



ASSESSMENT and
QUALIFICATIONS
ALLIANCE

Mark scheme

June 2003

GCE

Philosophy

Unit PLY2

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AS PHILOSOPHY UNIT 2

Candidates must answer one question.

1

Total for this question: 45 marks

- (a) *Identify one similarity and one difference between emotivism and prescriptivism. (6 marks)*

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **one** similarity and **one** difference between emotivism and prescriptivism. Similarities: both are non-cognitive or ‘subjective’ positions; holding, ultimately, that morality is a matter of personal decision; we are the source of value; there are no moral experts; without an evaluative add-on from us it is difficult to connect an external realm of value to human action. Differences: prescriptivism places more emphasis on reason whereas emotivism stresses feelings; in prescriptivism moral thinking involves a search for principles we can commit to and universally prescribe whereas emotivism has little to say about the genesis of our own moral values; in prescriptivism moral language is seen to guide action through commending whereas in emotivism moral language is seen to influence action through its expressive and persuasive nature. At the lower end of the mark-band either both explanations will be accurate but very brief or several similarities and differences are identified.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge and partial understanding either by accurately identifying a similarity *or* a difference or both are identified but description is confused. Generalised accounts of ‘philosophers who hold these views’, in which either the similarity or the difference is not clear, should be placed in this band.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

- (b) *Explain and illustrate the cognitivist view that we can know moral facts. (15 marks)*

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the cognitivist view that we can know moral facts. Answers in this band will recognise that the question is meta-ethical and focus on cognitive positions: intuitionism, moral facts are intuited through a moral ‘sense’; realism or descriptivism, moral facts exist in virtue of non-moral facts. Reward good versions of answers rooted in ‘normative’ theories (e.g. a utilitarian knows that ‘x’ is right because ‘x’ maximises happiness) at the bottom of this band.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding by offering a limited or confused account of cognitivist view that we can know moral facts.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Selects, or constructs, a relevant illustration of cognitivist view that we can know moral facts. Candidates may construct their own examples or borrow from relevant philosophers. The analogy with aesthetics might be used.

- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, a relevant illustration to provide a clear account of cognitivist view that we can know moral facts.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, an illustration to provide a partial account, poorly focused or lacking detail and precision, of cognitivist view that we can know moral facts. Responses in this band may be characterised by detailed exposition and brief illustration. Reward good illustrations of normative theories at the bottom of this band.
- 1-3 Selects an illustrative example to provide a basic, sketchy and vague account of the cognitivist view that we can know moral facts or an illustration is given but application with regard to how we can know moral facts is spurious or tangential.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

(c) *Assess the view that we can't get an 'ought' from an 'is'.* (24 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is'. It is likely that there will be references to Hume but this isn't essential for top band answers providing that there is a clear account of the problem itself, that factual statements do not entail moral conclusions and/or that moral conclusions cannot be legitimately inferred from factual statements. Some candidates may present this as one of the issues dividing non-cognitivism from cognitivism in ethics.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is'.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Candidates are likely to consider positions which are critical of the view in which case candidates:

- could draw from the realist position generally, that morality is 'attached' to facts connected to 'wants that all men have' and which contribute to human flourishing
- or from specific debates (e.g. Foot v Hare) and specific arguments within debates (e.g. whether it is possible to – morally – commend courage without saying 'let me be courageous')
- or from specific attempts to cross the is-ought gap, e.g. Searle on promising
- or from reference to first order theories, utilitarianism, deontology, virtue theory and relevant 'facts' underpinning first principles.

It is possible that 'the view' could be defended without raising the above points, in which case expect material selected for discussion:

- either to draw from practical ethics in attempting to show that, whatever the facts, a range of moral choices are possible
 - or to discuss the role of choice in creating value more generally, perhaps with reference to certain texts (e.g. Sartre).
- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, detailed analysis of philosophical debates concerning the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is'.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is'.

- 1-3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague, explanation of the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is' or some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to the is-ought gap.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Candidates are likely to adopt one of two approaches:

- We can't value anything we like. Moral reasoning is constrained by moral facts or a moral reality external to us. If this is not so we are left with the difficulty of delineating the sphere of morality (as well as other difficulties). In virtue of the facts of the case, e.g. facts about flourishing, we can reach moral conclusions. So, there is not an unbridgeable gap between is and ought.
 - Morality is rooted in our desires and attitudes rather than being entailed by whatever the facts of the case are taken to be. It is not possible to go from is to ought without an evaluative add-on from us. Moreover, in acknowledging our values we are also frequently beginning from a universal ought statement (we ought to do that which contributes to individual or social well-being, keeping promises contributes to individual and social well-being, so we ought to keep our promises) and going from ought to ought.
- 7-9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is' and advances a clear position.
- 4-6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is' but is either implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches or asserted with limited supportive explanation.
- 1-3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of some arguments concerning the view that we can't derive 'ought' from 'is' in which a view is described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or argument is confused.
- 0 No relevant philosophical insights.

2

Total for this question: 45 marks

- (a) *Briefly distinguish between ideal and hedonistic utilitarianism.* (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the difference between ideal and hedonistic utilitarianism: hedonistic utilitarianism views happiness/pleasure or the absence of pain/suffering as the sole end whereas ideal utilitarianism recognises other goods/virtues as contributing to overall well-being. The distinction may involve discussions of Bentham and Mill and/or illustrative examples although good explanations should earn full marks without this. Accurate but briefly stated definitions should be placed at the bottom of this band. No marks are available for discussions of respective strengths and weaknesses.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge and understanding of the difference between ideal and hedonistic utilitarianism by e.g. providing an accurate account of one and an inaccurate account of the other or through providing a confused account of the difference.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

- (b) *Explain and illustrate **one** criticism of a deontological approach to ethics.* (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

Deontological ethical positions refer to acts which are right or wrong in themselves; acts which are performed out of a sense of duty: what is dutiful may be decided through reason or may be established by some ‘given’ moral standard; the motivation for the action is in accordance with a commitment to an absolute duty. The motivation or intention behind the act is important, a right act is one performed through duty and good will. Given the wording of the question, understanding may be *implicit* in the explanation of the selected criticism.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of one criticism of deontology. At the bottom of the band expect to see candidates making accurate points but not clearly relating these to **one** criticism.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding e.g. description is limited, explanation is partially correct but there are errors of understanding.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Illustrative examples, whether borrowed from texts or the candidates own, should clarify **one** of the following or equivalent points: it is overly strict, more moral agents can’t meet these demands; too focused on reason, emotions also guide conduct; an inadequate guide to actual conduct, on what directions we should take; the problem of what to do when duties conflict; should we never consider consequences *or* what the consequence would be if maxims were universally observed; is there a constraint on what can be universalised?

- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, a relevant example and applies this to provide a clear illustration of **one** criticism of deontological arguments. Illustrative material is present but it isn’t clear which critical point is being illustrated.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, points or examples to provide a partial illustration, e.g. focused on listing and explaining criticisms rather than illustrating one criticism, or provides an

- illustration lacking detail and precision of one criticism of deontological arguments.
Responses in this band may be characterised by detailed exposition and brief illustration.
- 1-3 Selects at least one point or example to provide a basic, sketchy and vague account of a criticism of deontological arguments or a relevant illustration is given but application is tangential (e.g. indistinguishable from utilitarianism).
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

(c) *Assess virtue theory.* (24 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

A relevant knowledge base could be selected from Plato, Aristotle, Foot, Williams, MacIntyre or equivalent source *or* from a consideration of the role of particular virtues, for example, temperance, justice, courage, wisdom and Christian virtues (faith, love etc.) in questions concerning how we should be.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of virtue ethics. At the lower end of this band this will be limited in scope or depth.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of virtue ethics, e.g. discussions which drift into accounts of the ‘virtue’ of following some other first order theory such as the virtue of doing your duty.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

There should be clear focus on, and understanding of, virtue ethics, its strengths and weaknesses, possibly with reference to the strengths and weaknesses of other first order theories. Thus,

- In virtue ethics the focus is on dispositions, moral education and developing moral character; the interest is in questions concerning how we should live/how we should be rather than questions concerning particular moral problems. Happiness (eudaimonia) is the purpose of life, human well-being and flourishing. So, morality is connected to how we are, to what we do, rather than to a consideration of rules and principles.
 - This may be presented as anti-theoretical *or* there may be discussions about why learning rules and principles do not equip us for moral action. Alternatively, it may be connected to moral realism – meta-ethical issues concerning what moral language does and what morality is about.
 - Various problems include whether it is more or less virtuous to overcome vices/temptations or to not have them in the first place; whether ‘natural’ dispositions have more value than e.g. adherence to duty for duties sake; in questions concerning ‘why be virtuous’, whether it pays to be virtuous or whether virtue is its own reward; moral weakness etc.
- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, analysis of virtue ethics.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of virtue ethics.
- 1-3 Selects and applies some points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague explanation of virtue ethics or some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to virtue ethics.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Evaluation is likely to follow from, and be present in, points selected for discussion. Beyond this:

- It may be acknowledged that there has been an increasing interest in virtue theory over the last forty years – this is likely to be linked to dissatisfaction with alternative approaches – and argued that it is useful to focus on virtue as a basis for ethics.
- Other arguments against virtue ethics that some candidates are likely to suggest are alleged elitism and/or the difficulty some may face in developing moral character; whether virtue theory is essentialist or relativist; whether it is a complete theory (e.g. don't we also need recourse to rights).

- 7-9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning virtue ethics and advances a clear position.
- 4-6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning virtue ethics but is either implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches or asserted with inadequate supportive explanation.
- 1-3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of at least one argument concerning virtue in which a view is described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or argument is confused.
- 0 No relevant philosophical insights.

3**Total for this question: 45 marks**

- (a) *Briefly explain the view that faith is opposed to reason.* (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the view that faith is opposed to reason. Fideism: faith, which is contrary to reason, is necessary for religious belief; or the more moderate view that faith comes first and may lead to understanding if and when eventually supported by reason. Faith may be described as belief without justification; a special cognitive state (given through the grace of God); involving insights which are sufficiently underdetermined to allow for freely given assent, trust and commitment; a form of life, or language game, or way of being. At the lower end of the mark-band expect either an accurate but very brief account or a good account of faith which neglects an explicit contrast with reason.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge and partial understanding by identifying and accurately describing an aspect of faith, or faith and reason are referred to but explanation is confused or tangential.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

- (b) *Outline and illustrate two characteristics of a religious experience.* (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

There should be a clear focus on **two** characteristics which distinguish a religious experience from other experiences – e.g. an experience caused by God, an experience possessing certain phenomenological properties, a life-changing experience.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **two** characteristics which distinguish a religious experience from a non-religious experience, probably through discussion of an appropriate experience.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding by offering a limited or confused account of at least one characteristic typically involved in establishing that a given experience is religious.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Selects (or possibly) constructs a relevant experience to illustrate the characteristics employed in distinguishing it as religious as opposed to non-religious experience. For example, aspects of the immediate and direct nature of religious experience (e.g. its felt quality, the feeling of awe, reverence, exhilaration, fascination etc.) or of the impact of religious experience (e.g. visible signs of changed behaviour). There may be references to biblical examples.

- 7-9 Selects (or constructs) a relevant experience, providing a clear exposition of the qualities of the experience and a clear illustration of **two** characteristics or qualities which demonstrate that the experience is religious.
- 4-6 Selects (or constructs) an experience to provide a partial illustration, poorly focused or lacking detail and precision, of at least one characteristic or quality which demonstrates that the experience is religious. Responses in this band may be characterised by detailed exposition and brief illustration.

- 1-3 Selects an experience, or issues are raised, to provide a basic, sketchy and vague account of the characteristics of religious experience **or** an account of an experience is given but application with regard to religious experience is spurious or tangential.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

(c) *Assess whether religious language is meaningful.* (24 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

This is intended to be a reasonably open question in which candidates might adopt any of the following approaches:

- The (logical positivist) view that it isn't: religious language is meaningless, or literally insignificant, because it expresses neither analytical truths nor verifiable experiential propositions.
- The view that it is: it represents and expresses commitment to a set of cultural, moral and spiritual values. This might be connected to aspects of faith (commitment, trust etc.) and/or to religious experience, seeing 'reality' in a particular way, forms of life and language games.
- A comparing and contrasting approach incorporating both of the above.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of at least one position concerning whether religious language is meaningful.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of at least one position or aspects of a debate in which there is a focus on whether religious language is meaningful.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Discussion could draw from the following:

- Illustrations/examples of religious language and/or, if language is interpreted broadly, of religious symbols.
- The problem of verification (or falsification) and explanations of why religious expressions are unverifiable (or why they cannot be falsified). The assault on metaphysics more generally.
- Explanation of how the meaning of language is given by its use within a language game or form of life.

- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, detailed analysis of whether religious language is meaningful.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, either narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of whether religious language is meaningful.
- 1-3 Selects and applies some relevant points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague, explanation of whether religious language is meaningful **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to whether religious language is meaningful.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

A range of positions might be argued:

- Language is meaningful to the extent that it employs concepts derived from experience and expresses propositions which can be confirmed through experience. Religious

language does neither and is not meaningful. (There may be some critical discussion of verification, for example via the notion of eschatological verification.)

- Language is meaningful in and through its recognisable uses and/or functions. The functions of sacred terms, signs and symbols – to inspire awe, express commitment, reaffirm value, define purposes and goals etc. – are meaningful to those playing a religious language game and committed to a religious form of life.
- Is it a matter of either/or? The meaning of religious language is given by commitment to a form of life *and* by epistemological and ontological claims.

- 7-9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of arguments concerning whether religious language is meaningful and advances a clear position.
- 4-6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of arguments concerning whether religious language is meaningful but is either implicit in a juxtaposition of points/theoretical approaches or asserted with limited supportive explanation.
- 1-3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of some arguments concerning religious language in which a view is described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or argument is confused.
- 0 No relevant philosophical insights.

4

Total for this question: 45 marks

- (a) *Briefly explain **one** difference between the ontological and teleological arguments for the existence of God.* (6 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **one** difference between the ontological and teleological arguments for the existence of God. The ontological argument for the existence of God is an attempt to establish His existence without recourse to empirical evidence from a purely formal consideration of the concept of God. It is an attempt to establish that God is a necessary being. It is an a priori argument. In contrast, the teleological argument is probabilistic. It is an a posteriori argument drawing from features of the world and particularly evidence of design. An argument proceeding from effects to causes. Answers at the bottom of this band will cite several differences, rather than one, through accurately outlining both arguments.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic or partial knowledge and understanding of one difference between the ontological and teleological arguments for the existence of God. Either through describing both arguments but leaving differences implicit or by very briefly stating a difference. At the bottom of this band only one of the arguments will be accurately stated.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

- (b) *Outline and illustrate **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God.* (15 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

Criticisms are likely to be drawn from:

- Existence is not a perfection, property, predicate.
- Necessity does not apply to existence.
- It is not possible to build bridges from the conceptual to the real.
- It has absurd consequences (the overload objection).
- It is inappropriate to use logic to demonstrate the existence of God – His existence is revealed experientially and our experiences of God do not include experiences of His logical necessity.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God e.g. a range of criticisms are all briefly listed so that *one* isn't developed or is blurred into another.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

The selected criticism should be illustrated with an appropriate example or examples. Expect references to perfect islands, unicorns and super-unicorns, the devil (possibly) *or* to the grammar of subject-predicate statements.

- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, a relevant example and clearly illustrates **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God.

- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, an example or examples to provide a partial account, lacking detail and precision, of **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God. Answers in this band may be characterised by detailed exposition rather than illustration. At the bottom of this band more than one criticism may be explained/illustrated.
- 1-3 Selects at least one point or example to provide a basic, sketchy and vague account of **one** criticism of the ontological argument for the existence of God **or** a relevant illustration is given but application is tangential.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

(c) *Assess the cosmological argument.* (24 marks)

Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)

The universe's existence is offered as proof of God's existence. Dimensions of the argument are:

- God as prime or unmoved mover – explaining why there is motion, why things happen.
- God as first cause – avoiding an infinite regress in the casual chain of events.
- God as sufficient reason – the necessary, non-contingent, basis of why something exists at all.

- 4-6 Demonstrates precise knowledge and understanding of the cosmological argument.
- 1-3 Demonstrates basic knowledge or partial understanding of the cosmological argument.
- 0 No relevant philosophical knowledge and understanding.

Selection and Application (9 marks)

Some of the following, or equivalent, issues will be discussed:

- Is *rest* the natural state of things and is it necessary to explain *motion*?
- We should treat the universe as a 'brute fact'. Viewing it as God's creation offers us no more than viewing the universe as something which just happened to happen. Is the universe less intelligible because not fully explained?
- Is the argument contradictory? Everything is caused *and* there is a first cause.
- What meaning can be given to 'cause of itself' or 'necessary being'? Why look for a 'sufficient reason'? Is it possible to explain the *why* of natural order by referring to something outside of natural order? Is logical argument compatible with the a posteriori nature of the argument?
- Every event might have a cause but does it follow that the series of events has a cause?
- Does the argument satisfy psychological needs rather than valid reasoning?
- Does science offer a more plausible explanation of the origins of the universe? Is the first cause God?
- Is it the God of the theists?

A good account of Hume's objections, and replies to Hume, will cover a range of points.

- 7-9 Selects, or constructs, relevant points and examples and applies these to provide a clear, analysis of the cosmological argument.
- 4-6 Selects, or constructs, some relevant points and examples to provide a partial analysis, narrowly focused or lacking detail and precision, of the cosmological argument.
- 1-3 Selects and applies some points to provide a basic, sketchy and vague explanation of the cosmological argument **or** some relevant points feature among many irrelevant points in a tangential approach to the cosmological argument.
- 0 No relevant philosophical points.

Interpretation and Evaluation (9 marks)

Evaluation is likely to be present:

- Through assessment of (critical) points selected for discussion i.e. an evaluation of the quality of the argument.
- Through assessment of the conclusions licensed by the argument.

7-9 Demonstrates a critical appreciation of the cosmological argument and advances a clear position.

4-6 Evaluation is present within an exposition of the cosmological argument and various criticisms but is either implicit in a juxtaposition of points or asserted with inadequate supportive explanation.

1-3 Demonstrates a simple and basic appreciation of the cosmological argument by offering an account in which a view is described, or points are listed or asserted without justification, or argument is confused.

0 No relevant philosophical insights.