Version 1.0

General Certificate of Education
June 2010

GCE Philosophy PHIL3

Unit 3

Key Themes in Philosophy

Final

Mark Scheme

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.

Set and published by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334).
Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX

GCE PHILOSOPHY UNIT 3 GENERIC MARK SCHEME

	Knowledge and Understanding	Interpretation, Analysis and Application	Assessment and Evaluation
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
Level 5	**13–15 marks** Answers in this level provide a comprehensive, detailed and precise account of philosophical arguments, positions and concepts relevant to the question, demonstrating a full understanding of the issues raised.	**13–15 marks** A range of points are selected to advance discussion. Points made and examples used are pertinent and judiciously selected; the nuances of the question will be specifically addressed. Answers in this level critically analyse the range of points and examples selected for discussion to advance a clear, directed and analytical treatment of the issue. The implications of positions discussed are considered and explored.	**17–20 marks** Reasoning and argumentation are effective, penetrating and expressed with some insight and sophistication. The construction of argumentation is relevant and sustained and reads as a coherent and integrated whole. Answers in this level advance a clear evaluative judgement: at the lower end of this level this may consist of a balanced summary of the strengths and weaknesses of positions or points evaluated throughout. The response is legible, employing technical language accurately and appropriately, with few, if any, errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The response reads as a coherent and integrated whole.
Level 4	**10–12 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** provide a clear, detailed and precise account of a relatively narrow range of positions and arguments relevant to the question so that, while the response is clearly focused, detailed and precise, it is not comprehensive and some avenues remain unexplored. ***Or*** the range of points selected and applied may be quite full but descriptions of philosophical positions, arguments and concepts may lack some detail. Understanding, while good, may not always be precise.	**10–12 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** critically analyse a relatively narrow range of relevant points and examples to provide a clear, detailed and pithy analysis of philosophical arguments and positions. ***Or*** consider a wide range of material without fully exploiting it, so that some points are not analysed in detail or with precision and some implications are not explored. Critical discussion is focused and generally sustained although some points may not be clearly directed.	**13–16 marks** The critical appreciation of points raised is employed to advance a reasoned judgement although this may require further support. Some material will be explicitly evaluated although the construction of argumentation may lack some insight or sophistication and positions reached may not convince completely. At the bottom of this level evaluative conclusions might acknowledge some key strengths and weaknesses of relevant positions. The response is legible, and technical language is employed with partial success. There may be occasional errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar and the response reads as a coherent whole.

GCE PHILOSOPHY UNIT 3 GENERIC MARK SCHEME continued

	Knowledge and Understanding	Interpretation, Analysis and Application	Assessment and Evaluation
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
Level 3	**7–9 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** present a range of knowledge generally and prosaically so that relevant positions are identified and explained but specific arguments will be rare and those given will lack detail and precision (this type of response may be quite lengthy and pedestrian). ***Or*** relevant positions, concepts and arguments are introduced and accurately stated but exposition fails to develop beyond a bare outline.	**7–9 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** select a range of relevant points and examples to provide a focused discussion of relevant philosophical positions, arguments and concepts in which analysis is brief, lacking in detail and precision. ***Or*** interpretation is very narrowly focused, and analysis centres on a partial appreciation of the issue.	**9–12 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** evaluate some relevant points and argumentation but may not advance a position or reach a judgement in relation to the issue as a whole. ***Or*** positions are listed and juxtaposed so that evaluation is implicit in the order or number of points made and judgements may be made on the basis of limited argumentation. At the bottom of this level juxtapositions lack depth, detail, subtlety and precision. The response is legible, employing some technical language accurately, with possibly some errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.
Level 2	**4–6 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** demonstrate a basic grasp of relevant arguments and positions through offering a sketchy and vague account lacking depth, detail and precision. Positions may not be clearly described and, at the bottom of this band, descriptions may also be inaccurate and confused in places. ***Or*** answers may be relevant but very brief and undeveloped.	**4–6 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** select some relevant points but analysis may be basic, sketchy and vague so that critical points are not developed. ***Or*** apply and analyse a range of philosophical concepts and arguments without sustaining a focus on the question. Answers lower in the level may exhibit both of these tendencies in discussions of a limited range of points where the focus on the question may be largely implicit.	**5–8 marks** Answers in this level: ***Either*** exhibit a limited attempt to develop argumentation, rather they describe a view. ***Or*** argumentation is confused in places. Judgements may be reached which do not seem to be justified by the reasoning provided. The response may be legible, with a basic attempt to employ technical language, which may not be appropriate. There may be frequent errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

GCE PHILOSOPHY UNIT 3 GENERIC MARK SCHEME continued

	Knowledge and Understanding	Interpretation, Analysis and Application	Assessment and Evaluation
	AO1	**AO2**	**AO3**
Level 1	**1–3 marks** Answers in this level demonstrate a very limited grasp of relevant positions and arguments. Knowledge and understanding of at least one aspect of relevant positions, arguments or concepts will be present.	**1–3 marks** Answers in this level provide a limited analysis of philosophical arguments and positions: ***Either*** through offering a brief, fragmentary, interpretation and analysis of the issues. ***Or*** through offering a tangential account in which some points coincide with the concerns of the question but relevance is limited.	**1–4 marks** Argumentation is likely to be brief, judgements may be asserted without justification and reasoning is confused, misdirected or poorly expressed. Technical language may not be employed, or it may be used inappropriately. The response may not be legible and errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar may be intrusive.
0 marks	No relevant philosophical knowledge.	No relevant philosophical points.	No relevant philosophical insights are presented.

GCE PHILOSOPHY UNIT 3 QUESTION-SPECIFIC MARK SCHEME

Examiners should note that the content suggested in the question-specific mark scheme is intended as an indication of the range of issues candidates are likely to draw from but is not exhaustive, and other relevant material and approaches should be credited. Note also that the range of potentially relevant material mentioned is not intended as a prescription as to what candidates' responses ought to cover and examiners should refer to the Generic Mark Scheme when awarding marks.

Section A: Philosophy of mind

EITHER

01 Assess eliminative materialism. *(50 marks)*

AO1

Candidates should identify some of the following elements of the eliminativist account of the mind:

- 'Folk psychology' is a conceptual framework, a proto-theory of mind. It employs such theoretical concepts as beliefs, desires, hopes, fears, intentions, decisions, perceptions, sensations, memories, etc and we use it to explain and predict our own and others' behaviour. Examples of general laws of folk psychology might be given.
- Since folk psychology is a theory it is in principle falsifiable.
- Eliminativists expect the neuroscience of the future to be far more powerful than folk psychology. Adoption of the new theory will involve displacing rather than reducing the concepts of the old, meaning that the theory expressed in our folk psychological concepts is literally *false*, a fundamentally flawed and misleading account of the causes of human beings' behaviour and the nature of their internal states.
- Eliminativism might be contrasted with the identity theory in claiming that the concepts of folk psychology are irreducible to brain processes, so there will be no smooth reduction of folk psychological concepts in a mature neuroscience and no 'bridge laws' identifying the posits of the old and the new.
- Expect references to the history of science in which theoretical entities have been abandoned, eg possession by demons to explain mental illness; caloric fluid to explain the propagation of heat, sound particles, phlogiston, etc. In the same way we will abandon concepts such as 'belief' once we recognise that there is nothing in reality corresponding to them. Eliminativists may be described as holding that either some or all mental states are eliminable in this way.
- Some candidates are likely to focus on reductive theories (behaviourism and/or the identity theory) and argue that beliefs are reducible to brain processes, or behavioural dispositions and therefore don't exist. Good responses along these lines that argue that only the physical is ultimately real and that the mental, mental substance or immaterial souls can be eliminated as a distinct ontological category, can access the full range of marks. Candidates may also discuss psychological behaviourism and the denial that the mental realm has any explanatory role to play and so can be dispensed with. However, responses that simply discuss reductive theories without showing awareness of the issue of *eliminating* the mental should be seen as tangential.

AO2

Candidates may draw on some of the following or equivalent points:
Arguments for the view:

- Since all causes are physical, there can be no interaction between mental events, such as beliefs or decisions, and physical action. So mental states can have no place in a complete physical account of human behaviour.
- Intentionality cannot be reduced to any purely physical system, and so it cannot exist in the brain. Thus beliefs and desires cannot be real.
- The supposed shortcomings of folk psychology accurately to predict and explain human behaviour. Illustrations of how folk-psychology is deficient might include its inability to explain the nature and functions of sleep, the causes and development of mental illness, the workings of memory, the processes involved in learning, etc.
- Folk-psychology is a degenerating research programme as it has not developed since ancient times.
- Folk psychology has been used to explain the behaviour of natural processes such as floods, and the weather and we now recognise it is inadequate to do so. In the same way we will come to recognise it is inadequate to explain human behaviour.
- The poor track record of other folk theories, (eg folk physics and the view that there is a preferred direction in which objects fall), by contrast with scientifically advanced theories suggests folk psychology will go the same way.
- Some *qualia* may be more complex than our folk-psychological concepts allow. Eg the neuro-physiological basis for pain may require us to categorise it differently.
- The phenomenological fallacy: Qualia are not objects of knowledge.Introspection may not reveal how things really are within the 'mind'. Pain may not be intrinsically awful. Dennett's argument that our assumptions about the incorrigibility of introspective evidence can be questioned.
- Candidates may discuss whether the ideas of free will or of a unified self may be eliminated.
- Recognising that folk psychology is a theory (and so in principle falsifiable) has the advantage of solving several problems in the philosophy of mind: eg it explains how we are able to predict others' behaviour; it solves the problem of other minds without the need of recourse to analogy with one's own case; explains how a purely physical system can enjoy intentionality since intentionality is a feature of folk psychological concepts; solves the mind-body problem since the issue is not one of how one type of being relates to another, but rather of how the ontology of one theory (folk-psychology) relates to that of another (a mature neuroscience).

Arguments against the view:

- We are directly aware of mental states in our everyday lives, so they must exist. Our self-knowledge as revealed through introspection immediately demonstrates the reality of the posits of folk psychology. We can be more certain of the reality of our own mental states than we can of the claims of any theory which purports to deny them.
  [Counter to this: the argument that introspective evidence is not isolable from a theoretical framework, and therefore that recognition of beliefs, etc within one's own mind is not evidence that these are real. The phenomenological fallacy of supposing we directly aware of phenomenal objects.]
- The argument that eliminative materialism is self refuting since if it is true that beliefs do not exist, then no one can believe the claims of eliminative materialism.
  [Counter to this: the claims of eliminativism may be true even though they can only be imperfectly expressed in terms of our current theory, folk psychology. The objection begs the question, by presupposing that beliefs are necessary, which is precisely what is being denied. Once we have the new categories of a mature neuroscience we will be able to state the claims of eliminativism without paradox.]

- The eliminative materialist position is equivalent to claiming that a perfect physical theory could explain the whole of reality without mentioning ordinary objects such as chairs and handkerchiefs and therefore that these don't exist.
- Eliminativism is incoherent since we cannot identify what it is that must be eliminated (viz mental states) except by reference to subjective feels.
- The more extreme claim of eliminativism that an advanced neuroscience may make us revise our concepts of rationality might be rejected on the grounds that such a neuroscience would have to be judged by those same canons of rationality.
- The success of folk-psychology, or adopting the 'intentional stance' in predicting and explaining behaviour might be used to argue that its posits will not be abandoned. Folk psychology might be defended from a pragmatist perspective.
- The normative nature of folk psychology means it cannot be eliminated. It not only claims we have beliefs, but specifies which we ought to have qua rational beings. A neuroscience can only ever be descriptive and so cannot prescribe what our internal states ought to be.

AO3

The central issue is whether folk psychological concepts refer to anything real and whether they might be eliminated from some future neuroscience. Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments and a range of positions might be defended from saying that all mental states will be eliminated to saying that none will.

- In between these two positions candidates might argue that certain mental states are likely to be reducible (eg *qualia*), while others will be eliminated (eg beliefs). 'Revisionary materialism': the view that folk psychology need not be fully abandoned or retained, but may be revised and reworked, so that some of its concepts are dropped, while others remain.
- Eliminative materialism is hostage to fortune: since we don't yet have a clear idea of what a new neuroscience will look like, we cannot say for certain in advance that the posits of folk psychology will not find a place within it.
- It might be argued that while folk psychology is indeed a theory and so might be eliminated, that this is improbable in the light of its predictive and explanatory power.
- Candidates might agree that mental states cannot be reduced, but defend a version of dualism or anomalous monism or biological naturalism.
- Functionalism: candidates might argue that the evidence that mental states are functional states is too strong to countenance the possibility that they might be eliminated. Functionalism says nothing about the intrinsic nature of mental states, so is protected against advances in neuroscience which will only reveal precisely how functional states are instantiated. Sciences of the mind, in so far as they deal with how humans function, must be autonomous of a purely descriptive neuroscience.
- Explanatory pluralism (McCauley): both theories can co-exist because psychology and neuroscience operate at different levels.
- All past scientific theories have some epistemic virtue, so to say they are falsifiable is not to say their posits don't exist, but rather that they have pragmatic value.
- Obsolete theories may be false without this implying that the terms in those theories don't refer to anything if we adopt a causal theory of reference, so that the entities retain a causal relationship to the discourse of the theory, eg stars in the sky being thought to be holes in the skull of a giant.

OR

02 Is any account of how the mind affects, and is affected by, the body convincing?
(50 marks)

A01

The focus of the question is on the interactionist thesis that some mental events have a causal influence on physical events in the body and that certain types of physical process in the body produce certain types of mental state.

Candidates are likely to illustrate both processes. Examples of the former include acts of volition causing bodily movements; reasons, desires and beliefs causing actions; emotional states causing physical reactions, etc. Examples of the latter include the impact of physical objects on the sense organs producing sensations; damage to the body causing pain; chemical or hormonal changes causing certain emotions and feelings, etc.

A suitable knowledge base may be grounded in a range of accounts of how these processes occur, including:

- Cartesian and other dualist accounts. Epiphenomenalism, Anomalous monism.
- Logical behaviourism.
- Materialist accounts: identity theory, functionalism.

AO2

Candidates are likely to approach the question by discussing substance dualism but the 'any' in the question invites them to consider more than one possible account (see below).

- Cartesian dualism
  The key difficulty is with the claim that two very different substances can come into causal contact. If the two are distinct kinds of thing what is it that allows them to communicate? What is the medium of the transactions between one and the other? If the mind does not exist in space *where* does it come into contact with the body? If the mind is unextended how can it exert force upon an extended thing?

  Candidates may explore the problem with illustrative examples of beliefs, reasons, desires, etc causing action, and of physical events in the body causing sensations.

  Descartes' response to this –'animal spirits' – which convey the mind's influence to the body and vice versa. But this simply displaces the problem. For we can still ask how material 'animal spirits' interact with something entirely non-spatial.

  There may be reference made to Hume's account of causation.

Other difficulties with dualist interactionism include:

- The physical universe is *causally closed*, in the sense that everything that happens within it is caused to happen by something else within it, and so it is not possible for something non-physical to have a causal impact on the physical. Casual closure implies behaviour is overdetermined.
- The claims of the interactionist appear to contravene the law of the conservation of energy because the mind must introduce energy into the physical universe from without in order to exert a real influence on it. Although it may be argued that mentality can account for the distribution of energy without affecting conservation (C D Broad).

- The homunculus fallacy: the difficulty of supposing the mind to be an agent acting upon the body and receiving sense data from it. The threat of infinite regress.

Other accounts which either explain how, or deny that, interaction takes place:

- Other dualist positions: the mind as an extended 'ghost in the machine'; non-interactionist substance dualist positions (occasionalism, parallelism), property dualism.
- Epiphenomenalism: there is a one-way causal relationship with the physical causing the mental, but not vice versa.
- Anomalous monism: mental events do cause physical events and so they must be subject to physical laws. But because the mental is anomalous there can be no psycho-physical bridging laws. Mental states supervene on physical states.
- Biological naturalism: conscious states are caused by lower level brain states, but are not ontologically reducible to them. And conscious states are realised in higher level features of the brain which are causally related to e.g. actions.
- Logical behaviourism: if mental events can be reduced to behaviour and behavioural dispositions then they are not the cause of nor are they caused by physical events.
- Identity theory: mental events are physical events and so there is no problem of how the one can cause the other.
- Functionalism: the view that mental states are defined by their causal role in relation to other mental states and to bodily states and behaviour.

AO3

Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments which should be employed to support a position.

Candidates may argue that substance dualism succeeds in explaining the relationship between mind and body, eg because this case of causation is no more mysterious than causation generally.

Candidates might defend the view that mind and body are in causal interaction by appeal to everyday experience of such interaction. No theory which denies this has much plausibility in the face of the lived experience.

Alternatively they might argue there can be no causal interaction between mind and body conceived as distinct substances and then might defend a range of alternative accounts, such as:

- Occasionalism or parallelism: the appearance of a direct causal relationship is an illusion.
- Epiphenomenalism, the view that mental events are causally inefficacious.
- Reductive accounts of the mind, logical behaviourism (mind is constituted not caused by behaviour) or identity theory (mental events are brain events and so there is no causal interaction between them. The mind/brain in physical interaction with the rest of the body).
- The view that mental concepts cannot be reduced to physical concepts, but are supervenient on them (anomalous monism).
- Biological naturalism.
- A functionalist position might be advanced stressing the importance of giving a causal role to mental states in order to be able to explain and predict human behaviour.

Section B: Political philosophy

EITHER

03 'In order to protect the liberty of individuals, the role of the state should be minimal.' Discuss this view. *(50 marks)*

AO1

The view expressed in the quotation is likely to be associated with liberalism generally or more specifically with the libertarian, minarchist, or 'night watchman' state; and candidates are likely to give an account of this position (or range of positions). According to this view the individual should (as far as possible) be free from state interference, and legitimate state power extends only to the point that it upholds negative liberty.

The minarchist state might be described as one which confines its operations to internal and external security (judiciary, police and armed forces). The state as a 'neutral umpire'. Laws would be confined to protecting property rights, contracts freely entered into and the person. The state should not involve itself in wealth redistribution, welfare provision, schools, hospitals, etc.

The liberal state might be described as one which restricts individual liberty solely in order to prevent encroachment on other individuals' liberty.

AO2

Expect responses which approach the question in terms of arguments for and against liberalism, libertarianism or minarchism (see below). Such responses can access the full range of marks, although the better responses are likely to recognise at least some difficulties with interpreting the quotation and its implications.

Difficulties of analysis and interpretation:

A key issue concerns what is meant by protecting individual liberty and the better responses are likely to discuss different conceptions of 'liberty'. The distinction between positive and negative freedom is likely to figure. Promoting freedom conceived negatively might mean only legislating to defend individuals against crimes against the person, theft and fraud. Alternatively, if the state's role is seen as promoting individuals' positive freedoms, or if it is argued that liberal ideals are best achieved through state involvement in economic and social life of the state, then there will be place for state involvement in regulating markets, redistribution of wealth, welfare provision, extending educational and career opportunities, etc.

The state has a role in removing obstacles to human freedom, such as illiteracy or disability, increasing opportunities and 'empowerment'.

The Liberty (or Harm) principle and the idea that individual liberty extends only so far as it doesn't harm another (Mill).

Candidates are likely to point out that a minarchist state is likely to be one in which individuals are free to exploit one another, and/or in which there are great inequalities in wealth distribution which would restrict the freedom of many. So it can be argued that state authority should extend to protecting individuals from economic exploitation and extremes of poverty.

The problem of distinguishing acts which have no effect on others from those which are purely private or self regarding (private and public spheres) might be explored as a way of understanding how far state power over the individual may legitimately extend.

What defence of individual liberty may mean in practical political terms? Eg the importance of the rule of law, constitutional protection for human rights, democratic governance and institutions, separation of powers (Locke, Montesquieu). What kind of state would best defend individual liberties ranging from minarchism to absolutism?

Candidates may draw on some or the following points for discussion:

Arguments for the view:

- Liberty is good in itself and so maximising individual liberty is the primary duty of the state. State interference in individual liberties can only be justified to the extent that it serves to protect those same liberties. The state should protect the freely chosen contracts entered into between individuals because of the intrinsic value of individual freedom.
- Locke's claim that humans are born free and therefore that the state can only be justified to the extent that it protects this natural right.
- In the state of nature negative liberties would be minimal because of the war of all against all (Hobbes). Thus law is a necessary evil. Anarchy would give free rein to individuals to exploit each other (Mill) and so the state is necessary to the realisation of individual liberty. The night-watchman state would emerge out of anarchy via the free competition between protection services (Nozick).
- Human beings are ends in themselves. They own themselves and the products of their labour and so if the state takes on more than the minimal responsibilities of protecting the individual against force and fraud and enforcing contracts, basic rights are violated. Thus taxation is a form of forced labour and the modern liberal welfare state is immoral (Nozick).
- Liberty as an instrumental good. The Utilitarian argument that legislating to defend liberty in the private sphere will promote the free development of the individual and so to the general happiness. Restrictions on individual freedom do not (as a matter of fact) serve the greater good because they restrict human well-being through experiments in modes of living and so stunt the advancement of knowledge and social progress. Minimising state interference leads to a more vibrant culture in which human creativity is allowed to flourish (Mill).
- Artificial or state interference in individual liberty, even when well intentioned, is counterproductive. The 'spontaneous order' of social life is the best route to human well-being (Hayek).
- Candidates may explore various freedoms that the (liberal) state should protect, viz freedom of conscience, of speech, of association, of worship, etc and/or discus the value of these freedoms. For example, freedom of speech is important because the state/majority cannot be certain to be right and allowing free competition between views is most likely to lead to the truth. Allowing false views to be aired will strengthen true views (Mill).
- Rousseau: we become free through creating laws we adhere to.
- Economic arguments: unfettered markets are more efficient than those regulated by the state. Smith's invisible hand. State run bureaucracies are inherently inefficient and so welfare provision, education etc are best left to the free market.
- If true freedom consists in autonomy and self mastery, then state power may be legitimately used to coerce people into behaviours which will ultimately promote their positive freedoms, eg in preventing them from taking addictive drugs or taking their own life. Citizens may elect to submit to state authority where their own self-control is not sufficient to avoid temptation, or the state may legitimately force us against our will to act in our real interests. Mill's claim that children and 'barbarians' cannot be given liberty since they are incapable of making informed decisions about how to live. Rousseau's claim that citizens may have to be forced to be free.

Arguments against the view:

- Principles of distributive justice require a more than minimal state.
- Too much liberty is a dangerous thing. It may lead to licence and idleness. Liberty may undermine customary morality (eg allow public indecency, euthanasia, prostitution, drug taking, etc), lead to a collapse of civilised values, etc. The state should punish the grosser forms of vice and/or intervene to promote virtues among its citizens which might not be promoted by giving them free rein.
- Mill's arguments to restrict individual liberties where they don't lead to the greatest happiness and/or because they cause harm to others. Beyond Mill's position, it might be argued that individual liberty is inconsistent with utilitarianism, that the general happiness is best served by severely restricting individual liberty. The tyranny of the majority.
- Liberalism as a defence of bourgeois individualism. The liberal state may protect individual liberties in law while civil society still contains limitations on freedom due to social inequalities. Human emancipation requires revolutionary change in the ownership of the means of production which goes beyond defence of property rights (Marx).
- The individual's duties are determined by their place in society, and by tradition and so the state should not give the individual freedom to ignore such duties (conservatism, communitarianism).
- Freedom of expression may be dangerous, in that it can promote views which are detrimental to social cohesion. The importance of propaganda (Plato's noble lie).
- Economic arguments: the tragedy of the commons: without state intervention and control of the distribution of certain resources they will be quickly depleted. Free market competition for resources leads to environmental degradation which is to the detriment of all.
- Some provisions necessary for social well being are not best served by free markets (eg in health, education, welfare, transport networks, water). Public services are 'natural monopolies' and so the state is best placed to provide them.

AO3

Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments which can be employed to support a range of positions. For example:

- Depending on how they interpret the view expressed in the quotation candidates might defend it from perspectives ranging from a minarchist position, through welfare liberalism to an authoritarian state, as the best way to protect individual liberty.
- Alternatively they might reject the view that the state has any legitimate power over the individual, and argue that even the defence of an individual's liberty is pernicious and argue for an anarchist position.
- Otherwise they might argue for greater state interference and defend a state which places restrictions of various kinds on individual liberty. At the extreme they might argue for absolutism: the view that the state has no duty to observe let alone protect the liberty of its subjects (Hobbes).

OR

04 Assess the claim that there are no such things as natural rights. *(50 marks)*

AO1

Natural rights may be defined as those that are thought to be universal or the rights that we have in virtue of being human and may be equated with 'human rights'. They are rights that exist independently of the contingencies (historical, economic, social) of any particular society.

Natural rights might be said to be accorded to human beings in virtue of certain natural properties they possess, such as rationality, autonomy, free will, being subjects of experience. We have natural rights in virtue of our 'moral worth' because humans are ends in themselves.

Natural rights may be described as those given to us by God.

References might be made to the state of nature in Locke or Hobbes in which we possess certain natural rights to self-preservation (Hobbes) or life, liberty and property (Locke).

The idea of natural rights might be explored by contrasting them with social/positive rights, eg the natural right to life, as opposed to the social right to education. To say there are no such things as natural rights is to say that all rights are socially constructed.

The contrast between positive and negative liberty/rights might be drawn and natural rights described as those which attach to the latter.

AO2

The question concerns the status of natural rights. Do they really exist and does it make sense to speak of them? If so, where do they come from? How do we discover them? In responding to these issues candidates may draw on some of the following points:

Arguments against natural rights:

- Bentham's argument that it can make no sense to say people have a right, if there is no objective basis – such as a convention or legal statute which is written down – which can be appealed to in order to demonstrate that they have it. People in uncivilised 'savage' societies without laws have no protection from others so to claim rights is empty talk. Because we cannot reduce rights to utility they are 'nonsense on stilts'.
- Since the rights we supposedly possess are not self-evident nor universally agreed upon they cannot be natural. Candidates should avoid turning this into the claim that because rights are infringed, they do not exist.
- It would be impossible to persuade a sceptic about the existence of natural rights, since there is nothing that we could 'point to' that might demonstrate they exist.
- The idea of natural rights is reached by analogy with legal rights. But without the possibility of any enforcement of such natural rights, the analogy breaks down.
- Whether or not one can be said to have rights depends on the circumstances in which one lives. If food is scarce, then my self-preservation will determine whether I kill someone else. And advanced social rights are also like this. They make sense only within a social framework.
- No right is exceptionless. Conflicts between rights suggest that none can be termed 'natural'.
- The idea of natural rights is the product of a distinctly European way of thinking and so contingent not universal. The Marxist and communitarian critique that they are the

product of bourgeois ideology which values the negative freedoms of the autonomous individual over the collective.
- There is no universal human nature which is unmoulded by history and that therefore we can have no rights which are grounded in our nature as human beings independently of our social nature.
- The problem that if rights are natural some account of when they appeared in our evolutionary history seems necessary.
- The desire for rights is the cause of our belief in them. Our fear of death, for example, produces the desire for a right to life which might protect us. But a reason for wishing we had a right is not a reason for thinking we do.
- Statements of human rights are too vague to be meaningful.
- The Humean argument that we cannot derive moral rights from human nature (you can't derive 'ought' from 'is', the naturalistic fallacy). So we cannot argue on the basis of the possession by human beings of certain natural properties, such as free will or rationality, that they possess moral rights.

Arguments for natural rights:
- Candidates might defend the idea of natural rights by contrasting them with the principle of utility. Rights are 'trumps' over the principle of utility (Dworkin), they are more fundamental and cannot be explained in terms of it. Examples of how utilitarian reasoning can lead to conclusions which conflict with our moral intuitions (killing a patient to save five others, arresting an innocent person to avert a riot, etc) might be used to argue that rights are inviolable and so natural.
- Natural rights are real because supervenient upon other natural properties of human beings, so that they have them in virtue of, eg their rationality, the ability to suffer, their intrinsic dignity as ends in themselves, etc.
- Natural rights are real because they can be discovered by reason (eg Kant), or can be derived from the 'natural law'.
- The fact that some societies don't recognise natural rights doesn't mean they don't exist. For to assert that we all have natural rights is to say they ought everywhere to be respected, not that they are.
- Natural rights are not reducible to any other property of humans and so are basic. Natural rights are known intuitively. The fact that universal agreement can be reached about which rights are natural suggests they are natural.
- The pragmatic argument that moral judgements asserting natural rights may not be literally true, but nonetheless helpful, for example, in bringing international pressure to bear on governments to give due respect to their citizens.

AO3

Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments which should be employed to support a position.

Depending on the approach taken candidates may argue that there are no such things as natural rights on the basis that, for example:
- they are not universal, eg human beings in 'primitive' societies or in the state of nature do not have or are not aware of having such rights
- they cannot be reduced to utility. Rights can be established only to the extent that they are useful to society
- all rights are socially constituted
- they cannot be empirically verified.

Candidates may argue that there are such things as natural rights, on the basis, for example, that:

- human beings have intrinsic human worth, or certain natural features which ground natural rights, such as rationality, autonomy or free will
- they can be discovered by reason, intuitively known, or God given
- they are epistemically basic.

Alternatively the language of rights might be justified on pragmatic grounds so that whether or not they really exist is not the issue. If most regimes in the world accept certain rights as inviolable and universal, then they can be held to account for not respecting them.

Section C: Epistemology and metaphysics

EITHER

05 'The fact that our beliefs are subject to error shows that knowledge is impossible.' Evaluate this claim. *(50 marks)*

AO1

Candidates may see the quotation as an expression of the sceptic's challenge and that it is claiming that universal scepticism follows directly from the fact of our vulnerability to error. Good responses should make plain the move from the fact that our epistemic faculties are fallible to the claim that they cannot provide us with knowledge.

Candidates might also identify the quotation with infallibilism, the view that a belief must be invulnerable to error to be known. Since out beliefs can be mistaken infallibilism leads to scepticism about the possibility of knowledge.

AO2

Candidates may illustrate the sceptical argument through examples from the history of philosophy, most likely Descartes' scepticism about the senses, dreaming and the evil demon argument; or modern versions of the latter (brain in a vat) although other philosophers or traditions might be used such as Socratic scepticism (all I know is that I know nothing); Pyrrhonism or Academic scepticism (eg the claim that equally good arguments can be given on either side of any claim); the Eleatics (the senses cannot provide knowledge), or Hume (that induction cannot provide knowledge, rational justification for our beliefs cannot be given).

Responses focusing on local scepticisms, eg about the possibility of moral or religious knowledge, or knowledge of the future should not be awarded above Level 3.

Candidates focusing on scepticism about the senses are likely to emphasise the difficulty of moving from appearance to reality, from sense-data to knowledge of the physical world. If I cannot distinguish between a veridical and illusory perception then I cannot claim to know that any of my perceptions are veridical.

The quotation involves a move from the recognition of particular instances of error to a global scepticism about knowledge, and the legitimacy of this move is likely to receive some attention. It may be argued that the claim that I am sometimes in error is actually inconsistent with (one interpretation of) the conclusion drawn that I may always be in error. We cannot move from occasional deception to universal scepticism.

However, the conclusion that knowledge is impossible need not be interpreted as saying that we are always in error, only that we cannot know when we are and when we are not. This suggests that the sceptical argument is assuming that knowledge requires not just adequate justification but also the knowledge that one is justified. If we drop the requirement to know that we know in order to know, then we can have knowledge on some occasions even though we might, on others, be in error.

Candidates may also examine the definition of knowledge and the question of whether infallibility is a necessary condition for knowledge. It may be necessary for a belief to be true for it to be knowledge, but this doesn't mean it cannot be prone to error.

AO3

Candidates may make a range of critical judgements about the sceptical challenge.

They may agree with the quotation and argue that knowledge is indeed impossible. Candidates might react to this judgement in various ways, for example:

- That we can make do with justified belief.
- Mitigated scepticism (Hume): the view that radical scepticism cannot be defeated, that reason cannot give us an escape route from the Cartesian impasse. Consequently, the use of scepticism in philosophy needs to be limited. Instinct is a more powerful basis for belief than reason.
- The view that scepticism while not defeatable using reason is not a practical option and that the demands of real life will always override our sceptical concerns.
- While knowledge of reality is indeed impossible we can have knowledge of appearances. Candidates may defend some version of idealism (Berkeley or Kant) or phenomenalism.
- Certain claims are epistemically basic and part of the scaffolding of our belief system so that it makes no sense to doubt them. However, it is misleading to call them 'knowledge' since it only makes sense to call knowledge what can be doubted (Wittgenstein).

Alternatively candidates might argue that the sceptical challenge can be met on various grounds, for example:

- Infallibilism is false so the sceptical conclusion isn't warranted. Knowledge is possible if we demand less of what we require of knowledge. Alternative accounts of what constitutes knowledge might be defended, such as that it is a belief that is beyond any reasonable doubt and true, which is caused by a reliable process, or which tracks the truth.
- Knowledge is possible if we demand less of what we require of knowledge. Knowledge does not require the impossibility of error, but rather a belief that is beyond any *reasonable* doubt and true.
- Candidates might identify certain beliefs as immune from error, such as knowledge of one's own existence (Descartes' *cogito*); knowledge of the nature of one's own mental states or sense data; or knowledge of *a priori* truths.
- The idea that some beliefs are epistemically basic and require no further justification (Moore's two hands proof of the external world). Arguments from common sense: that it may be possible to doubt all kinds of beliefs, but that these beliefs are not *doubtworthy*. In the absence of good reason to doubt them we are justified in calling them 'knowledge'.
- Transcendental arguments: what are the conditions of possibility for the sceptic's argument to be intelligible? Candidates might argue that the claim that I am subject to error shows a commitment to the possibility of truth and falsehood in one's beliefs and so of knowledge.
- Ordinary language philosophy: the claim that our ordinary use of the term 'knowledge' is the source of its meaningfulness and that we have perfectly adequate criteria by which to identify knowledge claims. To judge whether I can truly 'know' that there is a table before me we need to examine how the word 'know' is ordinarily used and our everyday processes of justification.
- Knowledge claims must always be relative to particular contexts in which particular types of justification are employed, and so it is meaningless to make claims about knowledge without reference to context.
- Global scepticism is self-defeating. If the claim in the quotation is known it is inconsistent, but if it is not known, then we have no reason to believe it.

- Externalist accounts of knowledge according to which the possibility of error does not disable someone from having knowledge. If a belief tracks the truth then it counts as knowledge.
- Brain in the vat possibilities are self-refuting (Putnam). The meaning of the claim to be a brain in a vat would be empty because it would fail to refer to anything real.

OR

06 Evaluate the claim that universals exist only in the mind. *(50 marks)*

AO1

The claim may be identified with conceptualism, the view that the referents of general terms are mind dependent (ie human constructs) but not metaphysically real. Similarities between particulars are explained in terms of their falling under the same general concept or idea. So two objects are both blue because the concept of blue applies to both.

Imagism, the view that general concepts are images in the mind with general application (Berkeley) may also figure in responses.

Candidates are likely to identify this as an anti-realist position and contrast it with realism: the view that there exist mind independent universals. (However, it may also be classed as a species of realism in that it claims universals exist, albeit in the mind.)

Good responses may also contrast conceptualism and nominalism: the view that there are no such things as universals existing independently of particulars. Nominalists explain the way particulars are grouped together in terms of relations of resemblance between them but not in terms of mind-dependent concepts. Conceptualism may be identified as an intermediate position between Realism and Nominalism.

Some candidates are likely to identify the position with anti-realism without drawing a clear distinction between conceptualism and nominalism. Responses along these lines can access the full range of marks.

AO2

The view is likely to be explored as a solution to the problem of universals. Expect the following points:

- The view explains the ontological status of universals by treating them as human constructs. Universals are created rather than discovered and reflect the mind's manner of classification rather than reality. Universals 'do not carve nature at the joints'.
- The existence of general concepts explains how it is we are able to place many particulars within one class. It explains the relationship between universals and particulars.
- Possession of the general concept can also be used to explain how we are able to recognise unfamiliar particulars as instances of a particular class.

An explanation of the view could be offered in terms of the uniform nature of human experience: the fact that experience seems to be ordered under certain categories (causation, identity, time and space, etc) seems to indicate that there are universal, mind-dependent concepts at play.

It is our human interests that govern how we categorise particulars, so our conceptual schemes impose structure on reality. General terms do not cleave to real distinctions.

AO3

Support for the view may be drawn, on the one hand, from arguments for some form of moderate realism about universals.

- Without appeal to universals we have no means of accounting for our ability to recognise particulars (Plato) or of making sense of the uniform nature of human experience (Kant).
- Without appeal to conceptual universals, we have no means of accounting for our language acquisition and subsequent ability to grasp new and novel sentences hitherto unencountered (Davidson).
- The view explains the relationship between universals and particulars. Particulars exist in the world, universals in the mind.
- The view explains how we can think about classes of things even while no particulars exist or have been experienced.

Or, on the other hand, by arguments critical of extreme realism:

- The reification of universals unnecessarily overpopulates our ontology: Ockham's razor. Conceptualism is ontologically parsimonious.
- There are no necessary and sufficient conditions for the correct application of any general term to a particular (Wittgenstein).
- 'Nature makes no leaps' so that any system of classification is to some degree arbitrary or imposed by mind.
- Particulars are the only things that can be demonstrated empirically to exist in the world. Thus universals must be products of the human mind.
- Arguments against platonism e.g. 3rd man.

Criticisms of the view might come from a realist **or** nominalist perspective:

- Universals must be objectively real since otherwise there could be no such things as natural kind terms which denote mind independent features of the world. Candidates could refer to the successes of the sciences in support of this view.
- Conceptualism fails, as contrasted with realism or nominalism, to explain how we come by the general concept based only on experience of particulars.
- The view fails to explain without begging the question what it is that makes it correct to apply the same concept to distinct individuals. A collection of particulars can only be correctly identified as falling under the general concept because they have something in common (realism) or because they resemble each other (nominalism), rather than the other way round.
- Candidates might explore difficulties with the view that mental entities can do the work of universals. How can a particular concept represent many particulars? The problem that concepts are private to individuals and so we cannot determine whether different people use them in the same way.

Depending on the approach taken candidates might argue that:

- Conceptualism has the best of both realism and nominalism. It escapes the trap of positing the objective existence of ontologically problematic entities on the one hand, while providing an account of how we are able to categorise experience on the other.
- The view fails to account for our knowledge of the world and/or our conceptual framework. Only metaphysical realism can do this.
- Conceptualism must collapse into nominalism in order to explain how terms can be correctly applied to the world.

Section D: Moral philosophy

EITHER

07 'Cultures make different judgements about what is right and what is wrong and so there can be no moral truth.' Discuss. *(50 marks)*

AO1

The key issues raised by the question should be clarified:

- Candidates should recognise that the argument expressed in the quotation starts with a factual claim about the relativity of moral judgements made across different cultures and infers a strong scepticism about the possibility of moral judgements admitting of truth. The position should be recognised as moral relativism: the view that there is no basis by which moral judgements might be deemed objectively true or false, or that moral judgements can only be termed true or false relative to a moral code; that what is 'good' is whatever a culture believes is good; and that there exist no absolute moral criteria which could be used to evaluate the relative merits of different moral codes.
- Candidates may explore the relativist position by arguing that different cultures operate within distinct conceptual schemes or participate in different ways of life.
- Candidates may note that the argument involves the move from descriptive relativism (the empirical claim that cultures differ in their moral judgements) to normative relativism (the claim that moral judgements are relative to an ethical framework).
- An appropriate knowledge base might be situated within different positions from the history of philosophy, such as that of Thrasymachus in Plato's *Republic*, Protagoras ('man is the measure of all things') and the Sophists, Nietzsche, Marx or Freud.
- The position might be contrasted with realist or cognitivist positions such as Platonic realism, Kantian rationalism, naturalism or intuitionism.
- Candidates might discuss a relativist view of virtue ethics. Different cultures have different virtues and we can only flourish within a particular moral tradition.

AO2

Candidates may illustrate the descriptive relativist premise of the argument by examples of disagreements between different cultures in particular moral judgements, for example concerning slavery, cannibalism, monogamy or through practical ethical problems such as abortion, euthanasia, etc. Empirical evidence of the great diversity of moral codes is such that no values are shared by all human beings.

Alternatively candidates may question whether the facts bear out the descriptive relativist position. While there may be apparent disagreement there is an ethical core of broad moral consensus between cultures, eg over the wrongness of murder.

If moral judgements express attitudes (emotivism) then the appearance of ethical disagreement may be explained by reference to disagreement over the facts not the values while there may remain broad agreement over basic moral values.

It might be argued that we ought to be tolerant of the moral attitudes of other cultures and therefore that we should not regard their moral judgements as mistaken. If the attitudes of other cultures are not mistaken, this could be taken to imply that moral relativism must be true. However, candidates should recognise that the link between relativism and tolerance is awkward. If there are no moral truths then it cannot be a truth that we ought to be tolerant. And if there are moral truths, then tolerance might be one of them.

The argument moves from the fact of moral relativity in judgements to the claim that there can be no non-relative moral truth. Since there is no rational way in which we can decide which of these moral codes is the correct one they must be equally valid. This move is likely to receive some attention. For example:

- Candidates might defend the move. Disagreement about moral codes is best explained as a consequence of differences in ways of life and culture rather than by inadequate apprehension of objective values. The causal connection is this way round: people approve of slavery *because* they participate in a culture which has slaves, rather than choosing to have slaves *because* they approve of slavery.
- Alternatively, candidates may point out that disagreement about what is right and wrong is not inconsistent with the possibility of moral judgements being true. Indeed, it might be argued that the fact that there is disagreement presupposes that there is a fact of the matter to disagree about and therefore that true judgements are at least possible.
- The fact of cultural diversity concerning moral judgements does not entail the normative conclusion that there are no objective moral truths. The inference violates Hume's law. You can't move from is to ought: from the descriptive to the normative.
- The argument may be accused of assuming that explaining the origin of moral judgements invalidates them. The fact that moral beliefs derive from one's culture does not entail that they cannot be true.

AO3

Support for relativism may be drawn from some of the following:

- If there were an objective moral law then there wouldn't be the diversity of moral opinion which we observe in the world. So moral judgements don't admit of objective truth.
- Hume argues that if you examine a wilful murder you cannot 'find a matter or fact or real existence which you call vice'. Moral judgements do not describe any objective properties of the world. So they are a subjective response and concern our attitude toward the act. Since cultural norms determine our attitudes moral judgements are relative to culture.
- The argument from queerness: if there were objective values then they would be entities utterly different from anything else in the universe and they would be apprehended by a faculty utterly different from any other faculty.
- The positivist argument that only judgements which can be verified are meaningful, thus moral judgements are expressions of attitude and their source is our social norms.
- The fact that moral judgements can be explained as deriving from social norms rather than reason undermines their claim to truth.
- If there were an absolute moral law, then there could not be any conflict between its tenets. However every attempt to encode the moral law throws up conflicts. So there can be no moral truth.
- Appeal to objective moral rules abdicates responsibility for making moral choices (Sartre).

Criticisms of relativism may be drawn from some of the following:

- It may be argued that cultural divergences are overplayed by the relativist and that all human beings share certain core moral values. If fundamental moral judgements are accepted by all people in all cultures then relativism cannot be true. Very basic principles common to all cultures might be identified with the principle of universalisability, the golden rule, or a utilitarian principle.
- Differences of moral judgement may be a consequence of disagreement over the facts, rather than genuine differences of value.
- The fact that a culture makes certain moral judgements does not make those judgements true for them since it can always make sense to ask whether such judgements really are good. The judgement that slavery is acceptable even if made by all citizens within a culture does not by itself make it acceptable.

- We can have rational debate in ethics and sometimes we can change people's views. But if there were no objective values it would be meaningless to have moral disputes. Therefore there must be objective values.
- If relativism were true then it would be impossible to condemn the actions or moral judgements of other cultures. Relativists cannot justify intervening in other cultures to prevent atrocities. The fact that we are sometimes morally justified in doing these things suggests relativism must be false.
- We commonly judge that one moral code is better than another. For example, we may suppose our own moral code to be superior to that of the Ancient Greeks since they allowed slavery. To make such a judgement we need to compare the two codes. But if there were no absolute moral standard, there would be nothing in respect of which we could compare the two codes. Therefore there must be an absolute moral standard. (This objection might be resisted by arguing that we *can* compare two codes without having a standard. All that is required is that I take a code *as* a standard and stick to it.)
- Society shows progress in morals. The abolition of slavery, or the enfranchisement of women, for example, represent moral improvements. But if society can show moral improvement there must be an objective standard by which to judge such improvements, and so relativism must be false.
- Moral relativism cannot explain the possibility of moral non-conformity. If moral judgements are only justified by reference to the prevailing cultural norms, then it makes no sense to make a moral case against them. And yet this is possible (eg over animal rights).
- If morals were relative to time and place then we ought to treat people from different cultures and places differently. But all people deserve to be treated equally and so it would be wrong to treat them differently because of the culture or origin. There are certain basic human rights shared by all. Therefore relativism is false.
- Judgements which are relative to time, place or personal preference cannot be universalised. But moral judgements are universal judgements. If I make a moral judgement I am committed to saying that it holds not just for me but for anyone in a relevantly similar situation. As Kant would say, a moral judgement accords, not with what one prefers, but with what one wills autonomously, ie in recognition of one's duty, or in accordance with the Categorical Imperative. Therefore relativism is false.
- Various *naturalist* arguments might be deployed to show that morals are common to all human beings. For example if Utilitarianism provides the correct account of the nature of morality then there is an absolute and objective standard of right and wrong.
- Relativism implies that it is possible to value anything at all. However, to be valuable something must be shown to be beneficial, and so there are limits on what we as humans can meaningfully value and there are constraints on possible moral codes.
- If there were no absolute values moral judgements would be matters of convention and caprice. Anyone would be free to make up their own values and there would be nothing to constrain them. Moreover it would be meaningless to condemn other people for their actions. Since moral condemnation of others is possible, and we are not free to choose our values, morality judgements must admit of truth and falsehood.
- Relativism, whether true or not, undermines morality. By abandoning absolute standards, it encourages immoral acts.
- Relativism is self-defeating.

OR

08 Assess the view that what makes an action moral is that it is motivated by a sense of duty. *(50 marks)*

AO1

The view in question should be identified with a deontological approach, most probably that of Kant, but possibly W D Ross, Natural Law ethics (eg Stoicism or Aquinas) or the Divine Command Theory.

A good knowledge base may be evident in exploration of any one or more than one of these, although the better responses are likely to recognise the significance of appropriate *motivation* in the question. An act which accords with one's duty is not moral unless it is motivated by duty.

Being motivated by a sense of duty might be identified with actions which are altruistic, respect others' rights, treat others as ends rather than means, are discoverable by reason, coincide with the cardinal virtues or with our nature qua rational beings, accord with the will of God, etc.

AO2

Candidates are likely to find it helpful to approach an explanation of deontology through contrast with other approaches, such as:

- Consequentialism, the view that moral actions are to be assessed in terms of the consequences they bring about. The contrast is between focus on the Right and the Good: between being motivated to perform an action because it is intrinsically right, one's duty or because it conforms to certain principles, and the view that what matters are the good effects produced.
- Virtue theory. The view that it is the person's character rather than their actions which is the proper focus of ethics.
- Egoism. The contrast between actions which are motivated by self interest with those motivated by duty.
- The contrast between reason and emotion as motives for action could be explored. Kant denies emotion as a moral motive for action. It is morally praiseworthy to give to the poor whether or not one has any sentiment of pity, indeed it is more praiseworthy if one goes against one's inclinations in recognising one's duty.

Expect discussion of the importance of the good will (Kant) as the only motive which is intrinsically good. Being motivated by consequences (means-ends reasoning) is hypothetical rather than categorical. Only motives for action guided by maxims which can be universalised without contradiction can be moral (Kant's examples of suicide, false promises, etc, might be used.)

Those using the divine command theory may explore the idea that we do not have a duty to obey God merely because he is God, but because what he commands is actually good. This might be linked to the Euthyphro Dilemma.

Candidates might argue that a motivation to do one's duty is not sufficient to guarantee an action is moral since this would invite collapse into subjectivism. To be a sufficient basis one's motivation must be guided by objective principles (reason, principle of universalisability).

Candidates may also explore the point that a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for an action's being judged morally right is that one would be motivated to do it.

- Emotivism: the view that moral judgements are not descriptive and, insofar as they express approval or disapproval, they are essentially connected to the motivation to perform or not perform them.
- Prescriptivism: moral judgements are exhortations to action.

AO3

Candidates are likely to consider some of the following arguments for the view that actions must be motivated by duty to be moral:

- An action that happens to bring about good consequences is not considered morally praiseworthy unless the agent had honourable intentions. Expect examples of psychopaths intending to poison the water supply inadvertently administering a cure for cancer, or a believer abiding by God's will out of fear of eternal damnation.
- If we concentrate solely on the consequences of actions then we go against our intuitions about people's rights to liberty, justice, etc. (Expect examples of killing a patient to redistribute her organs, arresting an innocent to prevent a riot and similar.) Consideration of consequences means treating others as means rather than ends.
- Moral actions depend on human autonomy. Actions which are not freely chosen cannot be morally worthy. To be slave to one's passions is not to be a moral agent.
- Deontological approaches can explain why we have special duties to certain people.

Candidates are likely to consider some of the following arguments against the view that actions must be motivated by duty to be moral:

- Being motivated to follow one's duty means deontologists are insensitive to the demands of particular situations. Whether it be lying, breaking a promise, or killing an innocent person, there will always be possible circumstances in which the consequences outweigh any intrinsic wrong in the act itself.
- Respect for individual rights isn't as important as the general good. If there is a conflict, then the needs of the majority must outweigh the rights of the few.
- Kant's emphasis on *reason* and on the universal and dispassionate application of moral principles ignores the fact that we have special obligations to certain people above others.
- Candidates might explore difficulties involved with the conflict between duties.
- It is nonsensical to suppose that a motivation can be intrinsically worthy. An act that had no effects at all could not be either bad or good and so it must be the effects exclusively which determine its worth.
- Deontology is deeply conservative in nature. It will tend to defend whatever rights people suppose that they ought to have. It provides no mechanism for critiquing whether such rights are useful to believe in or not. By contrast, utilitarianism has been an engine for moral improvement within society because it provides an objective criterion by which to measure the moral worth of the practices of the status quo and frees moral decision making from prejudice.
- Good intentions can produce bad consequences. The focus on motivation may have difficulty accounting for the moral condemnation of negligent behaviour.
- The problem of determining one's own or others' motivations. The focus on motivation allows one to excuse oneself by claiming honourable intentions and excuses bad faith (self-deception).
- The focus on the agent's motivation is narcissistic. The problem that concern with motivation is about keeping one's own conscience clean while turning a blind eye to very real consequences.
- Candidates might argue that emotions do have a moral dimension and someone motivated by pity is morally praiseworthy, regardless of whether they recognise themselves to have any duties.
- Psychological and/or Ethical Egoism: that self-interested motives are the primary or even only ones of which we are capable and/or that it is morally right to be so motivated.

Section E: Philosophy of religion

EITHER

09 'From a scientific point of view, we can make no distinction between the man who eats little and sees heaven and the man who drinks much and sees snakes.' Assess the argument from religious experience in light of this remark. *(50 marks)*

AO1

Candidates are likely to give an account of the argument from religious experience although credit should be awarded for implicit Knowledge and Understanding evident in exploration of the criticism given in the quotation.

Religious experience itself can be characterised in various ways, eg Swinburne's 5 types, James' (transient, ineffable, noetic, passive) or Otto's description of them as 'numinous'. Religious experiences most often occur to religious people, but can also involve conversion of non-believers; they can be life-changing, or simply an ordinary part of a regular religious life although, given the quotation, candidates are likely to focus on mystical experiences.

The argument from religious experience may be characterised as a *direct* proof involving no inference since it involves becoming immediately aware of the existence of God. Experiences of God are often said to be 'self-authenticating' meaning that if you have one then you know (or at least cannot but believe) it is genuinely of God.

Candidates might distinguish 1st person (I have had an experience which appeared to be of God. I have no reason to doubt my experience. Therefore God exists.) and 3rd person (Others have related their experiences of God. We have no reason to doubt their testimony. Therefore God exists.) versions of the argument. Both involve a second premise which depends on Swinburne's Principles of Credulity (that we should suppose our experiences to be veridical unless we have good reason to suppose they are not) and of Testimony (that we should suppose the testimony of others to be trustworthy unless we have good reason to suppose it is not) respectively.

The quotation draws a parallel between religious experience and hallucinations. Candidates should recognise the implication it invites us to draw, namely that religious experience is not veridical and that it can be explained away in terms of abnormal physiological conditions adversely affecting the veracity of sense experience.

AO2

Arguments in support of the quotation might be drawn from:

- Sceptical arguments about the veracity of the senses may be invoked to argue that human experience generally is unreliable, although it should be recognised that the mere possibility of error is no reason to regard religious experience as particularly unreliable.
- However, analysis of the quotation will provide reason to think religious experiences are particularly prone to sceptical attack, since naturalistic explanations for them can be found. Religious experiences often happen when in an unusual physical state, (eg Christ not eating in the desert). Expect references to mystical practices (self-flagellation, starvation) temporal lobe epilepsy, the 'God spot', Pursinger's experiments, shamanism, ecstatic trances, which suggest they are not veridical.

- Psychological explanations of religious experiences, such as wish fulfilment might also figure. It may be argued that religious experiences tend to happen to religious people who have a desire to believe they are genuine.
- Experience of an incorporeal, atemporal, transcendent being cannot be like other experiences which are confined to this world and as such claims about such experiences should be treated with caution. Indeed, perhaps it is incoherent to speak of 'experiencing' here. Given that experience of God must be radically unlike experiencing anything else, how are we to recognise it as an experience of God? The question of whether non-sensory experience is possible.
- Religious experiences are not independently verifiable. They cannot be repeated, checked by others, or peer reviewed, it is not possible to conduct experiments to establish their authenticity, and so they are not scientifically respectable.
- The fact that religious experiences are supposed to establish the truth of a particular revealed religion can be used against their veracity. People from different religions have different religious realities revealed to them. Not all these experiences can be genuine since each religion denies the truth of the other. But if there is no reason to prefer one religion's experiences over the others', the veracity of all religious experiences must be equally doubtful (Hume).
- The claim that religious experiences are self-authenticating is viciously circular (Flew).

Arguments against the quotation might be drawn from:

- The quotation gives us reason to doubt the veracity of religious experience and so candidates may point out that a supposed strength of the argument is precisely that it is grounded in experience which is generally seen as an important source of knowledge concerning the existence of things. Swinburne's Principle of Credulity, empiricist (all beliefs are grounded in experience) or positivist (scientific knowledge is based in observation) considerations might be invoked in support of the argument. Religious experiences are widespread and similar between people and so corroborate each other. Owen's argument for an analogy between sense experience and religious experience.
- Because they are life-changing it is evident that religious experiences appear genuine to those having them. Also, religious experiences often lead people to live better lives. Their good effects suggest they are genuinely from God.
- The quotation suggests that we do have reason to doubt religious experience on the grounds that they occur to people in an unusual physiological state. However, it may be argued that this doesn't fit all religious experience which may be part of the everyday religious life, or may occur to people in no unusual state.
- If it is accepted that religious experiences occur to people in unusual physical states, this doesn't establish that they are not veridical. To see the whole of Paris you need to go up the Eiffel Tower (Davies), and to have an experience of the divine, you need to be in an unusual physical state.
- While it is true that people from different religions have different experiences this doesn't show that there isn't some core experience which is the same for all (Otto). Or it may be that there is one religious reality but that people interpret it in terms of their own perspective, heritage and religious background (the analogy of the blind feeling an elephant). [The difficulty for setting out criteria for establishing that different experiences are of the same reality.]
- Experiences of God are 'self-authenticating'.

AO3

Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments which should be employed to support a position. Candidates may support the view expressed in the quotation (that religious experiences are no different from hallucinations) and so conclude that the argument from religious experience fails to establish the existence of God.

On the other hand they may argue that genuine religious experience is importantly different from a case of *delirium tremens* and this may lead to the strong conclusion that the argument succeeds in proving the existence of God, or to a more nuanced position. For example:

- Candidates might question whether the 'scientific point of view' is the important one to take. Even if no one else is persuaded by a religious experience someone has, from the first person perspective at least such an experience will make you believe, even if they can never provide scientifically testable evidence.
- Religious experience may fail to establish the existence of God with scientific certainty, but still it succeeds in making his existence more probable than not.
- Belief in God is to do with a form of life and so is not amenable to verification.

OR

10 Assess the possibility of miracles. *(50 marks)*

AO1

Miracles are most likely to be defined as extraordinary events caused by God's intervention in the regular course of nature/a violation of the laws of nature due to a supernatural cause. Expect references to Hume ('a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity') and Aquinas ('those things … which are done by divine agency beyond the order commonly observed in nature'). Aquinas's three types of miracle may also be outlined, (events caused by God which could occur, would be very unlikely to occur, or would be impossible within the ordinary course of nature).

Since they have a supernatural cause, miracles are more than mere coincidences no matter how unlikely.

In addition miraculous events are those which have some religious significance or purpose (Swinburne).

Unlike religious experiences miracles are objective publicly observable events and determining whether or not they have occurred typically depends upon testimony.

Miracles are often adduced in support of belief in the existence of God.

Candidates may question whether miracles need to contravene natural laws and define them as coincidences with religious significance or 'signs' (Holland). Experiencing an event as miraculous depends on interpreting it from a religious perspective (Hick). No particular events are miraculous, rather the whole creation is the real miracle (Wiles).

AO2

Arguments against the view that miracles are possible:

- The claim that the idea of a miracle is logically incoherent. A genuine law of nature cannot be violated, and if it appears to be it is not a genuine law. Science describes what happens so any unusual event simply needs to be brought under a new law. [Swinburne's defence that a non-repeatable counter-instance need not falsify a law.]
- Since the laws of nature accord with the will of God, miracles cannot transgress them, but only the laws as we understand them. So any apparent miracle is merely an event demonstrating we may have been wrong about a law of nature (Augustine, Spinoza).
- The difficulty of explaining why the God of classical theism should need to intervene in the universe since this implies correcting mistakes in the divine plan. This again leads to the claim that apparent miracles are as much part of the divine law as all other natural events.
- The difficulty of explaining how an atemporal God *could* intervene in the temporal order.
- God's interventions might be accused of being arbitrary. There is no apparent rationale for his choice of intervention. This might be related to the problem of evil: if God can intervene to alleviate suffering, why doesn't he do it more often?
- Naturalistic explanations can always be found for any supposed miracles.
- Hume's main argument about the balance of evidence: our beliefs must be proportioned to the evidence and beliefs about the world are based on causal inferences grounded in observed regularities. We should believe a miracle only if it is less miraculous than the possibility of the testimony being flawed. Given what we know about the unreliability of human testimony, it is never rational to believe a miracle occurred. 'No testimony is

sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact, which it endeavours to establish.'

- Additional Humean arguments about the reliability of testimony:
  - Human beings have an inclination to believe stories of 'surprise and wonder'.
  - The people who tend to report miracles (Hume's 'ignorant and barbarous nations' MISSING QUOTE MARK) are predisposed to believe by their religious background or lack of scientific knowledge and so are unreliable. They often are eager to establish a particular religion.
  - The miracles of different religions are all used to validate the truth, but they can't all be right, and so they count against each other.

Arguments in support of the possibility of miracles occurring:

- Candidates might argue that the weight of reliable testimony gives them credence. As publicly observable events many miracles would be hard to misperceive. Many have independent corroboration (eg the 500 witnesses to Christ's resurrection related by St Paul). Witnesses may have nothing to gain by their testimony; and no predisposition to believe (eg converts).
- The claim that miracles are forces for good and so plausibly have a divine origin.
- Swinburne's Principles of Credulity and Testimony: we ought to believe things are as they seem unless we have good evidence that we are mistaken.
- The question of whether Hume's argument shows that miracles are not possible, or only that we shouldn't believe in them.
- Hume's argument is too strong, since it implies we should never believe testimony about novelties and yet, novelties occur. The example of the Indian prince who doesn't believe in frost might be used against Hume. (Hume's distinction between miracles and marvels – the latter are not contrary to past experience.)
- Hume's argument seems to rule out the evidence of one's own senses (Smart).
- The objection that Hume's argument begs the question: to determine whether a miracle has occurred by asking whether it conforms with past experience is to presuppose that only events that conform to past regularities can occur. But this is to presuppose that a miracle cannot occur.
- The distinction between natural and logical necessity. The idea of miracles involves no contradiction and so they are logically possible.

AO3

Assessment will figure in the discussion of the above or equivalent arguments which should be employed to support a position.

Candidates focusing on the view of miracles as events which are inconsistent with the laws of nature are likely to argue that:

- They are not logically possible, that the idea entails a contradiction. This position may be linked to the idea that so-called miracles are in reality explicable in terms of natural laws.
- Miracles are logically possible, but nomologically or physically impossible, ie inconsistent with scientific laws. So while it is conceivable that they might happen, as a matter of fact, they don't. Apparent miracles merely show our ignorance of the relevant laws and so, again, this is likely to be linked to the view that science is committed to revising its account of natural laws to account for any unusual event.
- Events which contravene the known laws of nature are possible, but it is not rational to believe testimony which claims they occur.
- Miracles have occurred and so are possible.

Candidates may focus on the issue of divine intervention and argue, eg:

- That we can never determine whether any unusual event is a miracle or not as we have no means of discovering whether supernatural intervention has taken place within the natural world.
- Since God lies outside of space and time he cannot intervene in the temporal order, and so miracles are impossible. Alternatively, it may be argued that since God is omnipotent there is nothing to stop him intervening, and so miracles are metaphysically possible. Or that although he could intervene, as a matter of fact he doesn't, so they are possible, but not actual.

Alternatively candidates who question the traditional definition in terms of breaking physical laws or divine intervention might argue, eg:

- That miracles are wondrous events which are part of the divine plan on a par with events in the rest of nature and therefore that they are possible.
- Miracles are extraordinary events with religious significance and so are possible.
- Miracles depend on the way the believer sees the event in question and so they are possible.

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVE GRID

A2 Assessment Objective	Marks allocated by Assessment Objective
AO1	15
AO2	15
AO3	20
Total	**50**