

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

Pre-U Certificate

**MARK SCHEME for the May/June 2011 question paper
for the guidance of teachers**

9774 PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

9774/02

Paper 2 (Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology 1),
maximum raw mark 50

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began, which would have considered the acceptability of alternative answers.

Mark schemes must be read in conjunction with the question papers and the report on the examination.

- Cambridge will not enter into discussions or correspondence in connection with these mark schemes.

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Page 2	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

AO1	Candidates will be required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the issues arising from the relevant religious and philosophical themes and texts; and the ability to identify, select and apply ideas and concepts, through the use of examples and evidence from recognised sources of authority.	40%
AO2	Candidates will be required to provide a systematic critical analysis of the texts and theories they have studied, sustain a line of argument and justify a point of view. Different views, including those of different scholars and schools of thought, should be referred to and evaluated where appropriate. They should demonstrate a synoptic approach to the areas studied and make links between them and their responses where appropriate.	60%

AO1 and AO2 are both to be considered in assessing each essay.

The **Generic Marking Scheme** should be used to decide the mark. The essay should first be placed within a level which best describes its qualities, and then at a specific point within that level to determine a mark.

The **Question Specific Notes** provide guidance for Examiners as to the area covered by the question. These question specific notes are not exhaustive. Candidates may answer the question from a variety of angles with different emphases and using different supporting evidence and knowledge for which they receive credit according to the Generic Marking Scheme levels. However, candidates must clearly answer the question as set and not their own question. Examiners are reminded that the insights of specific religious traditions are, of course, relevant, and it is likely that candidates will draw on the views of Jewish, Christian or Islamic theologians, as well as those of philosophers who have written about the concept of God from a purely philosophical standpoint. There is nothing to prevent candidates referring to other religious traditions and these must, of course, be credited appropriately in examination responses.

Page 3	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Table A: Generic Marking Scheme for 10-marks questions

Level 6 9–10 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues • Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts • Complete or near complete accuracy at this level • Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts • Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 5 7–8 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered • Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts • Response is accurate: answers the question specifically • Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts • Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 4 5–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered • Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts • Response is largely relevant to the question asked • Reasonable attempt to use supporting evidence • Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately
Level 3 3–4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon. • Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success • Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided • Some attempt to use supporting evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly
Level 2 1–2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short. • Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic • Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question • Limited attempt to use evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant material to credit

Page 4	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Table B: Generic Marking Scheme for 15-marks questions

Level 6 13–15 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts • Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question • Complete or near complete accuracy at this level • Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained • Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence • Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 5 10–12 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts • Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question • Response is accurate: answers the question specifically • Argument has structure and development and is sustained • Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence • Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 4 7–9 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts • Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question • Response is largely relevant to the question asked • Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained • Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument • May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately
Level 3 4–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success • Attempts to evaluate though with partial success • Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided • Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence • Some attempt to use supporting evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly
Level 2 1–3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short • Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic • Argument is limited or confused • Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question • Limited attempt to use evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant material to credit

Page 5	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Table C: Generic Marking Scheme for 25-marks questions

Level 6 21–25 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues • Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts • Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question • Complete or near complete accuracy at this level • Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained • Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence • Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts • Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 5 16–20 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered • Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts • Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question • Response is accurate: answers the question specifically • Argument has structure and development and is sustained • Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence • Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts • Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary
Level 4 12–15 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered • Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts • Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question • Response is largely relevant to the question asked • Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained • Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument • May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate • Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately
Level 3 8–11 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon. • Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success • Attempts to evaluate though with partial success • Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided • Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence • Some attempt to use supporting evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly
Level 2 1–7 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short • Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic • Argument is limited or confused • Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question • Limited attempt to use evidence • Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No relevant material to credit

Page 6	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Topic 1 Epistemology

Section A

[Extract from **David Hume: *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding***: Section X, 'Of Miracles']

1 (a) With reference to this passage, explain Hume's main argument against miracles. [10]

Hume begins with a reference to the supposed proof of Christian belief being based on the eye-witness testimony of the apostles, and comments that this proof is less secure than the knowledge gained by our own senses, particularly because in transmitting what they saw to their own followers, the apostles may well have altered (unintentionally or otherwise) the details of what they saw. Some eye-witness testimony of this nature contradicts sense. Experience is our only guide in matters of fact, but is not itself infallible: experience tells me to expect better weather during any week in June than in December, but it may turn out otherwise. In fact there are varying degrees of certainty about matters of fact, from the near-certain to "the lowest species of moral evidence", so "a wise man ... proportions his belief to the evidence". All such judgements are based on probability (because we cannot do every observation of a particular phenomenon to be 100% sure that it always occurs *thus*).

Our experience in observing matters of fact is founded on experience of constant and common conjunction, and the consistency of that conjunction leads us to believe that something is *a proof* or *a probability*. We weigh testimony, balance it, and incline to one view or another, depending, for example, on forcefulness, hesitancy, reputation, and so on, in those whose reports we consider. The Indian prince (says Hume) who refused to accept what he was told about the effects of frost did so because it did not conform at all to his experience. What this leads to is Hume's main argument against miracles based on the principle of induction:

- witness testimony has to become more reliable in direct proportion to the improbability of what the witness claims to have observed;
- *the* most improbable event would be a violation of the laws of nature, since we must argue inductively from what we have observed, and experience teaches us that the laws of nature by definition do not admit violations;
- so by definition, a miracle is always the least probable explanation of what has occurred;
- so the probability that the witnesses are lying or mistaken is always greater than the probability that a miracle has happened.

Page 7	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

(b) Critically assess Hume's arguments against miracles.

[15]

Hume gave a number of subsidiary reasons, based on psychology, for disbelief in miracles, e.g. – there are no properly attested miracles by sufficient men of integrity and intelligence / humans are naturally credulous / most miracle accounts come from 'ignorant and barbarous nations', and where they come from civilized nations, it is only because they had ignorant and barbarous ancestors / miracle claims are debunked by the conflicting accounts of miracles among the different religions, like twenty witnesses in a law court each denouncing the other nineteen as liars / miracles are part of the psychology of belief, which is a spiral of self-delusion in which belief is merit-worthy and disbelief is castigated as sinful. Candidates should evaluate some of these arguments.

Hume's general arguments are often seen as unfair, since any person of integrity and intelligence who witnesses a miracle is by definition delusional. Hume assumes that all theists accept his cognitive definition of miracles as a violation of natural law, by the volition of an unseen supernatural agency, who intervenes purposively in the world, whereas some believers prefer non-cognitive interpretations of religious language and religious experience. For those who accept a cognitive definition, Hume's main inductive argument is a major challenge, but it is not a disproof, for two reasons. First, Hume himself pointed out that inductive / empirical arguments are at best probable, never certain, so his argument against miracles cannot be conclusive. Second, according to most believers, we cannot have a miracle which is *not* improbable. According to Hume, then, the improbability counterindicates the miracle, so miracles probably don't happen, whereas for believers, the improbability is a condition of the miracle, so miracles probably do happen. There is therefore a disjunction about the role of probability which cannot obviously be solved in Hume's favour.

Candidates might conclude that other arguments against miracles are more powerful than those of Hume, or that cumulatively, the case against miracles becomes stronger by their addition: e.g. Hick's view that if an irregularity occurs in a law of nature, the law simply expands to include the apparent exception / Maurice Wiles' view that the direct action of God in the world, independent of secondary causation, is hardly an intelligible concept, especially in being so sparingly used, since it calls into question God's goodness. Some might judge that Hume's arguments are generally right, since empirical evidence for miracles is lacking, despite claims to the contrary.

Page 8	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Section B

2 Critically assess coherentism.

[25]

Foundationalist theories of epistemology assume that a belief cannot be justified unless justification stops at some foundational point. Foundationalism thus denies that there can be an infinite regress of justification. On this view, justification is linear, taking the form of a series of inferences from whatever is judged to be the foundation. Coherentism rejects this line of argument in favour of a holistic view – i.e. justification is instead a holistic process. There are no privileged beliefs that underpin all knowledge. Knowledge is justified because it coheres with some system of which it forms a part – i.e. it fits into a consistent set of beliefs and experiences that support each other. To establish this consistency, the main requirement is logical consistency, since beliefs that are logically inconsistent are clearly not coherent. Another requirement is for integration between the different parts of a system, so (for example) a theory that offers a single explanation for divergent phenomena is more coherent than a theory that offers multiple explanations. Also, the description of cohering beliefs has to be as complete as possible. Put another way, a coherent system should follow the principles of Occam's Razor and Bayes' Theorem.

A critique of coherentism might begin with the isolation objection: it is possible to have a perfectly consistent system of beliefs in isolation from anything in the *real* world. There are many examples of coherent belief systems that are entirely false. Russell argued that since both a belief and its negation will cohere with at least one set of beliefs, the coherence theory seems to hold that contradictory beliefs can be shown to be true. According to coherentism, what is justified by the theory is each belief *within* a set of beliefs, and *not* the set itself. In Creationist thinking, for example, belief in the principle of 'irreducible complexity' is justified by a chain of beliefs that cohere with that principle, yet Creationism is arguably a totally false theory, and conflicts with other coherent sets of beliefs held for example by physics, biology and genetics. If there can be multiple coherent sets of beliefs that conflict with each other, it is hard to see how the Coherentist theory of justification works. Some argue that although multiple conflicting sets exist, there can in fact only be one truly coherent set, and the task of empiricism and reasoning is to gradually eliminate all incoherent sets. This raises the counter-objection that the elimination process has to appeal to experience, which is not far from admitting that knowledge has foundations after all. Some suggest that perhaps knowledge does have foundations, but the best way of justifying knowledge is through the Coherentist approach, where the picture is built up like the interlocking strands of a spider's web.

N.B. If candidates refer to a coherence theory of *truth* (as opposed to coherentism as a theory of justification), this can be credited in accordance with the Levels of Response.

Page 9	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

OR

3 'It is impossible to uphold a realist theory of perception.' Critically examine this claim. [25]

The question allows candidates to consider either Naive (Direct) Realism (NR) or Representative (Indirect) Realism (RR) or both.

NR is the view that the world of material objects (MOs) exists / MOs can be known by sense experience / MOs exist independently of our perception of them / the properties of MOs exist regardless of whether or not they are perceived / and through sense experience we perceive the world much as common sense tells us we do: for example tastes, sounds, and colours are not in the heads of perceivers; they are qualities of the external MOs that are perceived. When we perceive the world, we do not *perceive* the experience – we have the experience. NR has to answer the arguments given in favour of alternative theories, particularly RR and sense-data. In particular, NR has to explain illusion and hallucination. RR claims simply that with illusion and hallucination, we perceive sense-data, while the real world stays as it is. NR has two alternative explanations for illusion: disjunctivists claim that if a stick appears bent in water, then what appears bent is sense-data, whereas in normal perception I perceive the world directly; relationalists prefer to say that 'looking bent' is a property the stick has in relation to being seen, so we don't need sense-data. The disjunctivist approach seems clumsy: why would sense-data operate only for illusions and not for normal perceptions? Relationalist approaches also seem clumsy: if I perceive an apple as sweet and someone else perceives it as sour, why should we perceive one or the other if they are in the object? It seems easier to say that sweetness and sourness are subjective properties in the mind, so we are perceiving sense-data. Hallucination is an even bigger problem for NR, since with hallucination there is no MO at all, so NR has to admit that what is perceived must be sense-data: but if sense-data are in the mind, then RR, which sees sense-data as mental/subjective, gives a better explanation of hallucinations.

RR is based on the concept of sense-data: a sense-datum is a mental image, perceived directly in the mind, that represents a MO, so giving us *indirect* knowledge of the real world of MOs: sense-data are representations, or appearances of the world. RR can therefore explain illusion and hallucination in terms of sense-data. Candidates are likely to describe the argument for RR based on (Locke's distinction between) primary and secondary qualities. Primary qualities are in the MO itself, whereas secondary qualities are related to perceivers, so according to Locke, we perceive a MO indirectly, through our sense-data, which 'resemble' the MO in its primary, but not its secondary qualities. Berkeley objected that our sense-data of primary qualities do not resemble objects; moreover we cannot say that two things resemble each other unless we can compare them, and we can perceive only the datum, not the object. The answer from RR was to drop 'resemblance' in favour of 'representation' – sense-data do appear to be caused by MOs: they represent MOs by being systematically related to them. Candidates might raise other objections to RR, e.g. that: sense data cannot exist: they are mental objects and cannot resemble anything. One major objection is that RR leads to scepticism, because if the only things we perceive immediately are sense-data, then how do we know that the world of MOs exists at all? This might lead candidates to discussion of alternative theories, e.g. idealism and phenomenalism.

Page 10	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Topic 2 Philosophical and Theological Language

Section A

[Extract from **Basil Mitchell**: *The Philosophy of Religion*: I: 'Theology and Falsification. A symposium' (Anthony Flew, R.M. Hare, and Basil Mitchell): 13]

4 (a) Explain how Anthony Flew uses the principle of falsification to attack the idea that religious statements are meaningful. [10]

Candidates should include some of the following material. Flew's point is that what starts as an assertion, that something exists, or that there is some analogy between certain complexes of phenomena, may be reduced step by step to a different status, perhaps of 'picture preference'. The sceptic asserts that there is no gardener, whereas the believer asserts that the gardener is invisible, etc. In the process of somebody checking an assertion, that assertion may be dissipated without the asserter realising it. A "fine brash hypothesis" may thus be killed by inches – the "death of a thousand qualifications". Here, says Flew, lies the "endemic evil" of theological utterances such as 'God has a plan', or 'God created the world', or 'God loves us as a father loves his children'. At first sight, these seem to be vast cosmological assertions, but closer inspection denies this.

By asserting that 'x' is the case, this is necessarily equivalent to denying that 'x' is *not* the case. If we are in doubt about what someone is asserting, we should attempt to understand it (or to expose it) by finding out what he would regard as counting against, or being incompatible with, its truth. If an utterance is indeed a meaningful assertion, then it will necessarily be equivalent to a denial of the negation of that assertion. Anything which would count against the assertion, or that would induce the speaker to withdraw it and admit himself mistaken, must be part of (or the whole of) the meaning of the negation of that assertion. To know what negates an assertion is to know its meaning. So if there is nothing that an assertion denies, then there is nothing it asserts either. So when the sceptic asks the believer, 'Just how does what you call an invisible, intangible, eternally elusive gardener differ from an imaginary gardener', he is suggesting that the believer's earlier statement has been so eroded by qualification that it was never a meaningful assertion at all. Flew states that there are no conceivable events that would lead believers to admit that, 'There isn't a God after all', or 'God does not really love us', or 'God does not love us like a father who loves his children'. Flew illustrates this by the scenario of a child dying in agony from inoperable throat cancer. The human father is frantic to help, but the heavenly father appears indifferent. The father qualifies his belief in God's love for his child by saying perhaps that 'God's love is not merely human love', or that it is 'inscrutable love'. Just what would have to happen to get the father to admit that 'God does not love us', or that 'God does not exist'?

Page 11	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

- (b) Critically assess either the contribution of Hare's concept of *bliks*, or of Mitchell's parable of 'The Stranger', as a response to Flew's attack. [15]

Candidates should include some of the following material:

Hare

A *blik* is a 'view of the world', and Hare suggests that we decide what is meaningful or not by our *bliks*, and that we fit evidence to suit our *blik* rather than the other way round. *Bliks* are naturally tenacious: a lunatic may have a *blik* that the dons in Oxford want to kill him, and producing lots of benevolent dons merely has the result that the lunatic is suspicious of their benevolence. *Bliks*, then, are compelling, whether sane or insane. Moreover they are *not* explanations, because it is by our *bliks* that we decide what is, and what is not, an explanation, and Flew does not realise this. The difference between a theist and an atheist *blik* is simply that the former accepts God as an explanation for the world, whereas the latter does not. Moreover in Flew's parable, the explorers seem not particularly concerned about the outcome of their discussion, whereas for the theist, his *blik* is central, and to abandon it would be to abandon all meaning in life. A religious *blik* is therefore a meaningful view of life, and by definition will not be abandoned lightly. Flew retorts that Hare's *bliks* are *non-cognitive* / *non-factual*, being concerned with attitudes; but believers want to assert that their beliefs are *cognitive* / *factual*. When a believer asserts his belief in immortality, he does not see it as a non-cognitive *blik*, otherwise he might as well be writing himself a 'dialectical dud cheque'. If religious belief is cognitive, therefore, it cannot escape the need for knowing what would falsify it. Candidates might discuss this in a number of ways, for example considering whether or not religious assertions are cognitive; whether believers do accept evidence that counts against their beliefs, as Mitchell indicates they obviously do; whether Flew is generally correct in espousing the falsificationist challenge, and so on.

Mitchell

Mitchell rejects Flew's assertion that the believer allows nothing to count against his belief. Pain and the problem of evil certainly do count, for the believer, against the assertion that 'God loves men'; although the believer will probably not allow evil to count *decisively* against God because belief is characterized by trust in God. Mitchell illustrates this with the Parable of the Stranger. The Stranger is a double agent who is trusted by a member of the resistance group in an occupied country, and despite all evidence to the contrary, eventually justifies that trust. Before that happens, the resistance member stubbornly refuses to admit to his friends that the Stranger is evil. In exasperation they tell him, in a parody of Flew's words: 'Well, what *would* he have to do for you to admit that you were wrong and that he is not on our side?' The resistance member refuses to put the Stranger (God) to the test. He does not allow anything to count decisively against the proposition, 'The Stranger is on our side' – because he has committed himself to trust in the Stranger. He does of course recognise that the Stranger's ambiguous behaviour counts against his belief in him, but it is precisely this situation, says Mitchell, which constitutes the trial of his faith. The believer will resist disbelieving in the Stranger's integrity as long as possible, but he will not say that the Stranger's behaviour does not count against his belief – that would be thoughtless or insane: to be reasonable in his belief, he will experience in himself the force of the conflict. Mitchell thus concludes that Flew is right – theological utterances are assertions – they are cognitive / factual, so they are also an *explanation* of the Stranger's behaviour. 'God loves men' resembles, 'The Stranger is on our side', and neither statement is conclusively falsifiable. Nevertheless, against Flew, such statements are meaningful, and can be treated in at least three different ways: (i) as provisional hypotheses to be discarded if experience tells against them; (ii) as significant articles of faith; (iii) as vacuous / empty formulae. The Christian is precluded by faith from taking up (i). He might slip into (iii), but he need not.

Page 12	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Candidates will use Flew's reply in evaluation of this: the Stranger is human, whereas God is omnipotent and omniscient, so there is no excuse for God's failure with evil. An omnipotent and omniscient God "must be an accessory before (and during) the fact to every human misdeed! as well as being responsible for every non-moral defect in the universe". Candidates might counter this with the free will defence, for example. Mitchell does seem to be right when he argues that believers do allow evil and pain to count against their beliefs, and from the point of view of the verificationist / falsificationist challenge, all that is required for propositions to have meaning is that they be verifiable and falsifiable weakly / in principle. Theism is in principle verifiable by (for example) the cosmological and design arguments. There seems no doubt that for many who did not survive the Holocaust (and for those who did), evil counted decisively as a disproof of their religious beliefs.

Page 13	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Section B

5 Examine critically the view that 'good' is non-cognitive. [25]

Ethical non-cognitivism (ENC), or Irrealism, is the view that 'good' boils down to emotion or will, for example. On this view, values are not facts – a view that is clearly visible in Hume's writings, where he says that sentiments of approbation or disapprobation lie in yourself, not in the object: values are just our attitude towards the facts. If this is right, no deduction such as 'murder is bad' can follow from what a murderer does.

ENC comes in two main forms: Emotivism (E) and Prescriptivism (P), and candidates might offer a critique of one or both of these.

E is the theory (for example of A.J. Ayer) that 'good' and 'bad' are simply about approval and disapproval. According to Ayer, moral statements are neither analytic nor synthetic (they cannot be the latter because no test of observation can prove for example that stealing is wrong), so they are meaningless. Moral statements have three functions: (i) to express emotional responses to what we see. Those who like to see blood may have no opposition to murder; those who do will probably make rules against it, so 'Murder is wrong' is like saying, 'Murder – boo!', whereas others might say, 'Murder – hooray!'; (ii) they are our attempts to persuade others to agree with our emotions; (iii) they can also be commands: if I tell someone that it is their duty to help the aged, this is the equivalent of command. A critique of this could take several paths: if moral judgements are just 'emotional ejaculations', we have no basis for moral discussion / Ayer believes that we cannot have real moral disagreements because there are no facts to disagree about, whereas others prefer to argue that there are moral facts / moral values might be objective rather than absolute, so on a Neo-Naturalist view, for example, 'good' isn't any kind of emotive judgement, it is what contributes to the good of human beings.

P is illustrated by R.M. Hare: 'ought' is prescriptive, action-guiding and universalizable, and the latter principle makes my choices moral ones, because it shows that I am happy that they are right. Moral judgements are 'overriding', because they are more important than other judgements (such as aesthetic ones), and they are adjustable (e.g. a prohibition against telling lies can be adjusted to save someone from injury, in which case the prescription against telling lies is not overridden, it is adjusted. 'Good' is defined by personal choice and commendation. Choice involves an effort of the will – Hare draws this part of his theory from Existentialism, which argues that life is meaningless, so it is up to individuals to create meaning by making choices. A critique of P might include the accusation that the application of universalizability is empty, because anything can be universalized by the will, including prescriptions that most would regard as grossly immoral (presumably on the basis of some other form of moral judgement). Also, P arguably allows trivial things to count as moral judgements; conversely, there is no obvious reason why we should choose any of the principles which most of us see as being morally true, such as not killing innocent people.

Candidates are not, of course, constrained by the contents of this mark scheme: any relevant material is acceptable as an answer to the question. As part of their answers, some candidates are likely, for example, to suggest that 'good' is cognitive, either through Naturalism or Non-Naturalism.

Page 14	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

OR

6 How far can the terms: *omnipotent*, *omniscient*, and *omnibenevolent*, be applied coherently to God? [25]

The question of God's attributes, or predicates, or perfections, operates on several levels, and candidates are at liberty to look at any relevant issues. In Descartes' Ontological Argument, for example, each attribute involves all the rest, since an omnipotent being is required to be omniscient, etc. Some see this as a contrivance, since (i) attributes such as power, love and knowledge are merely being 'extracted' from human attributes, with the addition that God has *ultimate* power, knowledge, love, etc. (ii) it seems dubious to give attributes to a being who is generally regarded as metaphysical and transcendent, especially as our own basis for knowledge may be empirical.

Moreover there are difficult issues that arise for each of God's attributes listed here:

Omnipotence

Religious literature does not always see God as all-powerful as opposed to being simply the most powerful being. If we describe God as omnipotent, does this mean that God can do the logically impossible? Most theologians reject this on the grounds that it would lead to a nonsensical (and therefore non-existent) God. But even the idea of a God who can do only the logically possible creates logical paradoxes: could such a being sin / commit suicide / make a rock too heavy for himself to lift? These are perhaps logically incoherent questions: God is not a moral agent / it would be illogical for a perfect being to commit suicide/the concept of a rock of infinite size would be logically impossible.

Omniscience

If 'p' stands for the total number of true propositions (whether empirical, logical or mathematical) that can be known, omniscience can be defined as: 'For all p, if p, then God knows that p' – i.e. 'For all the true propositions that can be known, selected singly or together, God knows them'. God's omniscience is related to his omnipotence in the sense that if God can do only what is logically possible, then God cannot know that $2 + 2 = 5$, because p does not include $2 + 2 = 5$. There is a complication with God's relation to time. If God is everlasting (in time), then he does not know the future, because it is logically impossible for him to know what has not yet happened. Some think that this nevertheless limits God's omniscience. If God exists eternally (timelessly), then presumably God can see the future, since he would be able to comprehend the whole of time instantaneously. There is an issue here in that it is often claimed that timeless God's omniscience is therefore causal, in that if God knows your future, you cannot do otherwise than what God fore-knows, so free will does not exist. One answer to this is that God sees the results of your future free choices, but does not cause them: i.e. God's omniscience is acausal.

Omnibenevolence

This is perhaps the most puzzling of God's attributes. First, Euthyphro's Dilemma seems to show that we cannot solve the problem of God's relationship to the moral law: Does God command what is good, or does God obey the moral law? If the former, God's command is arbitrary, and so not benevolent; if the latter, God is subject to the moral law, and so not omnipotent. Hence Russell argues that this paradox shows that all talk of a perfectly good being is nonsense. Aquinas' writings contain an answer to this problem, seen in his doctrine of analogy: God's goodness cannot be moral goodness, and to assume otherwise leads to Euthyphro's Dilemma, which is logical nonsense. God is not a moral agent – God's goodness lies (analogically) in being perfectly whatever it means for God to be good. A second, more intractable problem is presented by the existence of evil: why would an omnibenevolent and omnipotent God allow evil and injustice in the world? Candidates might look at this in connection with some version of the free will defence, or the theodicies generally. God's omniscience argues against God's omnibenevolence, since God must have foreseen the sum total of sheer evil in the world, and yet has still created the world, and allows innocent suffering to continue.

Page 15	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Topic 3 Philosophy of Religion

Section A

[Extract from **John Hick**: *Evil and the God of Love*: 264-267]

- 7 (a) (i) Explain briefly the reasoning of the free-will defence, and:
- (ii) with reference to this passage, show how Hick attempts to prove that it would be logically impossible for God to “have so made men that they would always freely do what is right.” [10]

The free will defence (FWD) is a reply to the inconsistent triad: ‘God is omnipotent; God is omnibenevolent; evil exists’, to which one possible response is that God allows evil to exist for a sufficient reason, namely that a universe containing beings able to make morally bad as well as morally good choices is superior to a universe in which morally bad choices are not possible. Candidates can give any version of the FWD they like*. Hick argues first that God cannot do the logically impossible – “not even infinite might can adopt a meaningless form of words as a programme for action”. Second, the idea of the creation of personal beings who are not free to choose wrongly as well as rightly is self-contradictory, so would be logically impossible for God to do. Humans must be free, morally responsible agents. God could have created beings with no freedom to make wrong / bad choices, but he has chosen to create persons, and we can only accept this decision as basic to our existence, and treat it as a premise of our thinking. Freedom of the will is so valuable to God that evil is allowed to exist, since without the genuine possibility of choosing evil, *true goodness is impossible*.

The crux of the matter hinges on this last conclusion (that true goodness is impossible without the existence of evil): Flew and Mackie (in particular) have denied this conclusion to the FWD. According to them, it was logically possible for God to have created beings who are genuinely free yet who would *always* make free good choices. That must have been a possibility, since it is a tenet of Christian belief that Christ, as God incarnate, was sinless. Hick refers to Ninian Smart’s discussion of the Flew / Mackie idea, which he calls ‘the Utopia thesis’. Smart dismisses it on the grounds that words like, ‘generosity, goodness, temptation, fear’ would lose their meaning in a Utopia. To call people good would be unintelligible. Moral utterance, says Smart, “is embedded in the cosmic status quo”. Hick argues that this does not defeat Flew / Mackie, because God, being omnipotent, could still have made beings able to *freely* resist temptation and fear. Hick’s answer is that there is a religious dimension to the question that Flew and Mackie ignore, namely that God’s purpose is for humans not just to act freely and rightly to each other but also to enter into a filial / personal relationship with God. Hick argues that it was not logically possible for God to have made humans so that they would freely respond to him in love, trust and faith. To have done so would be analogous to creating beings who would love God through post-hypnotic suggestion. This would be a purely technical achievement by God without true value. God would know, in effect, that human love for him would not really be free.

* For examiners: Hick’s formulation of the FWD is in response to that of John Mackie. Mackie supposes that second-order goods (sympathy, empathy, benevolence, etc.) exist in order to maximize first-order goods (happiness and pleasure) and to minimize first-order evils (pain and misery). Conversely, second-order evils (hatred, envy, malice, etc.) exist in order to maximize first order evils, and to minimize first-order goods. Freedom is a third-order good that allows humans the ability to act as agents for good or evil, and in so doing to realize the value of the good.

Page 16	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

(b) Examine critically Hick's defence of the free-will defence.

[15]

Hick's first contention is that God cannot do the logically impossible, a position denied, for example, by Mackie. Candidates might consider this question in general. It might be argued that if God cannot do the logically impossible, then there is something he cannot do, so he is not truly omnipotent. There is no obvious reason why the laws of logic should constrain God any more than the laws of nature constrain him as a metaphysical being. Against that, Hick argues that to claim that God can do the logically impossible is just a meaningless form of words. For example, to demand that God could make a rock too heavy for himself to lift would simply amount to a misuse of language. Such a rock would have to be of infinite size, which is a sense-free notion; moreover in what sense could God be said to lift such an object? If the object is already of infinite size, there is nowhere for it to be lifted. Second, Hick maintains that the idea of the creation of personal beings who are not free to choose wrongly as well as rightly is self-contradictory, so would be logically impossible for God to do – a contention that obviously hinges on his first claim. Hick's claim that goodness does not make sense without evil seems true, since choices that are not free are not choices at all. Some might argue that the cost of freedom is simply too much, and that the daily catalogue of animal misery, let alone human misery, is such that God's creation of the universe cannot have been a benevolent act. Hick would argue that God's purpose (universal salvation, shown through his Irenaean-type theodicy) means that 'it will all be worth it in the end'. In the dispute with Flew / Mackie, the latter's contention that God could have made creatures who would always make free, good choices, also depends on what is logically possible for God to do. Hick admits that God could have made creatures who would always make free, good choices, but argues that God could not have made creatures who would freely enter into a personal, love-relationship with God, since compelled love is worthless. This kind of God would be analogous to a hypnotist commanding love through post-hypnotic suggestion. Some might argue that such a situation would indeed be inferior to uncompelled love, but the price is too high, so God should perhaps have created this inferior universe with its illusion of freedom. If we never knew the difference, would that not be good enough?

Page 17	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Section B

- 8 'The only success of the ontological argument is that it supports the faith of those who already believe in God.' Critically assess this claim. [25]

The claim that the value of the ontological argument (OA) lies in its support for those who already believe in God can be looked at in a number of ways. Wittgenstein's Language-Game analysis makes God a reality for the believing community, so the issue of whether or not God exists factually is not a proper question. Those outside the community are not entitled to reject the OA – it is merely that they have no use for it. For those in the believing community who accept it, then, the OA is of value in supporting their faith. Norman Malcolm concluded that the OA does not work, because it does not convince atheists: the argument is anti-real – one that can be grasped by believers. Grasping it is like grasping the infinity of the sequence of prime numbers – you either understand it or you don't: equally with God's existence and the OA, you either grasp it or you don't. Once you grasp the concept of God's necessary existence, no question remains as to whether he exists or not. Barth's monograph, 'Faith Seeking Understanding' was the original title of Anselm's *Proslogium*, similar in turn to a statement by Augustine – 'I believe in order to understand'. Barth suggested that Anselm's argument is cast in the form of a prayer, and is a faith statement – a faith intuition given to Anselm that God exists. The creature cannot prove the creator – awareness of God comes from God's self-revelation, not from logic.

Candidates might analyse arguments such as these, none of which is particularly convincing. Malcolm's anti-real view seems odd, in so far as believers have no need of a logical proof of God's existence. Moreover Malcolm's comparison with grasping the truth of the infinity of the sequence of prime numbers is weak, since this is a demonstrable mathematical truth, and not something that needs an intuitive grasp. Barth's interpretation seems little better, since Anselm states in the preface to the *Proslogium* that he has found a 'proof' of God's existence; moreover Anselm interpreted Gaunilo's objection to his argument as an attack on correct reasoning, and he calls unbelievers 'fools'. Wittgenstein's approach cannot even consider the possibility that the OA is a logical proof of God's existence, but does admit that it might have that status for believers. The suggestion that the *only* success of the OA is in supporting the faith of believers might be countered by the possibility that the argument succeeds, although few believe that it does, since the critique by Kant and Hume seems to destroy it. If the argument really does fail, then of what value is it to faith? As a believer, Aquinas, for example, rejected the argument on the grounds that we cannot know God's essence. Some might suggest that the value of the argument lies in its being a training ground for discussing synthetic and analytic propositions, or in its historical value as the analytic argument amongst the other empirical 'proofs'. The fact that the argument refuses to die implies that it has a certain fascination and attraction.

Page 18	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

OR

- 9 'Religious experiences tell us only about religious belief. They tell us nothing about God.'
Critically assess this claim. [25]

Candidates might approach this in a number of ways. The main problem in linking religious experience with God is that there is no agreement as to how religious experience fits into the human perceptual framework. For those who hold that religious experiences are cognitive / factual, there is an obvious difficulty in that normal cognitive perceptions are different: they involve a perceiver, a perceived object, and the method of perception. If I claim to see a tree, I am the perceiver, the tree is the perceived object, and sense experience (sight) is the mode of perception. With religious experiences, we would have to say that the perceived object is God, perceived perhaps through a sunset, or through some experience of beauty, for example; yet the simple fact is that where one perceiver might see God in the sunset, another might just see the sunset. If religious experiences are non-cognitive, then presumably the experience is given directly to the mind by processes that are numinous, or ineffable, in which case we can have no means of verifying them beyond the experiencer's claim. William James, for example, devised a test for identifying experiences as experiences of God, claiming that genuine examples of the latter display a common uninterpreted phenomenological core, namely that they are passive, ineffable, noetic and transitory. The problem with this is that others propose a larger core, including different features. Katz claims that *all* religious experiences are interpreted, by definition, by the tradition in which the experiencer stands. We appear, therefore, to be able to analyse the religious beliefs concerned, without their telling us anything about the God that supposedly is the source of them.

One common claim is that religious experiences can be seen to be from God where their effects are commensurate with the power of the experience: e.g. Saul's vision on the road to Damascus brought about a dramatic behavioural change in Saul so that he became Paul, the architect of Christianity. This is problematic also, since there are hints in the New Testament that Paul suffered from epilepsy, and the main elements of his experience are suggestive of an epileptic seizure. Equally, in modern research into religious experiences, their association with abnormal brain states is well known, and similar experiences can be induced (e.g. with Persinger's 'helmet').

Candidates might argue that the medium of the revelation from God is irrelevant, and that God might indeed use any physiological processes through which to give religious experiences to humans: William James, for example, holds that drug-induced experiences can be valid in this respect. Some might refer, for example, to near-death experiences as a form of religious experience for which there is a respectable body of scientific evidence (e.g. for the out-of-body experience stage), which suggests that mind-brain separation at death is a genuine possibility, which in turn implies that 'soul' is a valid concept. The obvious response is that however coherent such analysis might be, it gives us no information about God that could not conceivably have been generated entirely by the experiencer's brain.

Page 19	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

Topic 4 New Testament: The Four Gospels

Section A

[Extract from **Mark 16: 8-20**]

10 (a) Discuss the contents and authorship of this passage. [10]

Discussion expected regarding the identity of author of the gospel. Is Mark the young man in Mark 14:51? Is Mark writing in liaison with Peter, or does he have connections with Peter; is Mark the travelling companion of Paul (Col 4:10, 2 Tim 4:11) etc.? This discussion is relevant but will need to relate where possible to the passage set. References made to passages outside of the set text may be credited but are not necessary for the full range of marks to be employed.

There are no fewer than 3 endings in the Authorised Version to the Gospel of Mark.

The empty tomb narrative ends at 16:8 and is considered by many to be the original ending of the Gospel. The most ancient manuscripts (Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus) of the gospel finish at this point. In Codex Vaticanus there is a blank space after 16.8 as if the scribe knew that there was material missing which was unavailable. The gospel stops at 16.8 in the oldest Syriac translations, in three of the oldest Armenian manuscripts, in the Ethiopian translation, and in one important Latin manuscript. Two early church scholars, Jerome (who produced the Vulgate), and Eusebius the church historian both say that the most accurate manuscripts of Mark stop at 16.8. This is an opportunity for candidates to show what they know of the themes in Mark's Gospel. It may be argued that the gospel was designed to end at 16:8. Support of this textual analysis which draws links with the body of the gospel is anticipated. It might be argued that the focus of Mark throughout the gospel has been the passion narrative, such that the gospel is often described as a passion narrative with an extended introduction. The shorter ending gives the reader the basic information; the body is gone because 'Jesus is risen'. The Markan theme of discipleship may be discussed by students. Some may argue that it is completed with an appropriate response from the women – they are afraid because they understand the mighty work which has been accomplished (see 4:40-41, 5:15-17, 5:29-34 for similar responses recorded in Mark). Others may argue that this narrative completes the picture of complete betrayal by all of Jesus' followers. Such, and other issues, will be marked according to the quality of argument presented in relation to the question. It may be argued that Mark intends to leave all future readers of his gospel in the same position as his original readers. All must respond to the events in faith, with no visible evidence of the resurrection. The theme of discipleship and the importance of faith, it could be argued, are the issues which Mark wishes to put in focus for all Christians, particularly those of his own generation who appear to have been facing the terror of persecution. These and many other points may be used by candidates to argue that the original author of the gospel intended to complete the gospel at this point.

Many believe that the gospel ends too abruptly at 16:8, indicating that it is incomplete. There is debate about whether the ending of Mark was lost. Some (Moffatt) argue that the shorter and longer endings were added in the second century to recover the lost ending and to complete the gospel. Some have argued that Mark may have died before completing the gospel, or that the ending may have been lost due to its neglect once Matthew's gospel emerged.

Page 20	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

The longer ending or the canonical ending of the gospel finishes at v20. Irenaeus who lived and wrote in the second half of the second century uses 16:9-20 without comment about its authorship. It appears that whilst some in the early church knew that there were questions about the authorship of verses 9-20 it had nonetheless established itself as part of the gospel by the middle of the second century. In 1891 FC Conybeare discovered an Armenian manuscript in Edschmiadzin. This manuscript includes a note to say that Ariston the Presbyter wrote Mark 16: 9-20. Papias reports that Aristion was one of the sources he used for finding out about the gospels and the life of Jesus. If Aristion is Ariston then the ending of Mark may not go back to Mark or Peter but does go back to the circle of the original disciples.

The shorter ending adds a verse after v8 to say that the women did report to Peter and that Jesus sent them out 'from east to west' to spread the word. This ending is in Codex Regius and Codex Laurentis, which are eighth century manuscripts. It is also in certain Egyptian, Syrian and Ethiopian manuscripts, and in one Latin translation which lacks the longer ending. With the exception of this single Latin translation the shorter ending is always offered as an alternative ending along with the longer ending. In the Greek manuscripts it never exists alone. The shorter ending is regarded as an alternative ending, not as the only ending.

All arguments relating to content will be credited whether or not they are connected with the theme of authorship. Context, style, linguistic and textual evidence, which relate to the question, will be credited.

(b) Critically assess the significance of the resurrection narratives. [15]

Students may approach this gospel by gospel or thematically or combine both approaches. Responses may include comments on the significance of the resurrection for the Christian faith, for witness to Christian claims, for the sense of completion of the narrative, for the demonstration of Christological claims, for fulfilment of Jesus' words, for the hope of the resurrection to come. Within each gospel comments may include reference to the completion or continuation of the major themes of the gospel. Detailed knowledge of the distinctive features pertaining to each gospel writer's account, in so far as they reveal the significance of the resurrection narratives for the individual writers, would be an acceptable approach. Higher level candidates would be expected to consider the relative significance of the resurrection narratives to other parts of the tradition. For example, are the resurrection narratives more important than the crucifixion narratives, or the teachings of Jesus?

Page 21	Mark Scheme: Teachers' version	Syllabus	Paper
	Pre-U – May/June 2011	9774	02

**11 'Jesus was more interested in teaching people how to behave rather than what to believe.'
Critically assess this claim. [25]**

Candidates may focus their responses to Jesus' teaching in parables and the Sermon on the Mount, and the full range of marks will be available to those who limit their enquiry in this way. A far wider framework of reference can however be expected from higher level responses including comment on teachings implicit in the actions of Jesus. Discussion in agreement with the quotation might include reference to parables such as the Good Samaritan, the Rich Young Fool, the interpretation of the Parable of the Sower, The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Talents and many others as well as examples found in the Sermon on the Mount. Some candidates may reflect on the teachings found about behaviour in the miracle stories, such as the Stilling of the Storm and the Woman with a Flow, as well as the pattern for human life given in Jesus' own example. By way of contrast candidates may offer commentary on the proclamation of the Kingdom, the claims Jesus appears to have made about himself, apocalyptic sayings, as well as the resurrection narratives.

Reflection on the work of Biblical critics who have argued that the early church was instrumental in both the selection and preservation of material might be used to argue that little can be known about the actual teachings of Jesus at all. Others might conclude that belief and behaviour are simply two sides of the same coin, meaning that there is a focus on neither one nor the other.

12 Critically examine the claim that the only purpose of the crucifixion narratives is to establish that Jesus truly died. [25]

Candidates are expected to select evidence from across all four gospels to support this claim. Higher level responses will identify similarities and differences between the gospels and examine the theological and historical importance of the death of Jesus to the gospel writers and to the Christian faith. This might include reflection upon the suspicions raised by Jesus' relatively quick death, in circumstances where death by crucifixion was designed to be a prolonged event, the shadow cast upon the resurrection accounts if Jesus did not truly die, and the accusation that the disciples stole the body. Theological reflections on the work of atonement and salvation might be included as requiring Jesus to truly die.

Evaluative responses will focus on whether there are other purposes of the narratives which might be considered equally important. Candidates may look at the work of redaction critics, which has suggested that the individual purposes of the gospel writers continues throughout the crucifixion narratives (the words from the cross might be employed constructively, but there are numerous other features which could be drawn upon). Some candidates may argue that the main purpose of the crucifixion narrative is to relate the inauguration of a new covenant, salvation, atonement etc. Others may argue that the main purpose is Christological, to reveal Jesus as Messiah / Son of God etc.

A mature response will reveal understanding of the nature of salvation history in which the events of salvation are revealed in, through and by the 'historical' narrative.