

How to pass: Higher Philosophy

A guide for parents and carers



Essential information

What will my child study?	How can I support my child?
Knowledge and Doubt — Descartes and Hume: theories of knowledge, doubt, reason and experience, using the prescribed text extracts. Moral Philosophy — Utilitarianism, including Bentham and Mill, and Kant's ethics: explaining, applying and evaluating both approaches. Arguments in Action — Reasons and conclusions, argument structure, validity and soundness, deduction and induction, and fallacies.	Study support runs Tuesdays and Thursdays after school. All classroom resources are on Teams. Ask your child to show you the class materials, their latest feedback and the next step they are working on. If work is missing, confidence is low or Teams access is difficult, contact the class teacher through the school's usual route. Encourage attendance at study support.

How is the course assessed?

Assessment	Marks	Duration	2027 exam / school date
Paper 1 Essays on Knowledge and Doubt and Moral Philosophy	60	2 h 15 min	Tue 1 June 2027 09:00–11:15
Paper 2 Shorter questions across all three course areas	50	1 h 45 min	Tue 1 June 2027 12:30–14:15

The final grade uses the combined mark from both exams: 110 marks in total. Both are externally marked by Qualifications Scotland. There is no assignment.

Both Descartes and Hume must be prepared: the Knowledge and Doubt essay has no choice of question. Pupils also need both Utilitarianism and Kant, and regular practice with the prescribed texts.

Practical help at home

What can we do each week?	Where can we find reliable resources?
Agree short, regular study sessions. Focus on one point from teacher feedback and check that your child acts on it. Practise a timed essay plan and short questions. Revisit the set text extracts, explain the argument accurately, then assess its strengths and weaknesses. Try to develop your child opinions. A five-minute conversation: Ask "What is the conclusion, and what reasons support it?" Then ask whether the reasoning works.	Past papers and marking instructions Select the correct subject and level; follow teacher advice for older papers. Marked examples: Understanding Standards Achieve — requires an account. Ask the teacher about access.  Course guidance sqa.org.uk/sqa/47900.html Exam timetable sqa.org.uk/sqa/1439.html