Markscheme

May 2016

Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1

How to use the Diploma Programme Philosophy markscheme

The assessment markbands constitute the formal tool for marking examination scripts, and in these assessment markbands examiners can see the skills being assessed in the examinations. The markschemes are designed to assist examiners in possible routes taken by candidates in terms of the content of their answers when demonstrating their skills of doing philosophy through their responses. The points listed are not compulsory points, and not necessarily the best possible points. They are a framework to help examiners contextualize the requirements of the question, and to facilitate the application of marks according to the assessment markbands listed on page 5 for the core theme and page 8 for the optional themes.

It is important that examiners understand that the main idea of the course is to promote *doing* philosophy, and this involves activity and engagement throughout a two-year programme, as opposed to emphasizing the chance to display knowledge in a terminal set of examination papers. Even in the examinations, responses should not be assessed on how much candidates *know* as much as how they are able to use their knowledge in support of an argument, using the skills referred to in the various assessment markbands published in the subject guide, reflecting an engagement with philosophical activity throughout the course. As a tool intended to help examiners in assessing responses, the following points should be kept in mind when using a markscheme:

- The Diploma Programme Philosophy course is designed to encourage the skills of *doing* philosophy in the candidates. These skills can be accessed through reading the assessment markbands in the subject guide
- The markscheme does not intend to outline a model/correct answer
- The markscheme has an introductory paragraph which contextualizes the emphasis of the question being asked
- The bullet points below the paragraph are suggested possible points of development that should *not* be considered a prescriptive list but rather an indicative list where they might appear in the answer
- If there are names of philosophers and references to their work incorporated into the markscheme, this should help to give context for the examiners and does *not* reflect a requirement that such philosophers and references should appear in an answer: They are possible lines of development.
- Candidates can legitimately select from a wide range of ideas, arguments and concepts in service of the question they are answering, and it is possible that candidates will use material effectively that is *not* mentioned in the markscheme
- Examiners should be aware of the command terms for Philosophy as published on page 54 of the Philosophy subject guide when assessing responses
- In Paper 1, examiners must be aware that a variety of types of answers and approaches, as well as a freedom to choose a variety of themes, is expected. Thus, examiners should not penalize different styles of answers or different selections of content when candidates develop their response to the questions. The markscheme should not imply that a uniform response is expected
- In markschemes for the core theme questions in Paper 1 (section A) the bullet points suggest possible routes of response to the stimulus, but it is critical for examiners to understand that the selection of the philosophical issue raised by the stimulus, is *entirely at the choice of the candidate* so it is possible for material to gain credit from the examiner even if none of the material features in the markscheme.

Note to examiners

Candidates at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the Core Theme
(Section A). Candidates at Higher Level answer **two** questions on the Optional Themes (Section B),
each based on a different Optional Theme.
Candidates at Standard Level answer **one** question on the Optional Themes (Section B).

Paper 1 Section A markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is minimal or no explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • There is little relevant knowledge demonstrated, and the explanation is superficial. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is descriptive and lacking in analysis.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is some limited explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is demonstrated but lacks accuracy and relevance, and there is a basic explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is some limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response, although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is a basic explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is mostly accurate and relevant, and there is a satisfactory explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally organised, and can be easily followed. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is good justification of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge. There is a good explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately. • The response contains critical analysis. There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. Most of the main points are justified.
21–25	• The response is well structured, focused and effectively organised. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is a well-developed justification of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge. There is a well-developed explanation of the issue. There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response. • The response contains well developed critical analysis. There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. All or nearly all of the main points are justified. The response argues from a consistently held position about the issue.

Section A

Core theme: Being human

1.   **Article from *United Nations Millennium Declaration***   **[25]**

The following paragraphs provide only a framework to help examiners in their assessment of responses to this question. Examiners should be responsive to a variety of philosophical perspectives and approaches. Examiners should be aware that candidates might respond to this passage in a variety of ways including ones not mentioned in the summary below.

This question requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts in the set passage, related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. Responses are likely to focus on human nature. This could include discussion of issues such as individuality and universality. Alternatively responses could focus on the key concept of freedom, discussing issues and concepts related to the opposition between freedom and determinism, or focus on issues such as identity and personhood, exploring questions in relation to social and cultural identity.

Responses should make explicit reference to the passage. Candidates may for example pick up on individual parts of the passage, discussing different positions on human nature or general social theories.

Alternatively candidates may pick up on the references to central notions such as "human rights and fundamental freedoms" and make links to conceptions of freedom and conceptions of personhood.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Human possibilities and limits (at individual, communal, societal or global level) of constructing a more peaceful, prosperous and just world
- Pessimism and optimism regarding the origin and destination of humanity
- The individual and the community/society/state
- Theories of the state of nature based on human nature: Rousseau and the noble savages living in harmony with each other and with nature. Theory of evolution, natural selection, the idea of "social Darwinism". Hobbes's view of all against all
- Approaches to aggression, war, cooperation and peace that reflect a worldview, not necessarily drawing on a classical philosophical school, but on religious, political or cultural perspectives, *eg*, traditional non-Western views; wars as being fought in the minds of people, "cultivate peace in their minds and there will be no wars" (*Bhagavad Gita*)
- Can a human be in charge of his or her own destiny? Is it possible that all aspects of life are predetermined?
- Perhaps life has no sense external to humanity. Does this devalue living and make life pointless?
- Is it a common human activity to search for the meaning of life?
- What is it to be a person? The extent of this notion. Could animals or machines be persons? Which are the defining features of being a person or human?
- The extent to which being part of a race, sex, language or religion is (and should be acknowledged as) constitutive of the individual's and community's identity
- Difficulties in realizing those ideals, *ie* violations of human rights, wars, or economic interests.

2.   Image of astronaut   **[25]**

The following paragraphs provide only a framework to help examiners in their assessment of responses to this question. Examiners should be responsive to a variety of philosophical perspectives and approaches. Examiners should be aware that candidates might respond to this passage in a variety of ways including ones not mentioned in the summary below.

This question requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts in the picture, related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. Responses are likely for example to focus on the relation between the human being and nature as being constitutive of the human condition, or on the place of man in the cosmos as an indication of central questions such as the origin and finality of human existence as an individual and/or member of a species. The discussions could explore positive philosophical and religious interpretations of the origin and destiny of the human existence or negative interpretations of the human life such as nihilism, fatalism, philosophy of the absurd, *etc*. Alternatively the response may focus on the concept of individual identity, with discussion focusing on the questions: Who am I/who are we?

Responses should make explicit reference to the picture. They may, for example, make reference to the relation between the human being and outer space or the Earth. Alternatively they may focus on an immediate interpretation of the stimulus referring to the conquest of space, making references to the human capacities deploying knowledge and technology. Responses could also, for example, refer to the usual feelings when we encounter extreme situations in nature in relation to *eg*, infinity and sublimity, leading also to discussions on God(s) and religion. Further, this stimulus might encourage a reflection on the extent to which the relation with an origin or creator is a central distinctive feature of the human condition. On a different note candidates may also for example pick up on some salient features such as the shadow, the equipment, the loneliness or the question whether we are seeing a human being or a robot.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Exploring and inhabiting as the transformation or manipulation of nature (the existing physical and biological environments) to satisfy human needs and goals
- For some, human life takes place "between Earth and sky". Where would we be according to the picture?
- Interpretations of the human condition: Biological and social necessities; social conditioning
- Implications of the possible biological transformations of the human body living outside the Earth
- Investing in the exploration of outer space when we are confronted with the desires and needs of the human population
- Are we imprisoned by the technological development?
- Is technology transforming human nature?
- Human nature and its continuity in the future
- Man or robot? What is it to be a person? Could machines be persons?
- Infinity; mythological traditions, physics and mathematics. Discussions on forms of infinity, the universe and the search for a principle or God(s)
- Religious approaches to the nature and purpose of human beings
- Man as tool-maker/practical animal, and man as a colonizer/dominator
- The extent to which humans are driven by a natural desire to reach for the unknown
- The human right – or not – to explore beyond the world
- The urge in humans to explore and go beyond their limits or the ability to redefine their limits
- Controlling technology and conquering new territory: Are these universal or more particular features of the human condition? When these are foregrounded, are there other traits of the human condition or other humans that are obscured?

Paper 1 Section B markbands

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. The response lacks coherence and is often unclear. • The student demonstrates little relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is mostly descriptive. There is no discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The student demonstrates knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, but this knowledge lacks accuracy and relevance. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Some of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • Knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme is mostly accurate and relevant. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally organised, and can be easily followed. • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately. • The response contains critical analysis. There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. Most of the main points are justified.
21–25	• The response is well structured, focused and effectively organised. • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response. • The response contains well-developed critical analysis. There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. All or nearly all of the main points are justified. The response argues from a consistently held position about the issue.

Section B

Optional theme 1: Aesthetics

3. **Evaluate the claim that art can reveal truth.** **[25]**

This question asks for an investigation of the purpose of art and whether that purpose might be restricted to revealing or presenting truth. The claim might be that art creates its own truth. It suggests that art is more than mere imitation and has the ability to give us access to types of truth. Different forms of art can address different types of truth, *eg*, literature might convey insights into moral truths whereas some decorative arts could portray truths, values and expectations. Artists seemingly often use art to express their own political perspective, these might be seen as alternative truths. It might be asked as to whether it is possible for art to convey a universal truth, the very essence of humanity. This might be contrasted with examples from the whole spectrum of art forms and the cultural variations of form and expression. The artistic depictions of nature might bring new insights of the true essence of nature.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Contrasts between representative art and impressionism and expressionism might raise the issue of the conveyance of human emotion in a more accessible form
- A counter position might be developed through analysis of form and colour in abstract portrayal; yet abstraction might be seen as a truth about colour or shape
- Aesthetic judgments might stress a focus on truth, as good art is seen as revealing the essence of nature
- Issues of composition in both visual and musical art forms might be seen as constructed in such a way so as to deliberately convey a new truth
- The revelation of truth in the beholder as opposed to the creator: The audience extracts their own subjective truth
- Sacred art and truth
- Can art reveal moral truth?
- What truth might conceptual art convey?

4. **Evaluate the claim that the artist should be free of social restrictions.** **[25]**

This question invites an evaluation of issues of censorship in art countered with unrestricted self-expression. In terms of censorship issues of motive and drive behind restriction might be raised. Is art by definition challenging the boundaries of conventions and therefore inevitably creating a discussion about control? Pursuit of the social restriction rather than all restriction might allow consideration of exclusive private activity being not restricted, whereas art in the social arena would have restrictions.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- What forms of social restrictions might there be?
- Are there social norms and mores that art ought to work within and are these cultural based or universal?
- Are artists tools of society and the state, or are they free agents? Examples might come from the Soviet Union or fascist Europe or from corporate sponsorship of the arts
- Can art be a form of social or political protest?
- If art is concerned with emotion and expression why should it be controlled?
- The freedom of the artist expands the human condition more so than any other human activity and creates opportunities for paradigm shifts
- If no restrictions apply, are artists above and beyond legal, moral or social constraint?

Optional theme 2: Epistemology

5.   **Explain and discuss the role played by social agreement and sharing in making opinion and belief tools of objective knowledge.** **[25]**

This question focuses on a traditional key point of epistemology: The origin of knowledge and the possibilities of its objectivity. Particularly, it offers the chance to analyse the role played by society and culture in rendering our knowledge objective or acceptable. Some questions that might arise from the topic would concern the relation between relativism and certainty, coherence and truth, perception and experience, social convention and practice. Moreover, if what is knowledgeable depends upon social agreement and sharing, knowledge is reduced to social acceptability. The question also invites an exploration of the criteria and methodologies of knowledge and what makes things real: Is social agreement sufficient to make an opinion true? What makes some ideas to be believed as real? What renders some beliefs persistent in time or spread in space? Some references might be made to Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Wittgenstein and Searle. The possibilities of knowledge in Kant's theory or Searle's theory of social construction might be two useful approaches.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Criteria used to justify beliefs
- Is social agreement a sufficient criterion for truth?
- Is reality necessarily connected to the content of truth?
- Illusions; limits of perception
- Coherence as possible justification of beliefs
- Social origin of behaviours, practices and norms
- Role and meaning of mysticism
- Language as expression of social agreement
- Theory of social construction of reality.

6.   "Knowledge is power." Discuss and evaluate Bacon's claim.   [25]

This question calls for a wide analysis of a core topic: The relationship between knowledge and power. According to Bacon's statement, the access to knowledge might affect power. The question invites the examination of some key points, such as whether all the people and countries have the same opportunities to access knowledge, whether technology improves access, the consequences of the digital divide and the presence of censorship. An argument might refer to ideology as controlled knowledge, *ie*, in totalitarianism. Historical examples of institutions controlling knowledge might be given. The question invites an evaluation of the relationship between knowledge and power in both directions: Knowledge as a tool to increase power and power as a tool to limit others' knowledge or to improve its dissemination. Useful references to approach the question might be Plato's Allegory of the Cave and the relation between ignorance and imprisonment; Foucault's view of power as creator of truth and knowledge; Gramsci's concept of hegemony; Jonas's principle of responsibility and the relation between technology and knowledge; Debord's theory of knowledge as a mirror of the society of the spectacle; Ortega y Gasset's view of knowledge linked to specialism and mass society.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Historical cases of knowledge control, limitation or censorship
- Technology as a tool for dissemination of knowledge
- Digital divide, *ie*, issues connected to the access to technology, therefore to knowledge
- Ignorance as a tool for power
- Ignorance and slavery, knowledge and freedom
- Is some knowledge too dangerous to disseminate?
- Cultural hegemony.

Optional theme 3: Ethics

7. **To what extent do you agree with the claim that ethics is more about self-interest than about the interests of others?** **[25]**

    The question opens a discussion on a central issue of normative ethics and allows for taking different lines of answer. One would be to support what might be called ethical egoism. Another way would be to take the opposite direction, *eg*, maintaining that ethics might be defined when we take a person's moral beliefs to be the beliefs he/she has about how to live his/her life when he/she takes into account in a sympathetic way the impact of his/her life and decisions on others.

    In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
    *   The conception that ethical egoism is parallel to utilitarianism: The utilitarian holds that one should maximize the good of all beings in the universe; the egoist holds instead that the good one is ultimately to aim at is only one's own
    *   The empirical hypothesis of psychological egoism: Human beings seek to maximize their own good
    *   Ethical egoism can approve of behaviour that benefits others, for often the best way to promote one's good is to form cooperative relationships. However, the egoist cannot approve of an altruistic justification for such cooperation; altruism requires benefiting others merely for their sake, whereas the egoist insists that one's ultimate goal must be solely one's own good
    *   There is no fact about oneself that justifies excluding others from one's ultimate end. Does egoism violate our sense of impartiality?
    *   The extent to which altruism is possible
    *   Hobbes has been widely read as a psychological egoist and was criticized by such philosophers as Hutcheson, Rousseau and Hume, who sought to show that benevolence, pity and sympathy are as natural as self-love
    *   Contemporary approaches to egoism and altruism, *eg*, psychoanalysis, evolutionary psychology, evolutionary ethics
    *   Religious views
    *   Since ethical life and ethical judgments imply the relation with others, is ethical egoism self-contradictory?
    *   The idea of common good
    *   Cooperation as an economic approach to behaviour; *eg*, Game theory or the Prisoner's Dilemma
    *   Approaches from one of the standard ethical theories, *eg*, teleological, utilitarian or deontological.

8.   Evaluate the claim that rationality offers a justifiable foundation for moral judgments.   [25]

The question asks for an evaluation of one of the main ways of justifying moral judgments. If rationality is the source of normativity, one must show why rational responses to some desires, intentions, or plans have normative force, so can be used to show that certain sorts of action are required. How can rational responses provide or constitute norms? The normative claims of morality based on rationality have been criticized, *eg*, by Nietzsche and others. Obligations are accused of being constraining and forbidding, even repellent and corrupting. Rational normativity is not confined to principles and obligations. It is pervasive. Goodness and virtue too imply rational norms to which we may or may not live up. A significant rational justification is provided by using the Kantian test, as when somebody asks himself whether he can act on certain maxims (principles, intentions, projects) regardless of his particular roles, desires, *etc*, or, equivalently, whether those maxims could be universally adopted. In this case reflection does not invoke any external or alien considerations, such as the norms of roles or of traditions, state or other powers.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Are there moral truths? Do we simply have a variety of feelings and attitudes about moral issues, with there being nothing in virtue of which one side of a disagreement is correct and the other incorrect?
- Descartes's emphasis of the place of rationalism in moral judgments
- Other approaches to justifications of moral judgments include belief in a higher being, emotion, natural law, gender, or environment among others
- The opposition between the rational attempts to ground normativity and biological, psychological, sociological *etc*, explanations of morality
- Kantian rational reflective scrutiny rejects any maxims and obligations which cannot be willed as universal laws
- Other possible views on ethical justifications impartiality, or assessments from different approaches to ethics, such as feminist ethics, Marxist or Foucaultian views, non-Western perspectives
- "The good life": Plato and Aristotle thought that the human purpose or function is to do what people do best or uniquely. Human purpose in this view would be to fulfill human nature or potential, which centrally implies rational achievement
- Moral reasons – not objective/material facts, but a form of reasoning that points to the reality of moral states of affairs.

Optional theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. **"If triangles were to make gods for themselves, they would give them three sides." Discuss and evaluate Montesquieu's claim with reference to a modern, multicultural world.   [25]**

    This question invites a wide analysis of what is meant by culture. Reference to multiculturalism, changing societies and globalization might be useful. The question arises from Montesquieu's claim, in order to offer the opportunity to explore whether cultures and societies produce their own values, merge or develop separately. The topic also focuses on the concepts of relativism, tolerance, sex, race, gender, and religion as differences, involving the issues linked to intolerance and respect in modern social contexts. Reference to philosophers such as Locke, Hume, Kant, Rawls, Sen, Taylor might be useful. The importance of education and democracy as free circulation of ideas as possibilities of comparison with other cultures might be underlined, *eg*, with reference to Dewey or Chomsky. Another key point might aim to the analysis of the role of tradition within societies in contrast with innovation and social change.

    In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
    - Are societies distinct or do they overlap?
    - Self-referentiality
    - Connection between multiculturalism and relativism
    - Does multiculturalism foster tolerance?
    - Multiculturalism and minorities
    - Sexual orientation issues
    - The role of technology in shaping modern societies
    - The role of traditions.

10.   **Explain and discuss the claim that equality before the law is different from equality of rights.** **[25]**

This question focuses on the central topic of liberty and rights. Specifically, it invites the analysis of the relationship between liberty and equality. According to Bobbio, equality before the law guarantees the equal treatment of the citizens who follow the rule of the law, while equality of rights goes beyond, fostering equal opportunities. Reference to the distinction between liberalism and socialism might be useful. One more point might be the analysis of the difference between legal and human rights. Analysis of the distinction between positive and negative liberty is another possible path. Historical cases of social equality policies or efforts might be mentioned, such as socialism in 1980s Eastern Europe. Bernstein and Marx might be other key points. The question also invites a discussion on egalitarianism, social justice, and civil rights: Rawls, Nozick or Sen might be used as references, specifically considering Sen's definition of liberty as depending upon real opportunities ("functionings" and "capabilities"). Exploration of welfare and its evolution might be approached.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Different types of equality
- Legal and human rights
- Equal opportunities
- Is equality connected to liberty?
- Liberalism and socialism
- Welfare and social justice.

Optional theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. **Evaluate the claim that it is not possible to live harmoniously in multicultural and multi-faith societies and still insist the particular truths and practices of your religion are the only correct ones.** **[25]**

This question invites a discussion and an evaluation of the claim that in a multicultural society, the diversity of religious traditions and moral views makes illegitimate any claim to objective truth with regards to religious beliefs. An argument in support of this claim is that with reflection upon these other religious views comes a reassessment of personal views (Quinn). This is an epistemic obligation. Quinn argues that with undeniable religious diversity, an individual's conviction that his/her beliefs are superior to others will weaken, and this weakening will lead to greater acceptance and tolerance. Strict fideism rejects the idea that religious beliefs are appropriate for rational analysis, or that such analysis indicates a lack of faith. A religious exclusivist would deny the earlier claim that parties are under an epistemic obligation to reassess their claims, and also deny epistemic parity to the other (Plantinga). Further, an exclusivist might see no moral arrogance in their proselytizing activities; many see them as a moral duty. In practice, if there is no epistemic accommodation in these societies, then there is tolerance, and an agreement to obey the laws, though the extent of the adherence to this obligation is a possible point for discussion.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- On the issue of reassessing my beliefs, am I not just as likely to confirm them, as I am to question them, regardless of the religious diversity present?
- Does belief reassessment in the face of religious diversity resolve the debate over conflicting religious perspectives in an objective manner?
- Various contexts and institutions that exhibit either religious diversity or exclusivity: Schools, charities, hospitals, *etc*
- What obligations are individuals under if the law of the state conflicts with religious observances or prohibitions, such as military service, or the content of education?
- If members of the same religion cannot agree on what their God(s) represent, then what hope is there of an accommodation with members of other religions?
- Atheists might argue that since there exists no divine reality, any claims to unique truths are false
- If an exclusivist is of the sincere belief that they possess the truth, are they morally obligated to attempt to convert others to their perspective?
- How pervasive is religious diversity? Does the reality of this diversity require a response?

12. Evaluate the claim that as God or gods is/are beyond human understanding, then any attempt to determine the characteristics of God(s) is a self-defeating exercise. **[25]**

This question asks for a discussion and an evaluation of the central idea of determining and understanding the qualities of God(s). Ancient God(s) *eg*, the Greeks, were God(s) conceived with human capriciousness and jealousies, while monotheism conceives of a God beyond all human understanding. The anthropomorphism still explicit in the monotheistic conceptions of God leads to paradoxes when discussing his/her attributes. In Hinduism the elusive and ungraspable nature of some God(s) is also evident, while in Buddhism there is no belief in God(s) as it is an idea based in fear. Many terms used to describe God(s) in theistic traditions are used analogously, as when God(s) is referred to as a father, shepherd, or fountain. More difficult to classify are descriptions of God(s) as good, personal, knowing, omnipresent, and creative. A theistic thought experiment would seek to extend our understanding of knowledge as we think of it in our own case, working toward the conception of a maximum or supreme intellectual perfection befitting the believer's understanding of God(s). Degrees of refinement would then be in order, as one speculates not only about the extent of a maximum set of known propositions, but also about how these might be known. That is, in attributing omniscience to God(s), would one thereby claim God(s) knows all truths in a way that is analogous to the way we come to know truths about the world? Too close an analogy would produce a peculiar picture of God(s) relying upon, for example, induction, sensory evidence, or the testimony of others. Also, if God(s) knows what my actions are in the future, do I really possess a free will? Theists like Swinburne argue that in the case of free will, our epistemic idea of omniscience should be limited to that of all of our human knowledge of what is possible to be known at any one time, *ie*, the past and the present. What counts as evidence is also a source of dispute.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Is Wittgenstein's edict that "what we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence", applicable to speaking about the nature of God(s)? Is this a truth evident to mystics and the mystical arms of religions?
- Aquinas's *via negativa*
- God(s) as "the first cause" or the "first mover"; are God(s)'s actions the only means of classifying him/her?
- The sources for determining the characteristics of God(s): Texts, visions, myths, personal experience
- Fideism
- Hick's epistemic distance
- The plurality of interpretative methodologies used when reading religious texts: Historical, political, mythological, literal, psychoanalytic, gender reading, *etc*
- Could intuition and revelation be equally good if there are not better ways to understand God(s)?
- Is speculation on the characteristic of God(s) as much as a believer can expect?

Optional theme 6: Philosophy of science

13. **Science depends on observation in order to draw conclusions. Evaluate the implications of this claim.** **[25]**

This question is not so much about the role of observation in the scientific method (although that may well perhaps be raised in the answer) but more it is about evaluating what the implications are of drawing conclusions (often couched as "laws") from observations made through sense experience. As such the answers will probably look closely at induction as a central feature of scientific argumentation, and the famous problems associated with induction, as expounded by Hume. Aristotle (and later thinkers) did not think that the only method of science was induction however, and he allowed for deduction as a legitimate part of the scientific process – reasoning from abstractions to explain phenomena observed empirically. So, answers will not necessarily focus only on induction. Nonetheless, the central question is what issues with scientific conclusions arise when these conclusions are based on observations, and there has been a long debate through the centuries involving philosophers like Aristotle, Bacon, Hume, Mill, Popper and Kuhn. Answers may well concentrate on the problems of induction, the hypothetico-deductive method and the issue of falsification. Answers may offer a response to the verification and falsification debate of the 20th century and make reference to Kuhn and his view that science is dynamic due to a conjunction of concepts and ideas, many of which will have been observed, but through the filter of a paradigm.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The rooting of science in empirical observation from Aristotle to the 21st century
- The roles of induction and deduction in the scientific method
- The problem of induction
- Verification and its role in the test for meaningfulness
- The emphasis on housing hypotheses in the hypothetico-deductive method
- Falsification and the need to show the grounds by which hypotheses can be shown to be false
- Positivism
- Popper's falsifiability
- Paradigms and Kuhn
- Pragmatism
- The work of Feyerabend and instrumentalism
- The suspicion of "scientism" by some philosophers.

14. To what extent can science contribute to understanding the mind?   [25]

This question encourages the development of a response that considers the concept of the mind and how it can be understood, especially in consideration of the way science can contribute. Understanding of the mind has been a philosophical question of long-standing and thinkers have offered many contributions to how to conceive of the mind, from denying its existence altogether, to suggesting that the mind – and consciousness – could be built, or at least simulated, artificially. Thinkers have also considered the issue of the minds of non-human animals, and ethical discussions ensue from this. This answer does not require an exhaustive list of different philosophical positions on how the mind works, or what it is (although this may be used in support of an argument). Rather its emphasis is on understanding how science, and its empirical method, most recently in cognitive and neuroscience, seeks to offer an explanation replacing metaphysical or religious views that formerly predominated. The work of various thinkers may well be referred to from Plato to Descartes, and in more recent times positions like behaviourism and functionalism and other theories of mind-body interaction could feature. However, the focus should be on the relevance – indeed the possibility – of applying science to the mind. Famous recent philosophical debate has been had between Dennett and Searle, and involved a treatment of intentionality. Psychology has also contributed and answers may seek to evaluate whether a psychological explanation works as a scientific explanation. B F Skinner's famous work may be referenced. Attacks on materialism from philosophers like Nagel or Midgeley might be used as examples against the adaptivity of science to understanding the mind. Work by thinkers propagating Artificial Intelligence may be used in support, including thinkers like Turing.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- How science uses observation and induction and deduction to reach conclusions
- The relationship of the brain to the mind
- Materialist explanations of the mind may include biological perspectives *eg*, Armstrong, Smart, Dunbar, Dennett, Damasio, or computational perspectives from Turing *etc*
- The criticism of scientific approaches to the mind, including intentionality *eg*, Searle
- Behaviourism, phenomenalism, functionalism, type-identity theory
- The appropriateness of Darwinism to study of the mind; socio-biology and evolutionary psychology and the mind
- Is psychology a science?
- Idealism and the rejection of materialism
- Dualism
- The role of linguistics in study of the mind
- The study of minds in non-human animals
- Drugs and brain injury as causes of mental change
- Pseudoscience and the mind *eg*, Sidgwick, Merton.

Optional theme 7: Political philosophy

15. Evaluate the claim that universal human rights can only exist effectively within a democratic political system. [25]

This question asks for a discussion and an evaluation of the issue of the implied argument and its conclusion: That the values and structures of a democratic system are the only ones capable of giving any value and meaning to the idea of human rights. A main consideration is the historical development of rights from Roman law, through the Magna Carta, French and American declarations, to the United Nations. Human rights are usually considered as norms that help protect all people everywhere from political, legal and social abuses. Examples of human rights are the right to freedom of religion, the right to a fair trial when charged with a crime, the right not to be tortured, and the right to engage in political activity. The conception of these as universal is often traced to Kant. The point is that human rights have evolved from specific histories and cultures and the appeal to universality is a mistake. Deciding on which rights are universal human rights is also a source of dispute. Not every inequity or disadvantage is considered a violation of a human right; *eg*, a country may have inadequate hospital facilities, or income inequity without violating any human rights.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- One argument against the concept of universal human rights is that in defining these as fundamental to individuals, it conceives falsely of the individual as unrelated to others; *ie*, it is not possible for individuals to have interests without reference to others
- Other political systems also produce other universal rights: The right to full employment, the right to shelter and protection, *etc*
- The symbolic value of the UN Declaration of Human Rights as an ideal rather than a reality
- Is the task self-defeating: Does the diversity of peoples and cultures across the world make it impossible to capture a universal set of rights?
- Relativists sometimes accuse human rights advocates of ethnocentrism, arrogance, and cultural imperialism
- Are economically developed nations the only ones realistically capable of supporting a justice system that can successfully implement and support a universal set of human rights?
- Discuss the extent to which rights, to be effective need a political institution to guarantee them, like a state
- Discuss why/the extent to which a democratic state is more likely to guarantee important human rights.

16. Discuss and evaluate whether the state has an obligation to enact laws and support institutions that make individuals better people.   **[25]**

This question invites a discussion and an evaluation of a central obligation explicit in many political philosophies: That one of the fundamental reasons for the creation and maintenance of the state, whether through a social contract, or other origins, is that the state enacts laws that at some level encourage civic and personal virtue. Some, like Aristotle, believe the state can help people with the cultivation of virtuous character. Others, like Bentham, believe that legal and political reform can contribute significantly toward maximizing human utility. Hegel believed that states can embody the highest expression of freedom, and morality is the expression of freedom. Though the rationale is still a moral one, Libertarian views of the role of the state and virtue argue in the opposite direction: That not acting is in the best moral interests of the citizen, and their own virtue is a private matter. The accusation often brought by Libertarians and others against this role for the state is that of paternalism and legal moralism.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
*   Can there be an objective view of betterment of humans? Aristotle and Nussbaum
*   If the state is under no obligation to make an individual more virtuous, then does it still have a duty to be fair and equitable? Are fairness and equity in the state necessary for an individual's virtue?
*   Mill, like Bentham, thought the state as a vehicle for improving morality and the ethics of individuals, and his Harm Principle acts as a limit to the extent the state may develop laws that infringe on individual liberty; it is usually via social approbation and rational argument that individuals change their behaviours
*   The question also raises issues such as when religious beliefs come into conflict with the demands of civil law, like blood transfusions, or military service
*   Are there significant differences between laws that protect an individual from themselves, like drug prohibitions, or laws made for the greater good, like jury duty, and laws that make them a better person?
*   Are the essential roles of the state to protect life and property through an impartial justice system? Are any other activities beyond its mandate?