



## **General Certificate of Education**

# **Philosophy 1171**

## *Specification*

**PHIL2**

# **Report on the Examination**

## *2010 examination – January series*

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# PHIL2

## General Comments

There were some very promising and mature responses to some questions. The main problem was one of consistency. Candidates found it difficult to respond with consistent accuracy and depth across both parts of both questions. There was a reasonable grasp of philosophical concepts and a sound awareness of the issues involved. The evaluative component of the part (b) questions was less well handled. Arguments were stated rather than explored.

### Question 1

- (a) This question was competently handled. Some confusion was present in distinguishing illusion from perceptual variation. Most candidates, however, were able to discuss two of the options with illustrations. The precise link with sense-data theory was sometimes left implicit.
- (b) This question elicited some full responses and was generally well handled. The understanding of Berkeley could have been sharper. The best responses were aware of Locke's theory of material substance and Berkeley's response to it.

### Question 2

- (a) This question was done well. Most candidates gave illustrations to distinguish the options from tolerance. Responses could have been more detailed.
- (b) This question was less convincing. Too many responses were content to talk about Mill's general position without relating it to the issue of 'promoting'. Although there was a sound grasp of the issues, the critical discussion was not fully developed and sometime not clearly directed.

### Question 3

- (a) Candidates struggled to find two reasons in the part (a). One was stated competently, but the second was often underdeveloped or misdirected. Some candidates appealed to song lyrics.
- (b) Answers were encouraging. There were mature discussions of truth in art. Plato, Kant, Aristotle and Croce were well understood. Candidates often illustrated their responses with well-chosen examples from the arts. The use of examples was often sophisticated and clearly directed.

### Question 4

- (a) Responses to part (a) were rather disappointing. There were few references to conceptual schemes determining experience. Too many candidates talked about the design argument and the problem of evil. Wisdom in parable and Hick's celestial city were frequently cited without being fully exploited.
- (b) This question was generally done well. There were some sophisticated responses which set out the problem in a clear, logical manner. Alternative theories were well understood.

The free-will defence was frequently discussed. Flew and Mackie's criticisms were sometimes conflated.

**Question 5**

- (a) This question caused a number of problems. Some candidates did not appear to know what compatibilism is. Some who knew what it is found it difficult to provide clearly directed criticisms. There were too many criticisms aimed at determinism or libertarianism in general. Examples were not always well chosen.
- (b) Part (b) was also a cause for some concern. Responses tended to be very general discussions lacking in philosophical precision and detail. There were few discussions which were clearly directed at the notion of responsibility. Candidates were often aware of Kant's 'ought implies can' without being aware of its full implications. Concepts of praise and blame were mentioned but not fully drawn on in relation to standard philosophical positions. There were some good discussion of Sartre which demonstrated a sound grasp of some of the issues.

**Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.