ASSESSMENT and QUALIFICATIONS ALLIANCE

General Certificate of Education

Philosophy 5171/6171

Unit 5 Texts

Mark Scheme

2008 examination – June series

Mark schemes are prepared by the Principal Examiner and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation meeting attended by all examiners and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation meeting ensures that the mark scheme covers the candidates' responses to questions and that every examiner understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for the standardisation meeting each examiner analyses a number of candidates' scripts: alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed at the meeting and legislated for. If, after this meeting, examiners encounter unusual answers which have not been discussed at the meeting they are required to refer these to the Principal Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of candidates' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

Levels-of-Response Marking Criteria

Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria. Question-specific marking notes are provided for reference on the following pages.

Part (a) **Total: 14 marks**

(i) 2 marks: A full answer in accordance with the mark scheme.

1 mark: A partial answer.

0 marks: An incorrect response.

(ii) 4–6 marks: The candidate will select and apply relevant aspects of the passage in a directed and coherent manner. There will be few, if any, errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

1–3 marks: The candidate will select and apply some relevant aspects in a directed manner. Some points will be omitted and there may be lack of clarity at the lower end. Errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.

0 marks: No relevant aspects are selected.

(iii) 4–6 marks: The candidate will select relevant material which displays a directed evaluative element. The central requirement of the question will be addressed in a coherent and well-expressed form.

1–3 marks: Some relevant material will be selected but evaluation or criticism may be lacking or misdirected. There may be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

0 marks: No relevant knowledge will be displayed.

Part (b) **Total: 11 marks**

Knowledge and understanding of text, showing an awareness of the arguments developed within it. The ability to identify, select and apply ideas and examples employed in the development of the philosopher's position, which involves a capacity to interpret text.

9–11 marks: The candidate shows detailed knowledge and understanding of the positions, concepts and argument, displaying an ability to select and apply relevant material in a sustained, coherent and well-structured form.

6–8 marks: The candidate displays either a detailed knowledge and understanding of limited aspects of the relevant material or a wide-ranging but non-specific grasp of the material. They will select and apply relevant information, but not draw on it fully, or leave important details out. The answer will be coherent and direct, but could contain passages that are not expressed clearly, or fail to sustain relevance.

3–5 marks: The candidate displays either a basic knowledge and general understanding of the material, or a limited grasp of at least one topical idea, selecting some relevant as well as some irrelevant material - but some knowledge will be effectively deployed. The answer will only partially address the question and could contain passages that are expressed very badly. There may be much repetition or assertion.

0–2 marks: This response is seriously incoherent or fragmentary, displaying little or no relevant knowledge.

Part (c) **Total: 25 marks**

The ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate philosophical argument, showing awareness of weaknesses and strengths in the Philosopher's position, and demonstrating the ability to express and defend their own positions, offering reasoned and supported judgements, and appropriate examples. This engages candidates' knowledge and understanding and their ability to select and apply relevant textual information. The candidate's ability to organise her/his response coherently and in good English will also be assessed.

20–25 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse, interpret and critically assess the issues and relevant evidence, supporting their own judgements with reasoned and considered argument. The response will read as an integrated whole developing in a coherent and fluent way. There will be few, if any, errors of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

15–19 marks: The candidate demonstrates an ability to analyse and evaluate some relevant material and to form judgements relevant to the requirements of the question. The arguments and/or supporting material will lack the imagination, insight or penetration characteristic of the top band. There may be occasional errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation.

10–14 marks: The candidate will demonstrate a limited appreciation of the key issues. Supporting material may not always be well selected, but the ability to select some relevant material must be present. Lower marks may denote responses that are not always well integrated. Evaluation must be present but will tend to lack penetration and/or depth. Some errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be present.

5–9 marks: The candidate displays an ability to analyse and interpret a limited range of relevant material. Reasoned criticism will tend to be replaced by the assertion of positions. The question may be read as one-dimensional. There may be errors of reasoning and understanding. There may also be errors of spelling, grammar and punctuation.

0–4 marks: The candidate demonstrates little or no ability to interpret, analyse or evaluate relevant material. Responses are likely to be incoherent in relation to the requirements of the question. They may be fragmentary. Errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation may be intrusive.

1 *Text: Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics'* **Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify the conditions of every science performing its function well; *(2 marks)*

That it observes the mean *or* refers its products to the mean. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly explain why goodness is said to hit the mean; *(6 marks)*

When something is working well, including man, according to its function, it operates in conformity with the mean. (Analogy between goodness and crafts). Goodness is concerned with moral actions which are amenable to analysis in terms of the mean, examples – both feelings and actions. **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop **one** criticism of the Doctrine of the Mean. *(6 marks)*

(a) Some actions, eg murder, are wrong *absolutely*, regardless of any considerations of the mean.
(b) Candidates may question the notion of morality being compared with a kind of technique (arts/crafts) and/or something you improve by practising.
(c) Related to (b), the point may be developed in terms of the acquisition of good habits.
(d) The doctrine offers little in the way of practical guidance. This might be developed in connection with the mean being relative to the individual.
(e) The point in (d) might be developed in terms of the doctrine failing to solve moral dilemmas. An example may be used to illustrate this.
(f) The doctrine is incomplete or contrived. There are cases not covered by it. Aristotle has to invent names for vices to lend plausibility to the thesis.
(g) The question 'what kind of person ought I to be?' and 'what is right relative to me?' do not have the same implications for moral action.
(h) We blame people for *what* they do, not for what they do relative to themselves. **6 marks**

(b) Explain and illustrate Aristotle's concept of contemplation. *(11 marks)*

Contemplation involves theoretical reasoning by which Aristotle means the contemplation of eternal truths. This is what is highest in us – intellect is what typifies man – when developed fully it will be the highest virtue. A life of contemplation will be the happiest. We are more capable of continuous contemplation than any other activity – examples may be given of practical activities. The objects of contemplation are the highest objects of knowledge. Contemplation resembles divine activity. It is through contemplation that we are said to become god-like. We are also likely to be rewarded for this. Contemplation is mainly self-sufficient but needs some external goods as an accompaniment to bring happiness. Contemplation is an end in itself and he who participates in it is the most self-sufficient of men. **11 marks**

(c) Assess Aristotle's use of 'function' in his ethical theory. *(25 marks)*

The role of function is crucial in Aristotle's ethics. The proper function of man is that which is particular to him. He is operating best when this function is being performed to the highest degree. In the case of man, the function is that life which implies a rational principle. So a good man is one who performs that function well (reason). Formally, the function argument may be expressed as follows:

i. if X has a function, then its goodness resides in that function;
ii. if man has a function, then his goodness resides in performing that function well;
iii. as each of man's bodily organs has a function, then so does man;
iv. this function is man's distinguishing feature (peculiar to him) – rationality;
v. the chief good for man (or the good man) is a life following or implying a rational principle, ie the use of reason.

Critical Points

1. A man who performs his function well in Aristotle's sense need not be morally good, eg Eichman was a superb administrator but a moral disaster. There is no guarantee that Aristotle's 'good' man would be morally good.

2. Teleological arguments ultimately rest on religious assumptions. If not they rest on an anthropomorphic conception of nature which is likely to involve the pathetic fallacy in one form or another.

3. Step (iii) in the function argument is dubious and should be discussed. The legitimacy of the inference from bodily organs to man is questionable. Examples from the natural world may be used as a counter to the function claim.

4. To say that, eg the function of the heart is to pump blood, adds nothing factually to saying the heart causes pumping of the blood. To talk about 'function' is to assign a normative status to causation. This, however, is projected by us. This applies to all teleological features and merely reflects our own interests.

5. Aristotle's (functionally) good man has no more to do with moral goodness than a horse being a fine specimen of a racehorse has.

6. Attempting to identify one unique feature, rationality, results in false abstractions. It is too much like an 'essence' question. To claim that rationality is an exclusive feature might also be questioned. Is possession of rationality an all or nothing affair?

7. The function claim presents an alleged fact about man, but what follows *morally* from this? Candidates may raise the issue of facts and values.

8. Aristotle needs to distinguish different senses of 'good'. To say that something is good for us is not the same as saying it is morally good.

9. Candidates may attempt to show that some feature other than rationality is common to man alone. Care will be needed here as Aristotle can respond by claiming that many such features pre-suppose rationality and that is therefore fundamental.

25 marks
[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

2 *Text: Hume's 'An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding'*

Total for this question: 50 marks

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify what Hume is reconciling; *(2 marks)*

Liberty and necessity. (Free will and determinism) **2 marks**

(ii) outline Hume's account of liberty; *(6 marks)*

Liberty is not to be regarded as randomness or caprice. Liberty does not imply a lack of connection between motives and actions preventing inference from one to the other. This would be contrary to fact. Liberty is a power of acting or not acting according to the determinations of the will. Any account of liberty must be self-consistent and consistent with the facts. **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Hume's definition of 'liberty'. *(6 marks)*

(a) Hume neglects the issue of whether we could act differently in the same circumstances and this is an essential feature of any discussion of liberty.
(b) The absence of felt constraint is not sufficient for deciding whether an act was free. Counter-examples are available such as hypnotic trances and some drug-induced states.
(c) Should Hume have distinguished constraint and felt constraint? This would prompt the question of how we could know when unfelt constraints were operating. It would also be hard to square this with his original definition.
(d) Hume's account of liberty is closer to what we mean by social or political liberty rather than freedom of the will.
(e) Does Hume's account adequately address the issue of moral responsibility? Kant's 'ought implies can' might be invoked here. Candidates may also address the issue that praise and blame are not *just* parts of a causal chain; punishment and what is deserved.
(f) There is a problem with the status of the will. If, like any other empirical phenomenon, it is subject to causality, then how is reconciliation possible? If it is not, how is it to be accommodated within Hume's scheme of things?
(g) If human actions and events in the natural world are both characterised by uniformity, then Hume owes us an explanation of *why* we should feel differently about them.
(h) If a lunatic feels no constraints or compulsions are his actions free?

6 marks

(b) Explain and illustrate Hume's distinction between ideas and impressions. *(11 marks)*

Hume is providing an exhaustive account of the contents of the mind. Ideas and impressions are of the internal and external senses. They are sub-divisions of 'Perception'. There is a further sub-division of sensation (bodily senses) and reflection (passion, emotions, desires). Ideas and impressions can be simple or complex (examples like golden mountains are likely to figure). Ideas of imagination are explained in terms of novel combinations of simple ideas. There might be a contrast with ideas of memory which are more closely tied to order and sequence. Ideas are dependent on impressions (empiricism). They are distinguished in terms of force and vivacity. Impressions are the immediate objects of sense perception (theory of meaning implication). **11 marks**

(c) Assess Hume's account of the origin of the idea of necessary connection. *(25 marks)*

Hume examines the possible sources from which an impression of causal power, force, energy or necessary connection may arise: objects/events in the world, mind-body, mind-calling up ideas, God-operation of laws of nature. These are all rejected as all they yield is one thing following another. Therefore there must be some other principle of equal weight and authority that explains our acquisition of the idea. This principle is repetition. Custom/habit in relation to constant conjunction is the ultimate explanation. He provides two clear definitions of 'cause', (some may say three) one philosophical, the other psychological. Cause and effect are regarded as distinct. We have impressions of distinct objects/events but not of an extra something called 'necessity'. We experience conjunctions *not* connections. Credit should be given for good illustrative examples.

Critical Points

1. The account is inconsistent with Hume's epistemological position: no ideas without corresponding impressions. A clear exception has been made. This point might be made through a more general discussion of the copy principle. Repetition is not an impression.

2. How important is repetition? Causal connections can be asserted without repeated occurrences of them. Examples might include hand/fire or more sophisticated scientific ones, especially from astronomy.

3. Defence of Hume: although we might not have repeated experiences of astronomical objects/events, we do have such experiences of their physical constituents. We can therefore make similarity judgements.

4. The defence above is undermined by Hume underestimating the organisational features of the mind. Our ability to make similarity judgements not just based on similarity of observed appearance, to extrapolate, to isolate relevant respects, to make imaginative hypotheses puts Hume's passive recipient model of the mind under considerable strain.

5. The problem of how we can and do distinguish causal connections from accidental generalisations. Support for counter-factuals. Examples are likely to be given.

6. The definitions could be regarded as incompatible. There are examples that fit one, but not the other, or fit both without being an instance of causation (night and day). The alleged third definition suggests necessity in a way the other two do not.

7. How can Hume explain the persistence of causal connections? There might be a discussion of natural necessity.

8. The problem of simultaneous causation, examples such as the wind and the waves.

9. Hume could be accused of using the concept of 'cause' in his account of how we acquire it.

10. How does Hume's account operate in the case of what he calls 'secret causes'?

11. Is it correct to say that we do not observe causal power? Suppose you see someone hold a lighted match to some wood shavings – have you observed him causing a fire?

25 marks
[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

3 *Text: Mill's 'On Liberty'* **Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify the characteristic of those who choose their own life plan; *(2 marks)*

They use all their faculties. **2 marks**

(ii) outline Mill's case for encouraging individual development; *(6 marks)*

It increases one's value as a human being. Faculties other than that of ape-like imitation are used. The *way* we do things matters as well as the things themselves. The robot analogy shows that would be lost. There is a difference between a machine and a tree. Growth and development are features of a living thing. **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Mill's individualism. *(6 marks)*

(a) Utilitarian considerations should have led Mill to the position that it is not so much imitation that is wrong, but *what* you imitate.
(b) Similar to the above is the more general point that Mill's position contains the possibility of the clash of two absolute principles. An example to illustrate the point might be given.
(c) Mill seems to imply that we are all equally rational and responsible. Guidance might be needed in some cases – this might even be a pre-condition for individual development in certain cases.
(d) It might be argued that there are distinctions between advice/paternalism/guidance. Listening to others is to be encouraged as it respects their rationality.
(e) How practicable or desirable is steering your own course in an interdependent community? Examples of problems or of damage to the community interest might be given.
(f) Media and other influences are more prevalent today than in the nineteenth century. The vulnerable need some protection for their own good. This is preferable to their choosing disasters for themselves.
(g) Is each individual always the best judge of what is his/her own good?

6 marks

(b) Explain any **three** of Mill's arguments in support of free discussion. *(11 marks)*

There should be an outline of any **three** of the following:

(1) The infallibility argument – refusing to listen amounts to an assumption of infallibility. Particular credit should be given to candidates who realise that Mill's point is logical rather than psychological.

(2) Truth and utility. Mill regards such a distinction as dubious. The truth of an opinion is part of its utility and cannot be separated from it.

(3) The prevention of free discussion is harmful for both dissenters and receivers of opinion. The latter would have their rational or mental development impaired.

(4) The dead dogma argument. If opinions are not regularly discussed/questioned they will have the status of a dead dogma.

(5) The supplement argument.

(6) The heretical ideas argument. Mill's own examples may be used to illustrate points 4, 5 and 6. Christianity is likely to figure here.

11 marks

(c) Assess whether Mill's Harm Principle is socially and politically effective. *(25 marks)*

There should be a clear statement of the Harm Principle and its purpose. The purpose is to mark off the legitimate sphere of state interference in individual action. The state can only exercise power over an individual, against his will, in order to prevent harm to others. The state has no right to interfere in matters affecting the individual alone; he is sovereign over his own mind and body. Such a principle facilitates individual development. The only exceptions are those who do not possess mature faculties and barbarians.

Critical Points

(a) Can self-regarding and other-regarding actions always be distinguished? This could be discussed in relation to Donne's claim that no man is an island. Examples might be used to illustrate the difficulty.

(b) Mill does address the above difficulty with his reference to 'social acts'. If there is a risk of harm to others, then this will remove the act from the sphere of the purely individual. Can this defence be sustained in highly interdependent societies? There might be some level of description at which there is always a risk.

(c) There are problems with what is meant by 'harm'. Mill is clear that mere offence is not sufficient and neither are financial losses brought about through the operation of free market forces – fair competition. These issues might be pursued against the modern background, eg economic interdependency and current thinking on offence. Is there a distinction between causing offence and causing mental harm? Can there be general principles regarding what counts as an offence?

(d) Harm would have to involve psychological damage. This claim would involve the difficulty of establishing the causation and also elucidating what is meant by 'causation' in this area.

(e) Some abhorrent practices are abhorrent for what they involve rather than for the harm accruing to others. Should the state intervene in voluntary incestuous relationships? The generation of pornographic material on computers *need* not involve others at all. If

the Harm Principle excluded interference in cases like these, would it create too wide a gap between morality and law?

(f) Does the existence of borderline cases damage Mill's position? The use of virtually any concept can involve such cases without showing the concept to be inherently flawed. However, Mill's principle is essentially one of demarcation and if it fails here, then it is a failure.

(g) Is Mill consistent in his treatment of voluntary slavery? Mill thought there was something paradoxical in using one's freedom to relinquish one's freedom. There is a traditional problem here with liberalism, ie should liberty be used to deny liberty? Freedom of speech for certain racist groups might be discussed here. Mill's position on incitement may also be discussed. Does the immediacy of the danger of harm make a significant difference?

(h) Some of these difficulties might be resolved by an appeal to the utility principle. This might, however, involve a clash between two absolute principles.

(i) Applications of Mill's principle might be discussed, eg drug taking, intervention in assisted suicide, women's rights. The discussion should centre on issues like consistency, implications and consequences.

(j) Mill's exemptions: are barbarian nations easily identifiable? Is the expression 'maturity of faculties' free of ambiguity? Would we restrict it to children and idiots?

(k) There are activities which may or may not be classed as harm: setting a bad example, undermining values, creating undesirable role-models/images, seduction. How do we decide on these?

25 marks
[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

4 *Text: Nietzsche's 'Beyond Good and Evil'* **Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify **two** features said to belong to the essence of life; *(2 marks)*

Any two of the following: appropriating, injuring, overpowering, being harsh, forcing, incorporation or exploitation of the weak. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly describe how Nietzsche regards our social or moral principles; *(6 marks)*

If they deny the will to power, they deny life. At best they issue in a form of etiquette/manners. When sentimentality is stripped away, the will to deny life is revealed. Morals are undercut by the more fundamental, organic will to power. This holds even within a cohesive class; they treat others in the way they refrain from treating each other. This is governed by the will to power, not principles. Moral judgements are irrelevant to the will to power **6 marks**

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Nietzsche's position on exploitation. *(6 marks)*

(a) Nietzsche does not adopt a neutral approach. The characterisation of exploitation as fundamental is based on a one-sided diet of examples; other examples are available which could yield other and different conclusions.

(b) Nietzsche's position on exploitation implies pain and suffering for many. Is it not equally 'natural' for them to have moral principles for protection?

(c) It is not clear whether the exploiters are responsible for what they do or whether they are merely the instantiation of a natural, organic process. There is a strain here between what is natural and what is noble or right or admirable.

(d) Nietzsche's 'exploitation' is beyond good and evil – it undercuts morality – but his writing is too similar to a kind of moral crusade. Internal consistency issues could be raised.

(e) If Nietzsche is describing natural facts, what follows from them? He would deny any kind of *moral* status for exploitation, yet there is a clear sense in which he thinks it *ought* to prevail. The nature of this 'ought' is unclear, or why should we *care* about what is natural?

(f) It is not possible to advocate the treatment of others in the way he does without raising moral issues. The question of how we treat others is irreducibly moral. You cannot effect the vanishing of the moral dimension with descriptions of organic processes.

(g) It is not clear why such importance is placed on nature. It could be argued that our moral capacity and sensitivity distinguishes us from other features of the natural order and is admirable for *that* reason. Alternatively, it could be argued that because something is 'natural' is not in itself a sufficient reason for admiring/pursuing it. Credit should be given for counter-examples.

(h) If the exploitative state of affairs existed between individuals, classes and nations, we would have the conditions for chaos and universal misery. Would it not be 'natural' to oppose such a state? **6 marks**

(b) Outline and illustrate Nietzsche's account of 'noble values'. *(11 marks)*

There are scattered references throughout the text. Selections from the following material is likely to be used.

Social divisions are regarded as important for inner progress, a political hierarchical structure can be justified. The aristocracy (the noble) should use society. It should not be a function of it. Corruption occurs when the aristocracy gives way or surrenders its ground. The noble life involves the will to power, this is organic and beyond morality. Master and slave morality can be distinguished along with their characteristic features. The herd has inverted morality, re-defined moral terms. It is the noble who are the creators of value. Value distinctions are applied primarily to people and derivatively to actions but the history of moral philosophy has inverted this relation. There is a distinction between the creators of value (noble) and the receivers of value. Noble values can be seen in Nietzsche's admiration of Viking society: harshness. Noble values are applied consistently – harshness towards the self and others. There might be reference to the importance of reverence.

11 marks

(c) Assess whether Nietzsche was right to regard past philosophy as an expression of prejudice. *(25 marks)*

He is concerned with the foundation of Philosophy. He uses some *ad hominem* arguments but is also concerned with the language that leads philosophers astray. He questions the status of their writing. What they present as pure or objective knowledge or truth is tainted by their own self-interest and their own physiological states (cf Freudian rationalisation). The subject-centred grammar of our language involves the imposition of our interpretation on the world. Concepts, like causality, are invented not given. The real issue concerns the function of concepts: do they promote life? Among Nietzsche's targets are: Kant with the synthetic *a priori* and the categorical imperative, Plato's Theory of Forms, Stoicism, Idealism, Leibniz, Descartes' *cogito*, the traditional approach to the free-will problem and the status of the laws of nature.

Critical Points

1. The problem of Truth. There are a number of related issues here. Should we question the truth of Nietzsche's own claims or should we just ask what function they have? This is hard to reconcile with the way the claims are made. It is hard to reconcile neutrality with perspectivism. There is also the question of 'function' in relation to what?

2. Are past philosophers being blamed for attempting to attain the unattainable (pure truth) or for failing to attain it? Has Nietzsche attained it? There may be associated discussions of allegedly 'true' accounts of undermining truth.

3. Kant is criticised for arguing from possibilities to faculties (opium example) but Nietzsche uses similar arguments/strategies to justify talk about instincts and the will.

4. The limitations of *ad hominem* arguments. You do not dispose of a thesis by attacking or revealing the motives behind it. Was he attacking motives rather than principles?

5. Is Nietzsche himself subject to the structures of language? If he is not, does this involve a case of special pleading?

6. We are told that writings of past philosophers are *caused* by their physiological states. We are also told that causation is a fiction and an invented concept.

7. Realist arguments might be used to show that we have good, independent reasons for employing the linguistic categories and concepts we do.

8. There can be individual defences of the philosophers criticised. Descartes did address the nature of the self and what he said stands or falls depending on the quality of the argument used. Sense data theorists did attempt to secure uniqueness of reference.

9. How might Nietzsche deal with the case of a philosopher reaching a repugnant conclusion? Is this theoretically possible, and if so, how?

10. Nietzsche's treatment of traditional philosophical problems is itself problematic, eg it is too easy to dismiss 'the will' as a common prejudice – one should be suspicious of 'prejudices' which occur on a universal scale.

11. Nietzsche has limited his case to examples of philosophy which suit his purpose. Candidates may suggest counter-examples to the prejudice thesis. It is not obvious how Nietzsche would accommodate the study of logic, formal validity, etc.

25 marks

[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

5 *Text: Russell's 'The Problems of Philosophy'* **Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(a) (i) identify what Berkeley applies the term 'idea' to; *(2 marks)*

Anything which is immediately known. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly describe Russell's account of Berkeley's position; *(6 marks)*

In perceiving a physical object, all we immediately know are ideas (sense-data). The reality of the physical object consists of the ideas – *esse est percipi*. Its permanence is guaranteed through its being a perception in God's mind. We participate in such perceptions and this is why we see the object similarly. Minds and their ideas constitute reality. Nothing can be known outside of them.

6 marks

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Russell's treatment of Berkeley's idealism.

(6 marks)

(a) Although Berkeley uses the term 'idea' in the broad sense identified by Russell, it could be argued that he was not guilty of any straightforward conflation arising out of the use of the same word.
(b) Berkeley's position would have been rendered more intelligible had the historical Lockean background been provided.
(c) Russell neglects Berkeley's claim to be a more consistent empiricist. This could be linked to (b) above.
(d) Russell fails to do justice to Berkeley's claim that no object of experience is lost. (Dr Johnson - stone example).
(e) Russell fails to acknowledge that Berkeley avoids the linking problem characteristic of representative theories.
(f) Russell was right to emphasise the role of God in Berkeley's system, but was wrong to go on to claim that this constituted a limitation on the mind's power to know.
(g) Do we prefer the external world to God purely on the grounds of theoretical simplicity? The simplicity claim may itself be questioned. Is Russell's 'matter' as remote as Berkeley's God?
(h) How would Russell respond to phenomenalism? Where would consideration of simplicity lead?

6 marks

(b) Explain and illustrate Russell's solution to the problem of *a priori* knowledge.
(11 marks)

The problem is that *a priori* knowledge appears to legislate for experience and yet is known independently of experience. Kant's solution is rejected on the grounds that it fails to account for the necessity of such knowledge. Examples of *a priori* knowledge might be given. Russell's solution is that *a priori* knowledge is not concerned with mental or physical existents but with subsisting timeless entities known as universals. He thinks there must be such entities (argument using the notion of resemblance). He claims that all *a priori* knowledge deals exclusively with the relations of universals. The example from arithmetic elucidates the point. There is a distinction between universals and particulars, concepts and actual existents – examples are likely to be given to illustrate the distinction. The reality of both worlds. **11 marks**

(c) Assess whether Russell was right in distinguishing sense-data from physical objects.
(25 marks)

Russell's two main arguments for establishing the sense-data theory are the argument from phenomenal variability and the dead-star or time-lag argument. Our perceptions of the table vary according to perspective, but we cannot suppose that the table is actually changing, therefore what we experience are sense-data of the table rather than the table itself. Sense-data are private and transient, physical objects are public and more or less permanent. We infer the existence of the table as the cause of our sense-data. The existence of the external world has the status of an extremely probable hypothesis that explains the occurrence of the sense-data in an economic and systematic way. The sense-data theory is supported by the dead-star/time-lag argument: if the sun had exploded in the last seven minutes, we would still be seeing something, though *ex hypothesi* not the sun. The 'something' is a sense-datum of the sun.

Critical Discussion

1. The argument reifies appearances. The object appears differently but the appearances are not things. When you see a brown table appear light and dark brown in different conditions, there are not two *things*. Similar remarks apply by extension to double vision, bent sticks, etc.

2. Reid's standard objection: that objects appear differently under different conditions is exactly what we should expect. We can predict the differences. The fact that things behave in accordance with our expectations and predictions can hardly afford a reason for thinking we do not perceive them.

3. Although the colour of the table can vary, the variations are not fantastically different and calling it 'brown' is not to show undue favouritism.

4. The existence of the external world cannot be regarded as a hypothesis in any normal or scientific understanding of that term. Formulating hypotheses presupposes the world. No probabilities or calculation procedures could be applied to Russell's hypothesis.

5. If all we are aware of are sense-data, then we can never know that they are caused by physical objects; we can never know their causes are physical in nature.

6. How can sense-data be described as 'representations' without independent knowledge of what they represent? Russell uses the catalogue analogy, but we would not have the concept 'picture' if all we were aware of were pictures.

7. Russell tells us that he 'seems' to be sitting at his table without telling us what would count as 'really' sitting at the table. I must know what it is for something to really be the case in order to make guarded claims.

8. The dead-star argument requires premises about physical objects to get started – yet its conclusion would subvert such premises. It is stars considered as physical objects that explode.

9. Russell's alleged correspondence between objects in private and public space could only be known if we could stand outside both and this we could never do.

10. Ayer's objection to time-lag arguments in general: is it any more paradoxical to say that our eyes can see into the past than it is to say that we do not see physical objects?

11. Walking round the table and talk of perspectives and distances presupposes the perceiver's body as a reference point.

25 marks
[Maximum for question: 50 marks]

6 *Text: Ayer's 'Language, Truth and Logic'* **Total for this question: 50 marks**

NB The following marking notes are not prescriptive and do not constitute 'model answers'; they are intended as an 'aide-memoire' for Examiners. Marks should be awarded in accordance with the levels-of-response marking criteria.

(i) identify the reason why an infinitely powerful intellect would take no interest in mathematics; *(2 marks)*

It would know instantly all the implications of the definitions. **2 marks**

(ii) briefly describe Ayer's account of mathematics and logic; *(6 marks)*

All such propositions are analytic; they merely unfold definitions, they are tautologies. Mathematics is a system of rules for tautological transformations. We can only be surprised through our limited capacity for grasping the implications of the definitions. Error can occur for this reason. Creative aspects are explained in terms of our choice of symbolic definitions.

6 marks

(iii) suggest and briefly develop a criticism of Ayer's position on mathematical knowledge.

(6 marks)

(a) Standard criticisms of empiricist accounts of mathematics. Mathematics is not obviously analytic in the sense that 'a puppy is a young dog' is. '12' does not *mean* '8+4' any more than '6+6'. There could be references to Kant.
(b) Does Ayer's account do justice to the ability of mathematics to provide information about the world or its use in theoretical physics?
(c) Ayer's account is too conventionalist. It fails to account for 'discovery' or explains discovery in terms of invention. Wile's proof of Fermat's Last Theorem was not available in Fermat's time due to our lack of *knowledge* or the state of our knowledge.
(d) Can the meaning of a term be equated with knowing all its consequences? This might imply that we do not properly understand a term without knowing all its consequences. This seems to make our knowledge provisional or indeterminate. It seems, however, that we must *know* what a prime number is before we can understand, say, Goldbach's conjecture.
(e) How would Ayer account for a mathematical conjecture that was shown to be false by use of an inductive method? eg $2^{2^{-n+1}}$ is prime was shown to be false by the discovery of a number generated by the expression that was not prime.

6 marks

(b) Explain and illustrate Ayer's solution to the problem of perception. *(11 marks)*

There should be some reference to Ayer's conception of Philosophy. Philosophical questions are essentially requests for definitions, ie definitions in use. The problem of perception is a request for such a definition: what does it mean to talk about physical objects? Ayer's answer is essentially linguistic. Talk about physical objects can be translated into talk about sense contents, eg 'there is a table' can be translated into 'I am experiencing a hard, brown colour patch.' The physical object symbols are replaced by sense content symbols. The resulting sentence is equivalent in the sense of having the same entailment properties. Statements about unperceived objects are translated into hypothetical statements about sense contents. Ayer is not saying that the physical object is composed of sense contents, rather physical objects are logical constructions from sense contents. **11 marks**

(c) Assess whether Ayer's verification principle achieves its purpose. *(25 marks)*

The verification principle states that for a proposition to be meaningful, it must be either analytic or empirically verifiable. There must be some sense experience relevant to determining the truth/falsity of a non-analytic proposition. Verification must be possible in principle if not in practice. The purpose of the principle is to distinguish sense from nonsense. Metaphysical and religious propositions are dismissed as meaningless – strictly they are not propositions but pseudo-propositions. Ethical statements are ejaculations or expressions of feeling and are said to arouse action in others. Ayer dismisses conclusive verification.

Critical Points

1. Religion and ethics (aesthetics) should have been treated as counter-examples to the all-encompassing claims of the verification principle. Such areas of discourse are practised and that amounts to their having meaning. You cannot simply *assume* the principle is right and reject whatever does not comply with it. This would not be a neutral approach.

2. There are inherent problems in formulating the principle. It is non-analytic and is not verified through sense-experience. It could therefore be argued that it fails within its own terms or is self-defeating.

3. If verificationism is a meaningful hypothesis, then counter-examples must at least be possible in principle. If not it degenerates into a stipulation that a certain group intend to use the word 'meaningful' in this way.

4. Could the principle be regarded as analytic? There are problems with this move:
   (i) it is not true solely by virtue of the meaning of its terms;
   (ii) it is not self-contradictory to deny it;
   (iii) it makes sense to talk of *possible* counter-examples.

5. Later Wittgenstein-type criticisms, meaning is guaranteed by usage. Eliciting reactions, responses, forming justifications, playing a role in a system are sufficient for establishing meaning.

6. The above point might be illustrated with examples from religious discourse and the claim that they constitute a language game. Meaning cannot be regarded as an absolute, laid down in advance of human practices.

7. The verification principle can be accepted as an account of factual meaning, but this does not imply that factual meaning is the only meaning. Alternatively, it fails as an account of factual meaning, eg hypothesis of the dancing toys, with the possible rejoinder that this, or similar, is not a genuine hypothesis.

8. Positivists have traditionally supplied examples from metaphysical writings to illustrate what they mean by nonsense. 'The absolute enters into itself' is one such example. However, this project is made more convincing by removing such examples from their context.

9. The principle allows in nonsense. Given any statement 'P', and an observation statement 'Q', 'Q' follows from 'P' and 'if P then Q' without following from 'if P then Q' alone. This will hold regardless of what we put in for 'P'.

10. Ayer fails to do justice to what Wittgenstein referred to as 'deep' nonsense. There is a difference between the mystical and, eg 'all mimsy were the borogroves'.

11. Some kind of verification may be relevant to religious discourse, eg eschatological verification. Some kind of sense experiences may also be relevant, eg a theist's recognition of the problem of evil as a problem.

12. There is standard difficulty with statements about the past, or distant past, and verification.

13. There may be some discussion of Ayer's position on value judgements but this needs to be focused on the central issue as verificationism does not force Ayer into the emotivist camp.

14. If statements about my mental states and the mental states of others have different verification procedures, then do words like 'pain', 'depression', etc have two different meanings? This seems to be an implication of identifying meaning with verification.

25 marks
[Maximum for question: 50 marks]