



# **MARKSCHEME**

**May 2012**

**PHILOSOPHY**

**Higher Level and Standard Level**

**Paper 1**

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**Note to examiners**

*This markscheme outlines what members of the paper setting team had in mind when they devised the questions. The topics listed in the bullet points indicate possible areas candidates might cover in their answers. They are not compulsory points and not necessarily the best possible points. They are only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Examiners should be responsive to any other valid points or any other valid approaches.*

**Using the assessment criteria**

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).

Answers on the Core Theme and the Optional Themes are assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on pages 4 to 5 and 8 to 9.

**Paper 1 Section A assessment criteria****A Expression**

- Has the student presented the answer in an organized way?
- How clear and precise is the language used by the student?
- To what extent is the language appropriate to philosophy?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.   |
| 1                        | The student expresses some basic ideas but it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. The use of language is not appropriate to philosophy.   |
| 2                        | The student presents some ideas in an organized way. There is some clarity of expression but the answer cannot always be followed. The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy.                |
| 3                        | The student presents ideas in an organized way and the answer can be easily followed. The use of language is appropriate to philosophy.  |
| 4                        | The student presents ideas in an organized and coherent way and the answer is clearly articulated. The use of language is effective and appropriate to philosophy.   |
| 5                        | The student presents ideas in an organized, coherent and incisive way, insights are clearly articulated and the answer is focused and sustained. The use of language is precise and appropriate to philosophy. |

**B Knowledge and understanding**

- To what extent does the student demonstrate knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme?
- How well has the student understood the philosophical arguments and concepts used?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.   |
| 1                        | The student demonstrates a superficial knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. There is only a basic understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.  |
| 2                        | The student demonstrates some knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. There is a limited understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.  |
| 3                        | The student demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme. Philosophical arguments and concepts are satisfactorily understood.   |
| 4                        | The student demonstrates a good knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the core theme, which is used effectively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are largely understood.                       |
| 5                        | The student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the philosophical issues arising from the core theme, which is used incisively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are well understood. |

**C Identification and analysis of relevant material**

- How clearly has the student identified a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme?
- To what extent does the student present and explore two different philosophical approaches to the issue arising from the core theme?
- How effectively does the student critically discuss the issue arising from the core theme?
- How effectively does the student identify and analyse relevant counter-arguments?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.  |
| 1–2                      | The student shows little awareness of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and identifies relevant material in only a limited way. There is little analysis and few or no examples are given.   |
| 3–4                      | The student shows some awareness of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and identifies some relevant material. Some appropriate examples are given.  |
| 5–6                      | The student shows an understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme and explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue. There is a satisfactory analysis of the material. Examples are generally appropriate and give some support to the answer.  |
| 7–8                      | The student shows an effective understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme. The student explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue in a convincing way. There is a compelling critical discussion of the issue. Examples are appropriate in their support of the answer. Counter-arguments are identified.  |
| 9–10                     | The student shows an in-depth understanding of a relevant philosophical issue arising from the core theme. The student explores two different philosophical approaches to the issue in a convincing, engaging and thoughtful way. There is an incisive and compelling critical discussion of the issue. Examples are appropriate and effective in their support of the answer. Counter-arguments are identified and analysed in a convincing way. |

**D Development and evaluation**

- Does the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well does the student develop and evaluate ideas and arguments?
- To what extent does the student express a relevant personal response?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.   |
| 1–2                      | The student develops ideas and arguments in a basic way with little or no evaluation of them.  |
| 3–4                      | The student develops some ideas and arguments but the development is simple, or is asserted without support or reference. There may be some basic evaluation of the ideas and arguments but it is not developed.                           |
| 5–6                      | The student develops ideas and arguments in a satisfactory way and evaluates them to some extent. There is some evidence of a relevant personal response.  |
| 7–8                      | The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is effective. There is good evidence of a relevant personal response.   |
| 9–10                     | The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held and well justified perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is compelling or subtle, and convincing. There is strong evidence of a relevant personal response. |

## SECTION A

### Core Theme: What is a human being?

#### 1. Passage from “Critical Mass” by P Ball

This question gives an opportunity to identify in the set passage a central philosophical concept or issue concerning the nature of a human being, to consider two different philosophical approaches to that concept or issue, and to explain and evaluate that concept or issue.

#### Key Points

- Relationships with others
- The essential human condition of being a social animal
- Existentialist theories
- Non-Western views that stress the community over the individual
- Reciprocity issues in terms of building the self
- Friendship and love; the notion of *philia*
- The effect of technology on the development of relationships
- I-Thou relationships compared to I-It relationships
- Consequentialist, deontological and virtue conceptions of friendship
- Socialization theories
- Technology and human relationships
- Caring and sharing aspects of friendship
- Alienation
- Friendships of pleasure, of utility, and of virtue; people as ends
- Mutuality and responsibility to others
- Power theories in respect to human relationships
- The status of family and friends in agrarian/industrial and rural/urban societies
- The importance of friends in terms of defining oneself, and in terms of support and self-fulfilment
- Virtual reality

#### Discussion

- Have post-industrialized societies become filled with isolated, lonely individuals?
- How are friendships made and maintained?
- Are friendships different in kind from relationships in social groups?
- Is there a difference between friends, associates and colleagues?
- Is friendship dependent upon culture? Might non-Western societies value family more than friends?
- Is friendship fundamental to happiness?
- If we have no friends are we lesser persons?
- What is the role of trust and/or duty in friendship?
- Can a relationship of equals cross gender and/or age?
- Is equality/mutuality/responsibility defined differently in a virtual, cyber world?
- Do friends mould each other and complement each other or can friendship be an asymmetric relationship?
- How far is “single-mindedness” a prerequisite of friendship?
- Does the bias that results from friendship affect and limit other relationships?
- Virtual reality
- Cyborgs
- Is the physical relationship necessary for the development of society?

## 2. Cartoon Image

This question gives an opportunity to identify in the cartoon image a central philosophical concept or issue concerning the nature of a human being, to consider two different philosophical approaches to that concept or issue, and to explain and evaluate that concept or issue.

### Key Points

- The mind–body problem
- The relationship of mind and brain, brain and body; identity theory
- Functionalism
- Cognitive ideas of identity
- Hemispherical theories of the brain
- Uniqueness of self
- Hindu and Buddhist notions of self
- Role of memory and experiences
- Role of the body in preserving continuity of the self
- Moral/religious/cultural issues concerning transplants
- Theories on the nature of the brain
- Monism vs. dualism
- Parallelism
- Issues of what defines death; brain death, lack of bodily functions
- Self-awareness and consciousness
- The nature of spirit and life after death; immortality
- Idealism vs. materialism
- Artificial brains and artificial intelligence

### Discussion

- What makes the self?
- Can brains contain the qualities of self?
- Non-Western views of the role of the brain; eating the brain means possessing the person and/or becoming the person
- Am I my body? Is there a non-physical side to me?
- Could transplanting brains be ethically justified?
- Does the body or brain or mind contain memory? Can memories and experiences be separated from the body?
- Futuristic theories concerning the control of the brain
- Can the “ghost in the machine” be discovered and therefore cease to be a ghost?
- Where does my personality and individuality reside?
- Freudian and other psychological theories of mind
- How far do brain diseases and illness affect our understanding of what makes us who we are?
- Issues of psychosomatic diseases, schizophrenia and research information from brain operations that divide the hemispheres of the brain

**Paper 1 Section B assessment criteria****A Expression**

- Has the student presented the answer in an organized way?
- How clear and precise is the language used by the student?
- To what extent is the language appropriate to philosophy?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.   |
| 1                        | The student expresses some basic ideas but it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. The use of language is not appropriate to philosophy.   |
| 2                        | The student presents some ideas in an organized way. There is some clarity of expression but the answer cannot always be followed. The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy.                |
| 3                        | The student presents ideas in an organized way and the answer can be easily followed. The use of language is appropriate to philosophy.  |
| 4                        | The student presents ideas in a clear and organized way and the answer is clearly articulated. The use of language is effective and appropriate to philosophy.   |
| 5                        | The student presents ideas in an organized, coherent and incisive way, insights are clearly articulated and the answer is focused and sustained. The use of language is precise and appropriate to philosophy. |

**B Knowledge and understanding**

- To what extent does the student demonstrate knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme?
- How well has the student understood the philosophical arguments and concepts used?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.   |
| 1                        | The student demonstrates a superficial knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is only a basic understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.                                    |
| 2                        | The student demonstrates some knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is a limited understanding of the philosophical arguments and concepts used.  |
| 3                        | The student demonstrates satisfactory knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical arguments and concepts are satisfactorily understood.   |
| 4                        | The student demonstrates a good knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, which is used effectively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are largely understood.                   |
| 5                        | The student demonstrates a comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, which is used incisively to support the answer. Philosophical arguments and concepts are well understood. |



**C Identification and analysis of relevant material**

- How well has the student understood the specific demands of the question?
- To what extent does the student identify and analyse relevant supporting material?
- To what extent does the student provide appropriate examples and use them to support the overall argument?
- How effectively does the student identify and analyse relevant counter-arguments?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| 0                        | The student has not reached level 1.  |
| 1–2                      | The student shows little understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material in only a limited way. There is little analysis and few or no examples are provided.   |
| 3–4                      | The student shows some understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies and analyses some relevant supporting material. Some appropriate examples are provided.   |
| 5–6                      | The student shows a satisfactory understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is nearly always relevant. There is a satisfactory analysis of this material. The examples provided are generally appropriate and give some support to the overall argument.   |
| 7–8                      | The student shows an effective understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies relevant supporting material that is analysed in a sound and thoughtful way. The examples provided are appropriate in their support of the overall argument. Counter-arguments are identified.  |
| 9–10                     | The student shows an in-depth understanding of the specific demands of the question and identifies supporting material that is always relevant. The implications of this material are analysed in detail. The examples provided are well chosen and compelling in their support of the overall argument. Counter-arguments are identified and analysed in a convincing way. |

**D Development and evaluation**

- Does the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well does the student develop and evaluate ideas and arguments?
- To what extent does the student express a relevant personal response?

| <b>Achievement Level</b> | <b>Descriptor</b>  |
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| 5–6                      | The student develops ideas and arguments in a satisfactory way and evaluates them to some extent. There is some evidence of a relevant personal response.  |
| 7–8                      | The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is effective. There is good evidence of a relevant personal response.   |
| 9–10                     | The student develops ideas and arguments from a consistently held and well justified perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments is compelling or subtle, and convincing. There is strong evidence of a relevant personal response. |

## SECTION B

### Optional Theme 1: Grounds of epistemology

#### 3. Explain and discuss the view that the truth of a proposition can only come from the way it is verified.

This question invites an explanation and discussion of the claim that arises from developments in the empirical tradition that the truth of a statement is discovered when the method of verifying the statement is known. Answers can be both broad in scope in dealing with the general problem of establishing knowledge, or more narrowly focused on the specific account of meaning and truth raised by proponents of verificationism.

#### Key Points

- Propositions as statements of knowledge and their relationship to the pursuit of knowledge and truth
- Verification as an approach to establishing criteria for knowledge
- The relationship between meaning and the truth value of a proposition/declaration
- The empiricist claim that meaning and truth are established through checking the origins of knowledge; the *tabula rasa* view of knowledge acquisition
- The contribution of empirical observation to verifying propositions
- Logical issues arising from the inductive method of empirical observation in verifying propositions
- Verifying through analysis of language
- Other approaches to establishing truth, *e.g.* non-Western ideas, religious approaches, authority, narrative traditions
- Coherence theories of truth *vs.* correspondence theories of truth

#### Discussion

- Popper's criticism of verificationism and its replacement by falsificationism
- The criticism that verificationism fails its own ability to be verified
- Wittgenstein's language games
- The issue of analytic statements in propositions – are they no more than tautologies?
- Examples of language that cannot be empirically verified; aesthetics, ethics, religion, emotional exclamation *etc.*
- The response in religion; eschatological verificationism

#### 4. Evaluate the claim that knowledge can be innate.

This question invites an evaluation of the view that some (or all) knowledge has its origin prior to experience and is in some way innate in human beings. Answers might concentrate on specific claims about knowledge being inborn (or prior to birth) or might pursue the more general claim that knowledge comes prior to experience or through structures of the mind.

##### Key Points

- The claims of rationalism about the origin of knowledge
- The counter-position of empiricism and the *tabula rasa*
- The status of knowledge that is claimed to be innate – the certainty of *a priori* knowledge compared with the contingent claims from experience gained *a posteriori*
- The notion of innate knowledge in radical theories that all knowledge can be accounted for from before birth, *e.g.* Plato, or that some knowledge can be implanted before birth, *e.g.* Descartes
- *A priori* knowledge as separate from sense experience, as opposed to specifically prior to it
- Examples of innate knowledge: the ideas of identity, perfection, the idea of God, branches of mathematics
- Hume's claim that some innate ideas may be explained by tracing them back to original sense experience, *e.g.* God, morality, the continuity of the self
- Intuition, *e.g.* Russell, Moore
- Kant's claims about categories and their role in structuring knowledge

##### Discussion

- Can innate knowledge say anything about the world?
- Descartes's certainty; the *cogito*
- The idea that mathematics describes an ultimate reality with the use of innate, *a priori* understanding
- Is *a priori* knowledge really only tautological?
- Hume's fork; matters of fact and relations of ideas
- Scepticism about the senses
- Reactions to rationalism, *e.g.* Berkeley's idealism
- Non-Western approaches to innate knowledge, *e.g.* religious and folk traditions
- Kant's response to empiricism and to Hume's challenge

## Optional Theme 2: Theories and problems of ethics

### 5. Evaluate the claim that there are some ethical principles that are universal.

This question invites an evaluation of the dichotomy between relative and universal ethical principles. Any number of these principles might be explored.

#### Key Points

- Moral relativism claims that the truth of moral judgments is relative to the conventions of a social group or even to the individual taste of the person issuing the judgment, and that these conventions or tastes are not themselves subject to any further justification
- Descriptive relativism is the social and cultural version promoted by anthropologists, while normative and meta-ethical relativism are proposed by philosophers
- Apart from the evidence of social anthropology, another proposed justification for moral relativism is from an emotional basis, *i.e.* emotive moral theory
- By contrast, deontological views posit some principle or being that is the foundation or source of moral truths. The guiding principles are either based on reason, duty, or faith. Regardless of what the moral judgments are, they are erroneous if the judgments are not based on these principles
- Ethical monism claims that there is some single ultimate feature whose presence makes right actions right and whose absence makes wrong actions wrong
- Ethical pluralism claims that there is no such single ultimate feature, but rather a small set of irreducible features whose presence or absence tends to make actions either right or wrong
- With universalism, correct moral reasoning must be understood in terms of abstracting particular cases within general moral principles. There is an assumption of rationality as the determining factor in moral judgments and actions
- Universal ethical theories may be based on arguments that appeal to the dignity of the self, *e.g.* modern monotheistic ethical theories, Western views of the autonomous individual, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Social taboos about violence, incest and other cultural/historical examples used as evidence in support of universal ethical principles

#### Discussion

- The concepts of absolute good and evil are essentially meaningless within a framework of moral relativism, and this seems counter-intuitive to beliefs about human nature
- Using anthropological and cultural evidence for and against universal ethical principles can produce examples to support either position, so, as a part of a philosophical argument, it has no value
- The possibility of moral progress
- A radical relativism would argue that the universality of reason is challenged by moral particularism, *i.e.* a rejection of the universalist requirement for moral reasoning that requires an abstraction or reification of particular cases within general principles
- Do documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have any meaning or value for a moral relativist? Are these rights merely a Western view of rights and so, as such, are culturally determined?

**6. With reference to one or more example(s) from applied ethics, evaluate the claim that human beings are the sole concern of ethical theory and ethical action.**

This question invites an evaluation of the issue of the limits of practical ethics. Issues from any area of applied ethics might be considered relevant.

**Key Points**

- The appropriate objects for moral concern: arguments for and against the claim may be based on common characteristics or qualities. With animal–human distinctions and similarities it may be rationality, ability to suffer, goal orientation, cognitive reciprocity *etc.* Arguments based on religious principles often rely on the intrinsic value of “all of God’s creatures”
- In environmental ethics, arguments may appeal to self-interest as well as intrinsic value or stewardship. Some arguments in favour of environmental protection invoke a state of nature model as justification. This usually involves a dependency, often connected to human identity and “self-realization”. Nature has a beneficent quality. As such, it often forms part of a broader argument on living a good life
- Utilitarian theory can be used to support the ethical principle that all sentient life forms deserve equal consideration. It can also be used as a principle for ignoring or denying action on environmental and animal issues
- Arguments for punishment, specifically arguments for capital punishment, often use the principle of *lex talionis* to justify punishment and the removal of moral value from the convicted criminal
- Bioethics is often concerned with the connected questions of the moral position or status, justification of treatment, and losses of moral consideration in a being’s own right, *e.g.* anencephalic infants, and those in a permanently comatose or vegetative state

**Discussion**

- Why should moral terms and considerations be applied to sentient and non-sentient beings that are (generally) incapable of moral self-awareness and reciprocity? Why should I care for a rock as much as I do for a child?
- Arguments that privilege human survival over others are labelled speciesist by opponents, and apart from biblical injunctions, supporters of speciesism need to provide justifications. Most use an evolutionary justification, that of survival and natural selection
- Speaking for those incapable of speaking for themselves often assumes duty based ethics, or an intrinsic value concept of moral agency. Are these principles based on reason or emotion?
- Is it possible to speak of the moral value of a sentient being as removable, or on a sliding scale? What of non-sentient objects?
- Are “free market” solutions morally valid answers to the question of environmental protection? Are we de-humanized if we treat the environment as another commodity?
- Is it impossible to frame an ethical position in anything other than a human-centred perspective? Does this necessarily limit our sphere of moral concern?
- If reason alone is inadequate as a criterion for moral consideration, then what other qualities are necessary? Is it necessary for these other qualities to be empirically verifiable?

### Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of religion

#### 7. Evaluate the claim that any proof for the existence of God is based on the experience of the individual.

This question asks for an evaluation of religious experience as a basis for proof of the existence of God. The broader question of the elements for proof of God's existence might also be discussed.

#### Key Points

- Types of religious experience: mysticism, prayer, and miracles. These are often introspective experiences or events experienced directly. The direct experience claims of individuals are often distinguished from the more general claims of common experience, and common interpretations of these experiences
- Faith can be initiated by specific experiences, but it may also gradually develop over time as a consequence of rational thought and life experience, often as a means of explanation or for consolation in the face of suffering and death
- Proofs based on common experiential and interpretative foundations appeal to general or specific features of the world, *e.g.* cosmological arguments and teleological arguments
- Knowledge of God through a set of shared experiences
- Establishing the veracity of such personal and common claims; not merely the means of establishing empirical/verifiable evidence, but whether the search for such verification is possible, and what might constitute verifiable evidence
- The nature of individual and common experiences is perhaps indescribable, or beyond sensory perception, so that religious experience is essentially private and correspondingly non-communicable
- The possibility that a religious experience is not separate from other parts of life and, therefore, is in the realm of being able to be described and understood by direct language
- Proofs of God's existence not based on direct personal experience: the *a priori* or ontological proofs of God's existence. The advantage of these proofs over experiential proofs is that these proofs purport to show the necessity of God

#### Discussion

- In contemporary society might a person who had a genuine encounter with a divine entity be dismissed as suffering from delusions?
- Is religious experience in fact a natural feature of human life? Is it the one aspect that makes us human?
- Is it necessary that religious experiences be, in some sense, cross-cultural?
- Has science made the idea of miracles obsolete? Are religious experiences explainable by unusual brain states or some sort of delusion?
- A mystical experience may be adequately explained in purely scientific terms; does this show that whatever it is, it does not constitute an experience of a supernatural reality? It is a basic principle of perception that we cannot be genuinely perceiving an entity that does not make a significant causal contribution to our perception of it
- We may not be in possession of such naturalistic or empirically based explanations. There are theoretical frameworks and perspectives such as psychoanalysis, or social and clinical psychology, that may provide an explanation for religious experiences
- Non-Western traditions about experience of God/gods

**8. To what extent is it possible to speak about religious ideas and practices without speaking about a particular culture?**

This question invites an assessment of the extent to which religious ideas and practices are products of cultural/historical determinants. It allows for the possible selection of any religious ideas or practices in developing an answer.

**Key Points**

- Some concepts that might be used: salvation, atonement, sacrifice, resurrection, expiatory and propitiatory worship, immortality, reincarnation, religious-based ethics *etc.*
- Cultural influences: in monotheism, festivals based on agrarian cycles were eventually supplanted and incorporated into the religious cycle of worship
- In many indigenous cultures, the natural cycle is a religious idea or living entity with many forms and manifestations, *e.g.* Australian and American indigenous peoples worship creator spirits that shaped, and continue to shape, the landscape
- The abstraction of religious ideas is often linked to the birth of a written tradition within a culture. Furthermore, any sacred text requires an active interpretation and re-interpretation of that text within a social context for its meaning
- Religious language has often been characterized as a cosmological narrative, or a historical narrative, or moral discourse, or myth, and uses many literary techniques to capture the inexpressible nature of its content. It may be argued that these are all culturally-based categories and characteristics

**Discussion**

- A common feminist critique of religion as a cultural practice is that religious ideas, language, images, narratives, and practices are framed from a predominantly male perspective
- If culture and religion are inexorably linked, does this make the existence of God problematic or does culture provide more evidence for God's existence?
- If religious concepts and culture are necessarily connected, does this mean that reading and understanding sacred texts demands a historical understanding as much as a religious and philosophical one?
- What constitutes religious practice? Is it defined only when practised communally?
- If religious ideas are culturally determined, then what does a concept such as salvation mean?

**Optional Theme 4: Philosophy of art**

**9. Evaluate the view that beauty is an objective property of works of art.**

This question invites an evaluation of the possibility of aesthetic judgments being made on an objective or cognitive basis.

**Key Points**

- The possibility of making aesthetic judgments
- Subjectivity vs. objectivity
- Beauty as an external, objective, real quality in the world which can be intrinsic in objects of art
- Plato’s world of the Forms and the link to the Form of the Good
- “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder”
- The possible objective basis of aesthetic judgments: metaphysical accounts and scientific/evolutionary accounts
- Beauty as the expression of certain qualities, *e.g.* unity, simplicity, pattern, symmetry
- Kant’s universal scope of aesthetic judgments and the role of imagination in judgments of taste
- Challenges to the objective reality of beauty; art as merely a subjective experience and taste
- Art as a clarification of emotion, with a purpose which can be judged objectively

**Discussion**

- The difficulty of particular things representing an ideal like beauty
- The relation of particular objects to universal concepts
- The notion of form in art
- The ability of art to arouse emotion in appreciators – a measure of beauty
- Biological and psychological approaches to beauty
- Other interpretations of the value of art, *e.g.* political, functional, expressive



**10. To what extent is authenticity important to the judgment of what constitutes good art?**

This question invites an assessment of the role that authenticity plays in our judgments about works of art. Answers might also challenge the assumption in the question that any quality could help a work of art to be good.

**Key Points**

- Authenticity understood as a true expression of the artist's outlook or feelings
- Authenticity understood as offering a true representation of the real world
- Representational *vs.* abstract art
- Technical skill required in making authentic art
- The value of art deriving from its being an informative insight into the way the world is
- Plato and imitation
- Intrinsic and extrinsic notions of artistic value
- The role of the artist as opposed to the observer in art and *vice versa*
- Interpretation *vs.* literal representation; formal qualities of art *vs.* content
- Consideration of authenticity *vs.* emotional effects of works of art
- Expressionist theories of art *vs.* representationalist theories of art

**Discussion**

- Examples of valued art being representational of reality, *e.g.* paintings, theatre, music, installations
- Kant's aesthetic argument that emphasizes the experience of contemplation by the observer over the need for accurate representation by the artist
- Can art stand for reality?
- Who can judge the authenticity of a work of art and/or the artist?
- How can authenticity be judged except in a literal means of representation?
- Authentic art and art forgeries
- Art as primarily informative
- The notion of high art *vs.* naive/pop/folk art
- The political/social function of art in relation to judgments about good art

### Optional Theme 5: Political philosophy

#### 11. Evaluate the idea that for punishment to be just its severity must reflect the gravity of the offence.

This question invites an evaluation of the notion of a just punishment. Answers might be further developed with regard to other central issues or concepts, *e.g.* justice more generally, society, power.

#### Key Points

- Notions of justice, law and punishment
- Corrective justice refers to that which is concerned with punishment, whereas distributive justice refers to that which is concerned with benefits and burdens other than punishments
- Usually just punishment should meet the following criteria: it should be imposed only on a properly convicted wrongdoer, and the amount of suffering should be according to the principle of proportionality (Brian Barry “Justice”)
- There is no agreement over the justification for punishment; this makes it controversial how seriousness, severity and culpability are assessed, and how the scale of penalties should be fixed
- The idea of natural law as a basis for justice and punishment

#### Discussion

- Is the idea of just punishment self-evident?
- To what extent does the idea that punishment must reflect the seriousness of the offence, reflect a cultural tradition such as the *lex talionis*? If so, is it legitimate to transfer the idea to other cultures?
- How essential to punishment is the possibility of its quantitative measurement?
- The extent to which the very notions of just punishment and amount of punishment might be based on different value systems; are these affected by gender, class or other social determinants?
- Justice and punishment in present societies with an international character
- Justice and punishment in multicultural societies
- Are conventional positions on punishment able to justify punishment solely by means of rational argumentation?
- Punishment as a deterrent, for rehabilitation *etc.*

## 12. Evaluate the idea that democracy is the best form of government.

This question invites an evaluation of the theory and the practice of democracy. It is open to different lines of discussion and argument. It might be approached as a form of government or as a way of constituting the state following a social contract approach.

### Key Points

- Democracy as rule by the people, as contrasted with rule by a special person or group. It is a system of decision-making in which everyone who belongs to the political organism making the decision is actually or potentially involved; in theory all have equal power
- Distinctions between state, nation, government and civil society which might affect the understanding and realization of democracy in practice
- The role of democratic legislation is not to register citizens' unconstrained preferences and let majority preferences rule, but to advance the interests of all citizens, so that each has the status of equal citizenship, is suitably independent, and can freely pursue his or her conception of the good consistent with justice
- Historical examples and forms in which democracy has been developed
- Forms of government: one-party democracy, multi-party democracy, oligarchy, monarchy, authoritarian and totalitarian rule, tribalism, theocracy
- The relation between the executive and those who are governed
- Social contract theories and modern notions of participatory democracy
- Contested understandings of "democracy"

### Discussion

- Can it be assumed that democracy is the best form of government?
- Is democracy morally superior to others forms of government?
- In what ways can the will of the people be expressed? *E.g.* representative or direct democracy
- Proportional voting systems vs. "first past the post" systems
- The place of minorities in democratic societies
- Is present day democracy a form of international obligation?
- Might, or should, democracy as a form of government be applied in any cultural setting?
- Is democracy as a form of government unavoidably linked to capitalism?
- Ideologies of government: liberalism, conservatism, Marxism and socialism

### Optional Theme 6: Non-Western traditions and perspectives

#### 13. Explain and discuss philosophical ideas concerning self-fulfilment in one or more of the non-Western traditions you have studied.

This question gives an opportunity to explain and discuss ideas, issues or approaches that relate to the notion of self-fulfilment in non-Western traditions.

#### Key Points

- The approaches to self-fulfilment adopted by various non-Western traditions
- Some main issues: self/non-self, subjectivity/objectivity, selflessness, identity, self-denial, self-expression vs. self-extinction, individuals, their relationship to other living and non-living things, evolution of identity, the journey of the self
- A fundamental premise of the great majority of India's religious and philosophical traditions: the combined beliefs in *karma* and rebirth, that is, the retributive power of actions and decisions of the individual, and a beginningless – though not necessarily endless – succession of births and deaths for living beings
- Basic contributions of Buddhism: a) a stricter notion of causality which postulates a pervasive coherence of karmic events, but insists on the feasibility of choice and responsibility; b) a notion of agency which defines the act as rooted in volition and decision; c) a radical notion of final liberation (*nirvana*) by eliminating the roots of karmic existence, that is, selfish desire and the illusion of the self
- According to Hinduism, in general, the joys and suffering of a human individual are of his or her own making; the destiny of the soul is immortality through self-realization
- Within Chinese Buddhist traditions each individual is constituted by his or her own karmic stream
- The relation of the individual to ancestors and the landscape in some native American traditions
- With self-fulfilment comes the related issue of self-denial

#### Discussion

- The responsibility of the individual and the motivation for accepting the doctrine of rebirth
- The individual as an intrinsic and inseparable part of the universe, as a general characteristic of Eastern philosophic traditions
- Implications of individual freedom and responsibility for Buddhism; the threefold action: in thought, in speech and in deed
- Is selflessness the same as non-self?
- Is self-fulfilment compatible with the emptying/denial of the self?
- Is it always necessary to conceive of the self as a thing? A substance?
- Has multiculturalism made traditional notions of self-fulfilment obsolete?
- Monotheistic traditions look at the individual as a whole. On the one hand, he/she is required to submit to God, but, on the other, they teach freedom and therefore personal responsibility. Concepts of sin and perfectibility

**14. Explain and discuss the most important philosophical contribution(s) to an understanding of society and culture in one or more of the non-Western traditions you have studied.**

This question gives an opportunity to explain and discuss ideas, issues or approaches in relation to society and culture in at least one non-Western tradition.

**Key Points**

- The social and cultural life and the performance of ritual actions: ritual speech has causal power, *e.g.* according to the Navajo conception speech relates consciousness with causality; it has causal power. Ritual language does what it says, it does not describe but it determines how things are, *e.g.* dispersing evil or eliminating illness
- The meanings of life within social and cultural contexts
- Oral traditions as forms of thought; examples of African traditions
- A categorial approach seems to be a characteristic of Amerindian thought and cultures: things in the cosmos or society are always affected by an unstable dualism
- The Red–White social binaries of the Creek confederacy and the Winter–Summer Tewa moieties are examples of the common dual forms of social and conceptual organization
- Forms of society and culture: for the Hopi, eagles are persons and reincarnations of clan ancestors
- Culture, other beings and nature: histories of personal relationships with animals and elements are frequent among shamans

**Discussion**

- What roles do ancestors, the family, the tribe, the village and folklore play in non-Western moral traditions or perspectives?
- Adaptation and coexistence with modern societies or cultures
- The Western/non-Western interaction; relevance in political, economic, social and cultural contexts: African political philosophy in the twentieth century has been carried out under the influence of philosophical traditions from the European countries that colonized Africa and created her modern system of education
- The role of culture in relation to knowledge, meaning and value
- Do non-Western approaches to the self diminish the need to become effectively involved in everyday social and political projects?
- How could a non-Western cultural tradition help us understand how we relate to other beings, the world, and the universe?
- Respect for all living and non-living things

### Optional Theme 7: Contemporary social issues

#### 15. Evaluate the claim that the information age is not an age of freedom but an age of oppression.

This question asks for an evaluation of the claim that more information and knowledge might not create freedom but rather establish mechanisms to oppress people both in an individual and a social context.

#### Key Points

- The difference between information and knowledge; facts *vs.* judgment about facts
- The issue of choice; more information might increase the ability to make informed choices
- The accessibility of information might be controlled by income, location, social status
- The use and abuse of accessibility to information; propaganda, the role of media and politicians
- The relationship of information and knowledge to what is true
- The role of the internet compared to attending libraries
- Oppression resulting from information overload or misrepresentations of information
- Cultural difference in terms of the status and accessibility of information and knowledge; news giver, the wise person, the literate person, the reader
- Authoritarian societies that manipulate real and imaginary information, *e.g.* fascism of present and past states, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and other dystopian views of the future
- The role of the state in restricting information for safety and security
- With information might come responsibility; I know, I need to know, I do not want to know
- Literacy and freedom

#### Discussion

- How far is the information age restricted to certain sections of the world?
- Does the lack of freedom come from an issue of the selection and use of information?
- Has greater access to information democratized knowledge?
- Is the information age like any other categorization of technology, and its impact merely a reflection of wealth and status? *E.g.* those who had the sharpest flint in the stone age were dominant just as those with access to more information now become dominant
- Do the problems of abuse of information exist irrespective of how much information is possessed?
- Should any one person or institution control access to information?
- Does knowing less produce a situation of bliss from ignorance or just frustration?
- Is the idea of a knowledge-based society new, or were all past societies knowledge-based?
- Is it immoral to deprive people of access to knowledge?
- Should information be restricted so as to prevent harm?
- Is the status of knowledge in a society dependent upon other cultural values, such as belief?
- The significance of concentrations of ownership of media
- The significance of access to information via the internet and of its being subject to government control in various states

**16. Evaluate the claim that the right to work should be protected.**

This question invites an evaluation of the importance and value of work as one aspect of human activity.

**Key Points**

- The right to work; rights and responsibilities
- The notion of work; purposeful activity compared to labour or play
- The psychological and social benefits of work
- The relationship of work to status and meaning in life
- The problem of unemployment
- The role of the state in maintaining work and creating work
- The relationship of work to the achievement of wealth
- Issues of alienation and types of work
- Work's relationship to freedom or oppression; dependence on work for survival or work creating a means to achieve other human goals
- Work as a fundamental aspect of the human condition
- Christian concepts of work; the worker who increases production is to be rewarded
- Non-Western views of work; some cultures consider leisure a prime purpose in human activity
- Social responses to indolence
- The interaction of technology and work; technology changes the nature of work

**Discussion**

- Is work a defining feature of being human?
- If a state ignores the need to work is it failing in one of its prime responsibilities?
- Does the state view work only as a means of revenue?
- Could the application of technology eventually eliminate work?
- Is it possible to have a social model that prevents alienation and exploitation in the realm of work?
- Should the state interfere in market forces that drive the amount and nature of work?
- Is work optional? Can a person or institution require you to work?
- Does a society based on work become hierarchical? Do people have higher status because of the type of work they do? To what extent do people who do not work lose their status, identity or the respect of others?
- Can one person's work be another's play?
- Is there a universal idea of work or is it linked to a cultural perspective?

### Optional Theme 8: People, nations and cultures

#### 17. Evaluate philosophically the effects on a sense of national identity created by immigration.

This question invites a philosophical evaluation of a central topic of this theme to do with patriotism and national identity in relation to the issue of immigration. Answers may involve a number of concepts including economic, political and identity issues.

#### Key Points

- Modes and expressions of national identity: nationalism, patriotism, solidarity, tradition, language, religion
- National identity linked to a particular view of the constitution of the individual, *e.g.* Plato’s view of society, existentialist views, historical-method approaches
- Phenomenological methods of understanding humans and society: understanding humans as they appear and act as opposed to them having a specific nature or essence, *e.g.* Ortega y Gasset
- Immigration in various forms: economic migration, skills shortages, political asylum
- The role of tradition: national identity due to recent historical immigration, *e.g.* Australia, Canada, the USA
- The issue of indigenous communities and colonization, *e.g.* Latin America, Africa
- The disruption of existing communities

#### Discussion

- Multiculturalism
- Community cohesion
- Patriotism and national loyalty, duty, honour
- “My country right or wrong”?
- Issues of ethnicity and national identity
- The role of tradition: is identity shared? If so, how?
- The roles of labour, recreation and belief
- Different effects of immigration in developed and developing nations
- Myth and symbol in creating national identity



**18. Evaluate the view that the purpose of culture is primarily to serve the material needs of the individual.**

This question invites an evaluation of different theories of the nature and origin of culture. Answers might explore a wide range of materialistic theories of culture along with those which reject the view that culture is primarily materialistic in its purpose and origin.

**Key Points**

- Cultural evolution; how culture emerges
- Materialistic theories of the nature and origin of culture, including the economic and labour dominated approach of Marx and Engels
- The rejection of spiritual accounts of culture as emerging separately from man's basic position in life
- Human behaviour can be reduced to an account of responses to the material environment
- Tools arise as the first materials of culture before artistic artefacts
- The distinction between non-human animals and humans
- Social theories, including evolutionary psychology
- Functionalist vs. biological theories as explanations of the origins of cultural life
- The origins and roles of cultural institutions as well as artefacts
- Scientific accounts of culture using empirical methods to reach conclusions
- Counter-positions include idealist accounts of culture
- The role of myth, tradition, law, symbol *etc.* in understanding culture

**Discussion**

- Is culture the creation of an artificial environment to serve human material needs?
  - How can spiritual dimensions be housed in culture but discussed philosophically?
  - Biological accounts and human sciences accounts of culture; what is the difference?
  - How significant to culture is technology?
  - Is there a justification for studying culture scientifically, subjecting it to an assumption that it yields to a reductionist and predictive empirical methodology?
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