices													
Analysis	Connections between beliefs													
	Connections between practices													
	Connections between beliefs and practices													
	Underlying ideas of beliefs and practices													
	Role of beliefs and practices in the faith													
	Influences on beliefs and practices													

Sikhism

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist														
Evaluation		Nature of God	Atma	Maya	Haumai	Five Evils	Following the Gurus' teachings	Guru Granth Sahib	Jivan Muhkti	Karma	Freewill	Sewa and Simran	Khalsa	Worship
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to individuals													
	Relevance of beliefs and practices to the community													
	Relevance of beliefs and practices in the world today													
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to each other													
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the individual													
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the community													
	Significance of beliefs and practices in relation to the world today													

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist														
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the religion itself													
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the individual													
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the community													
	Impact of beliefs and practices on the world today													

Morality and justice

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
Analysis	Principles behind religious viewpoints				
	Principles behind non-religious viewpoints				
	Examples of religious responses				
	Examples of non-religious responses				
	Comparison of viewpoints				
Evaluation		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
	Support for viewpoints				
	Criticism of viewpoints				
	Relevance of viewpoints				

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
	Impact of viewpoints				
	Issues with viewpoints				
	Development of personal views				

Morality and relationships

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
Analysis	Principles behind religious viewpoints				
	Principles behind non-religious viewpoints				
	Examples of religious responses				
	Examples of non-religious responses				
	Comparison of viewpoints				
Evaluation		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
	Support for viewpoints				
	Criticism of viewpoints				
	Relevance of viewpoints				
	Impact of viewpoints				
	Issues with viewpoints				
	Development of personal views				

Morality and global issues

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
Analysis	Principles behind religious viewpoints				
	Principles behind non-religious viewpoints				
	Examples of religious responses				
	Examples of non-religious responses				
	Comparison of viewpoints				
Evaluation		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
	Support for viewpoints				
	Criticism of viewpoints				
	Relevance of viewpoints				

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
	Impact of viewpoints				
	Issues with viewpoints				
	Development of personal views				

Morality and medicine

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
Analysis	Principles behind religious viewpoints				
	Principles behind non-religious viewpoints				
	Examples of religious responses				
	Examples of non-religious responses				
	Comparison of viewpoints				
Evaluation		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
	Support for viewpoints				
	Criticism of viewpoints				
	Relevance of viewpoints				

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
	Impact of viewpoints				
	Issues with viewpoints				
	Development of personal views				

Morality and conflict

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
Analysis	Principles behind religious viewpoints				
	Principles behind non-religious viewpoints				
	Examples of religious responses				
	Examples of non-religious responses				
	Comparison of viewpoints				
Evaluation		conflict: causes of war, types of war, Geneva conventions, justifications	modern armaments: weapons of mass destruction, smart weapons, conventional weapons	consequences of war: human cost, environment, economic	alternatives to war: sanctions, diplomacy, pacifism
	Support for viewpoints				
	Criticism of viewpoints				
	Relevance of viewpoints				
	Impact of viewpoints				

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist				
	Factual information about moral issues				
	Religious and non-religious viewpoints				
	Issues with viewpoints				
	Development of personal views				

Origins

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
	Factual information about the issues												
	Factual information about the responses												
Analysis	Beliefs behind religious viewpoints												
	Beliefs behind non-religious viewpoints												
	Examples of religious responses												
	Examples of non-religious responses												
	Comparison of viewpoints												

Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist													
Evaluation		role of creator	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	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
	Support for viewpoints												
	Criticism of viewpoints												
	Relevance of viewpoints												
	Impact of viewpoints												
	Issues with viewpoints												
	Development of personal views												

Existence of God

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist												
	Factual information about the issues												
	Factual information about the responses												
Analysis	Beliefs behind religious viewpoints												
	Beliefs behind non-religious viewpoints												
	Examples of religious responses												
	Examples of non-religious responses												
	Comparison of viewpoints												

Evaluation		Nature of God	Aquinas' cosmological argument	Counter arguments	Science and the cosmological argument	Viewpoints supporting the arguments	Viewpoints criticising the arguments	Paley's teleological argument	Counter arguments	Science and the teleological argument	Viewpoints supporting the arguments	Viewpoints criticising the arguments	Viewpoints criticising the arguments
	Support for viewpoints												
	Criticism of viewpoints												
	Relevance of viewpoints												
	Impact of viewpoints												
	Issues with viewpoints												
	Development of personal views												

Problem of suffering and evil

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist									
	Factual information about the issues									
	Factual information about the responses									
Analysis	Beliefs behind religious viewpoints									
	Beliefs behind non-religious viewpoints									
	Examples of religious responses									
	Examples of non-religious responses									
	Comparison of viewpoints									

Evaluation		Types of suffering and evil	Free will and responsibility	Determinism	Natural causes	Role of God	Nature of God	Challenge to the nature of God	Challenge to the existence of God	Theodicies
	Support for viewpoints									
	Criticism of viewpoints									
	Relevance of viewpoints									
	Impact of viewpoints									
	Issues with viewpoints									
	Development of personal views									

Miracles

KU	Skills, knowledge and understanding checklist													
	Factual information about the issues													
	Factual information about the responses													
Analysis	Beliefs behind religious viewpoints													
	Beliefs behind non-religious viewpoints													
	Examples of religious responses													
	Examples of non-religious responses													
	Comparison of viewpoints													

Miracles

Evaluation		divine intervention	fixed laws of nature	literal and non-literal explanations	miracles in nature (scriptural)	healing miracles (scriptural)	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	miracles in nature (non-scriptural)	healing miracles (non-scriptural)	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
	Support for viewpoints													
	Criticism of viewpoints													
	Relevance of viewpoints													
	Impact of viewpoints													
	Issues with viewpoints													
	Development of personal views													

Appendix 4: suggested resources

[date accessed: August 2017]

Buddhism

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/>

<http://www.religionfacts.com/buddhism>

<http://buddhanet.net/>

<http://www.clear-vision.org/Home/Home.aspx>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tilBs32zN7I>

Christianity

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/christianity/>

<http://www.religionfacts.com/christianity>

<http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

<https://www.bcos.org.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TG55ErfdaeY>

Hinduism

<http://www.hinduwebsite.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/hinduism/>

<http://www.vedantauk.com/>

<http://www.religionfacts.com/hinduism>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Nn5uqE3C9w>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhTpJxIji2I>

Islam

<http://www.religionfacts.com/islam>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/>

<https://www.islamreligion.com/>

<http://www.mcb.org.uk/british-muslims/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TpcbfxtdoI8>

Judaism

<http://www.religionfacts.com/judaism>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/judaism/>

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/>

<http://www.jewfaq.org/beliefs.htm>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=73Wslne-FKq>

Sikhism

<https://www.sikhs.org/summary.htm>

<http://www.religionfacts.com/sikhism>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/sikhism/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNPhLQmR5W0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qXhV3dMxSzE>

General religion

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/religion>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ge071m9bGeY>

<http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/news/religion/>

Moral Issues

Justice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFsBe7QIU4M>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxPKkqr2o4c>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8sXQALU0Lo>

<https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/death-penalty/>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/execution/readings/history.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/criminal-justice>

<http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/news/criminal+justice/>

Relationships

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hide-and-seek/201606/these-are-the-7-types-love>

<https://www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/overview>

<http://www.sexualhealthscotland.co.uk/sex-relationships/sex-law/age-of-consent>

<http://www.fpa.org.uk/factsheets/law-on-sex#grooming>

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/sex>

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/series/my-family-values>

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

Medicine

<https://cbhd.org/content/sanctity-life>

<http://www.eurostemcell.org/embryonic-stem-cell-research-ethical-dilemma>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/euthanasia/>

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/gmpinaction/index.asp>

<http://www.carenotkilling.org.uk/>

<https://www.dignityindying.org.uk/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPbis0Hggsg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jsdzdm49CPE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smuhAiyRbw0>

Global issues

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>

<http://www.globalissues.org/issue>

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/aid>

<https://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

<http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-35473279>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5qig9HIJ7k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9-4V3HR696k>

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/envi-eth/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/pollution>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-16391040>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/blog/2011/oct/31/six-natural-resources-population>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eTCZ9L834s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kaeyr5-O2eU>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_IJg4GEjj6M

Conflict

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/war/just/introduction.shtml>

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/justwar/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcBovmGZSPU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elejpHKddNg>

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/smart-bomb.htm>

<http://science.howstuffworks.com/smart-bomb.htm>

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/dec/02/the-moral-challenge-of-military-robots-arises-when-we-delegate-fighting-wars>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/war/against/pacifism_1.shtml

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/pacifism/>

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=terrorism+ted+talks

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qm56GeaBazY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKwIRRV6EiU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3g3QqxsSiz8>

Origins

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DmUiCweDic4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22IGbAVWhro>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WYQ3O8U6SMY&list=PLJicmE8fK0Ejk2MO8WlaGGw7j13_fbc0A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhHOjC4oxh8>

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_cznB5YZZmvAmeq7Y3EriQ

<https://answersingenesis.org/>

<http://www.reasonablefaith.org/popular-articles/science-and-theology>

<http://www.discovery.org/id/>

<https://infidels.org/library/modern/science/>

Existence of God

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MrMcMillanREvis>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2F_LUFleUk0

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7e9v_fsZB6A

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgisehuGOyY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogd-yh7orfo>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/existence-of-god-rational-arguments-mathematics-human-consciousness-a7739841.html>

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06608b.htm>

https://www.edge.org/conversation/rebecca_newberger_goldstein-36-arguments-for-the-existence-of-god

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/questionofgod/index.html>

Suffering and evil

<http://www.patheos.com/Library/Christianity/Beliefs/Suffering-and-the-Problem-of-Evil>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-small/why-evil-suffering-exist_b_2829441.html

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AzNEG1GB-k>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qilO5AJkvw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9pRzyioUKp0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4z9Y2u30Qs>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCGtkDzELAI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMNZQVyabiM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wI3cXbIIA0g>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2L1a7CHYVLg>

Miracles

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/miracles/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPdZPzE9oU0>

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/the-story-of-god-with-morgan-freeman/articles/what-do-the-worlds-religions-say-about-miracles/>

http://www.alevelphilosophy.co.uk/handouts_religion/MiraclesRoleSignificance.pdf

Administrative information

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History of changes to course specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	September 2017
3.0	Penalty for non-submission of resource sheet added to 'Evidence to be gathered' section. 'Reasonable assistance' section updated.	July 2019
4.0	One change made to 'Evidence to be gathered' section for the assignment: 'Candidates must specify the issue they are addressing. No marks will be awarded if the issue has not been stated.' Hyperlinks in Further information section have been updated. Some formatting and layout changes have been made to tables to improve accessibility. What you need to do differently ◆ Ensure candidates state their issue on their assignment. No marks will be awarded if this is not stated. ◆ Make sure you use the most-up-to-date version of this course specification and the coursework assessment task with candidates.	September 2025

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