

Markscheme

November 2023

Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1

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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 4 for the core theme and page 7 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 core theme markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is structured and generally organized, 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is well structured, focused and effectively organized. • 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

Quotation

1. **With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human.** [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.

The excerpt talks about the trend to measure personal data such as sleep, exercise or heart rate to try to improve health and wellbeing. It also reflects on the increasing amount of data that people share with external organizations; this is part of a trend towards the datafication of day-to-day lives. Philosophically, the paragraph explicitly raises the question of freedom, but it can also be used to explore a host of issues relating to what it means to be human. In terms of freedom, candidates might consider determinism, and whether our physical environments and physical bodies causally determine our actions. They might consider the extent to which we voluntarily sacrifice personal freedoms in order to meet social norms, such as body-image norms or even sleep-pattern norms. They might relate this to the idea of living an authentic life as discussed in existentialism. Alternatively, candidates might choose to discuss personal identity. They might discuss the relationship between body and mind, pointing improvements in well-being as a result of attending to the body. They might consider the extent to which technology has become a part of our personal identity, perhaps in relation to the extended mind hypothesis which says that if something functions as a part of our mind, then it is a part of our mind. They might explore the idea of responsibility. If people allow technology to make decisions about their lives for them, to what extent are they responsible for their own actions? Candidates might also explore the morality of the companies collecting this data, and the place of privacy in society.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The role of technology in society *eg*: Adorno and Horkheimer
- Well-being, flourishing and living a good life *eg*: Aristotle
- Determinism *versus* libertarianism
- Compatibilism as an alternative to the division between determinism and libertarianism
- The nature of freedom *eg*: Locke's thought experiment of a person locked in a room without knowing it
- Ethical issues about collecting large amounts of data from people
- Privacy and freedom
- Authenticity and what it means to live an authentic life *eg*: Sartre
- The extended mind hypothesis *eg*: Clark and Chalmers
- The relationship between personal identity and society *eg*: social determinism
- The idea of self-improvement
- Whether changes to the body lead to changes to personal identity.

Image of newspaper excerpt

2. **With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human.** [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.

One idea that this question invites students to focus on is personal identity. It relates to what it is that makes us who we are. Physicalism or materialism holds that we are our physical matter, but this is brought into question by the idea that our physical matter is hard to distinguish from non-human matter. Candidates might consider thought experiments such as the Ship of Theseus, where parts of the original ship are discarded and replaced. They might consider whether being human is necessary to being a person. Another discussion point is the extent to which our identity is constructed, or whether there is something fundamental to each of us. Candidates might suggest the existence of the mind as a solution to defining personal identity. This might lead to a discussion of the mind-body problem. The stimulus could be tied to questions about human nature, or whether questions about determinism *eg*: are our actions determined by our non-human, microscopic colonists? They might discuss where consciousness comes from, and how it can arise from a collection of cells and microbes. An alternative approach might focus on what it is to be human. The stimulus blurs the line between humans and animals, the self and the other, and the accuracy of our sense of self. This invites reflection on the relationship between humans and their environment.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The metaphysics of identity *eg*: Aristotle on matter and form, or Plato on the world of forms
- The constantly changing nature of identity and how we define its fundamental parts
- The mind-body problem *eg*: Descartes's view that body and soul are distinct
- The role of the body in relation to our well-being
- Questions about personal identity over time *eg*: the Ship of Theseus
- Human nature and what makes us human
- The nurture *versus* nature debate and the extent to which microbes might influence our identity
- Causal determinism and the idea that our physical body and environment determine our actions
- Counter-views such as libertarianism and compatibilism
- Buddhism and the idea that people do not have a single fixed identity
- The problem of consciousness which asks how consciousness arises from matter *eg*: McGinn, Block, Chalmers.

Paper 1 Section B markbands

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is structured and generally organized, 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response is well structured, focused and effectively organized. • 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 the role of art is to create an emotional response. [25]

This question seeks an evaluation of the function of art as being restricted to creating emotions. This emotional response is perceived to be in the audience of the work of art. However, it could be seen that art itself is also an emotional response of the creator, the artist themselves. Many forms of art are seen to be able to communicate emotions. This claim that the role of art is to create an emotional response establishes the notion that the worth of art is directly equated to the degree of emotion that it can create. Art might cease to be just a skill or a form of play. It might cease to be seen as having metaphysical properties. Is art, therefore, a form of language that can communicate emotions in a way that other languages cannot? Art could also be seen as cathartic in that it releases emotions and is therapeutic, both for the producer and the audience. This links art to the release and expression of imagination both in the giver and the receiver of the art form. Contrasting perspectives might be explored which suggest that art has little to do with emotion but is a record of situations or objects, a vehicle to convey specific ideas and propaganda. Art as pure emotion might be seen as degenerate. Here exists the problem of knowing, what is the intentional emotion to be conveyed or received?

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Whether all forms of art can trigger or convey emotions
- This narrow view of art might be challenged in that it ignores ideas of form
- The nature of artistic subject matter. Some content might be better at expressing emotion than others, some art mediums might not be able to express any emotion
- The relationship of pleasure and emotion
- The cathartic function of art, *eg*: Aristotle
- The possible need to have access to the internal dialogue of the artist so as to grasp the intended emotional outpouring or intended outcome. Does the artist need to describe their intention or can the audience act and interpret independently of the artist?
- The relationship of the artist to their creation
- Can art be codified and defined absolutely? Notions of beauty and the sublime might be raised
- The social role of art
- Is the emotional response subject to any ethical judgements; can art be degenerate?
- The idea that good art is that which successfully conveys emotion
- Can art be objectified or is all art, and its quality, subjective
- Other possible roles of art, *eg*: propaganda, social change, education.

4. Evaluate the claim that there is nothing ugly in art except where it offers no inner or outer truth.

[25]

This question invites an evaluation of the ideas of beauty and ugliness in art, along with the ideas of whether there is truth in the realm of art. This can be seen as beauty being attributed qualities of goodness while ugliness is seen as bad. It can also be seen as that which pleases and is liked by the perceiver. For Kant what was ugly in nature could be beautiful in art, while later ideas on aesthetics suggested a hierarchy in which there was no room for ugliness. The claim implies that there is a link between either what is internally perceived and experienced as beauty, as well as that which is externally encountered. Where there is no interaction it is seen as being ugly. This rather subjective interaction with art forms might lead to rather arbitrary notions of what is good and is directly related to what pleases. What is truth in art might link to representationalism or an exact defining of beauty. There would then seem to be no absolute notion of what is beautiful and what might be good. It has been suggested that there is no fixed analysis of an art form, no fixed concept of beauty because each age and culture might define its own aesthetic judgement. This challenges the platonic notion that beauty is a fixed entity to be discovered or revealed. If the relativistic view is pursued, then beauty/ugliness is in the “eye of the beholder” and then there is no absolute standard. However according to Kant our judgments of taste have “universality of validity”. There is aesthetic pleasure when encountering beauty which is caused by the free play of our understanding and imagination which might be *a priori* in nature. Consequently, ugliness is not a route to truth because it does not allow the interplay of understanding and imagination.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Differing theories of aesthetic judgement from Plato through to Collingwood and Ayer
- Cultural variations of what might be beauty and beautiful challenging a notion of human archetypal views of beauty
- Beauty in nature, *eg*: Emerson
- Art in its various manifestations might not have fixed ideas or even achieve beauty Discordance in music might or might not be seen as beautiful
- The psychological problem of identifying “inner and outer truths”
- The relationship of truth to judgement. Is there a defined end or purpose in art?
- Cultural and time differing perspectives on what truth might be
- Art as only a material object divorced of universality
- The role of art as a means to convey or define belief, *eg*: in propaganda, religion
- The meaning of aesthetic judgment, *eg*: Nietzsche
- The nature of aesthetic pleasure or otherwise.

Optional theme 2: Epistemology

5. Evaluate the view that knowledge is not objective, but culturally dependent. [25]

The justified, true belief account of knowledge presents it as objective regardless of context and defined according to the correspondence between beliefs and reality. The idea that knowledge is culturally dependent is at odds with this traditional account. If something is knowledge in one culture, and not knowledge in another, then the concept of knowledge does not involve reference to some external reality. A proponent of the justified, true belief account of knowledge might respond to the idea that knowledge is culturally dependent by claiming that beliefs are culturally dependent, but whether or not those beliefs are justified and true does not depend on culture. In contrast, some philosophers argue that knowledge is subjective. For example, Lorraine Code has argued that the justified true belief account of knowledge wrongly assumes “that gender has nothing to do with knowledge, that the mind has no sex” (Code, 1993, p. 20). The same point can be applied to culture, so that differences in culture shape knowledge. Charles Taylor describes knowledge as “a certain grasp of the world that we have as agents in it” (Taylor, 1987, p. 477). If this is the case, facts about us as agents determine our grasp of the world, and so knowledge might differ according to factors such as culture. It is also possible to approach this question using ideas about the nature of knowledge and sources of knowledge. For example, if testimony is a legitimate source of knowledge, then knowledge might vary between cultures with different testimonial traditions. Or, if the justification of beliefs is judged by their coherence with other beliefs, then this might cause variance from one culture to another since bodies of beliefs might differ from one culture to another.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The justified, true belief account of knowledge
- Discussions about the nature of justification, *eg*: foundationalism and coherentism
- Concepts of truth, *eg*: correspondence theories of truth *versus* pragmatic theories of truth
- Differing perceptions of the nature of knowledge, *eg*: analytic and non-analytic, or western and non-western accounts of knowledge
- Postmodernist accounts of knowledge
- Radical skepticism and the idea that we cannot or do not have access to reality
- Plato’s metaphor of the cave as an illustration of difficulties gaining knowledge
- Whether there are differences in beliefs between cultures, *eg*: the shared *a priori* beliefs or shared empirical beliefs
- Examples of beliefs which differ from one culture to another
- Whether or not there are distinct cultures in a world where technology unites all different cultures
- Examples of differences between and within cultures, for example the differences between fundamental Christian beliefs about the age of the earth and secular beliefs
- Comparisons with moral relativism, *eg*: discussions about the problems with accepting that morality differs from culture to culture and whether the same is true of accepting that knowledge differs from culture to culture.

6. Discuss the relationship between information technologies and knowledge. [25]

Information technologies provide methods of communicating ideas, the Internet is one instance of this sort of technology. As an example, the Internet plays a large role in disseminating beliefs through social media, online videos, podcasts, encyclopedias, academic sources, search-engine guidance and so on. Candidates might consider the use of information technologies in expanding available bodies of knowledge, through projects which involve the public such as “citizen-science” initiatives, or through the collaboration between investigators across the world. The relationship between information technologies and knowledge brings up a set of problems too. The role of testimony in producing justified beliefs might be discussed, including the extent to which the Internet provides reliable sources of testimony. Problems such as “fake news” and “echo-chambers” might be used as examples which demonstrate the difficulties caused by technology when it comes to knowledge. On the other hand, the idea that information technologies allow the spread of potentially powerful knowledge to those traditionally deprived of access to it might be discussed, an example is the spread of Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs).

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Sources of knowledge including testimony, the senses and rationality
- Accounts of the nature of knowledge as fixed and unchanging
- Whether direct testimony is epistemically preferable to the sort of testimony communicated through technologies
- The relationship between information technologies and views about cultural industry, eg: Frankfurt School
- The role of information technology in shaping society, eg: McLuhan and Castells.
- How IT affects the definition of reality, eg: Baudrillard, Bauman
- Floridi’s view on infosphere
- The problem of “fake news”, and its causes
- The production and dissemination of knowledge, eg: Wikipedia
- The role of expertise
- The relationship between advertisement money and popularity of websites which incentivize “click bait” over epistemically sound content
- The role of social media as a means of spreading ideas
- Whether social media is an epistemically virtuous or vicious environment
- The danger of creating “echo chambers” and why echo chambers are epistemically problematic
- The importance of justification when it comes to knowledge as justified, true belief
- Whether relying on the Internet for knowledge provides warranted, or justified beliefs
- The idea that information technologies democratize knowledge by allowing a greater number of people to participate in inquiry, or otherwise which leads to the digital divide
- State control and manipulation of information, eg: propaganda, censorship
- The role of expertise and training when it comes to knowledge.

Optional theme 3: Ethics

7. Evaluate the claim that there are no objective values.

[25]

The claim is by Mackie and it is the opening sentence of his book *Ethics*. The claim invites an exploration of the possible ethical approaches that consider values as subjective or, on the contrary, objective. Candidates might analyse the nature of values and refer to metaphysical theories or see them as the result of social and/or institutional agreement. Responses might focus on the differences between subjectivism and objectivism or choose one or more philosophers in defining the nature of values. Candidates might evaluate Mackie's view or, more generally, the possibility of a skeptical approach in ethics. They might also mention the effects of skepticism for ethical and/or religious values, *eg*: Philo in Hume's *Dialogues*. Candidates might take into account the nature of values with reference to the nature of God as in Christian ethics, *eg*: Augustine, Aquinas. Responses might also offer a historical or genealogical approach, *eg*: Rée, Nietzsche. Or they might highlight the objective nature of values by referring to virtue ethics and the character of individuals, *eg*: Plato, Aristotle. Candidates might also refer to consequentialism in considering values linked to the results of action, *eg*: utilitarianism, Bentham, Mill. One more path might discuss whether and how the concept of value has been affected by evolutionism, in terms of change, dynamics, function, biology; candidates might mention evolutionist ethicists, *eg*: Rée, Churchland, or refer to the approach of a natural history of human morality, *eg*: Tomasello. Finally, responses might consider ethical values as the result of a social agreement, not far from the ground of contractarianism, or more in terms of institutional agreement, *eg*: Searle.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The nature of values according to different ethical approaches, *eg*: virtue ethics, consequentialism, deontology
- Subjectivism *versus* objectivism; solipsism
- Skepticism in ethics and/or religion, *eg*: Hume, Mackie
- Values with reference to the nature of God, *eg*: Augustine, Aquinas
- The good and the useful
- Values and metaphysics, *eg*: Plato
- Theories that there are objective values, *eg*: Divine Command Theory, Scheler,
- Values as linked to virtues, *eg*: Aristotle
- Historical or genealogical approach, *eg*: Rée, Nietzsche
- Different kinds of utilitarianism, *eg*: Bentham, Mill
- Values and evolutionism, *eg*: Rée, Churchland
- Values and social agreement, *eg*: contractarianism, Tomasello, Searle.

8. Evaluate the claim that evil is the result of the egoistic nature of human beings. [25]

The claim stems from Taylor Sutton and Held's paper on God and evil. The claim invites an exploration of one of the many possible issues that can arise: from the nature, meaning and justification of evil to the egotistical nature of the human being. Responses might also investigate the role of anthropocentrism in ethics and, particularly, in one of the topics of applied ethics that have been studied: genetic engineering, euthanasia, environmental ethics, deep ecology, and issues of social ethics, *eg*: distribution of wealth, inequality, charity. The issue of anthropocentrism might be related to specific environmental issues, which might involve the concept of human responsibility towards the future generations, *eg*: Jonas; or the moral respect for animals or the whole nature, *eg*: Leopold, Singer, the Gaia hypothesis. Candidates might consider the role of virtues and character in approaching egotism, *eg*: Plato. Responses might refer to evolutionary and biological arguments, which consider moral egotism as unavoidable, *eg*: Helvetius, Rée, Churchland. Responses might focus on the nature of the ethical judgment and the interpretation of evil according to the results of action, *eg*: utilitarianism. Candidates might consider the role of altruism and refer to the nature of sympathy, *eg*: Aristotle, Nussbaum. Responses might want to criticize the claim and discuss the nature of evil with reference to the nature/existence of God, *eg*: Hume, or on the account of theological positions, *eg*: Augustine, Aquinas, or refer to non-western traditions, *eg*: the *Tao*.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The nature of evil: different ethical approaches, *eg*: Augustine, Aquinas, Hume
- The nature of evil and the existence of God
- Evil and egotism in non-Western traditions, *eg*: the *Tao*
- Egotism and the nature of human being, *eg*: Helvetius, Rée, Churchland
- Virtue ethics and the individual's character, *eg*: Plato
- Anthropocentrism and issues of applied ethics, *eg*: biomedical ethics, environmental ethics, distribution of wealth
- Anthropocentrism and the principle of responsibility, *eg*: Jonas
- Anthropocentrism and animal rights, *eg*: Leopold, Singer
- Evil and the consequences of action, *eg*: utilitarianism
- Altruism and sympathy, *eg*: Aristotle, Nussbaum.

Optional theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. Evaluate the claim that modern technology is changing the nature of relations between humans and the environment.

[25]

This question provides an opportunity for students to explore one of the most pressing issues facing society in the 21st century: the relation between humans and the environment in light of the development of modern technology. Open to the variety of environmental issues, the question is based on the impact and implications of modern technology. Through technology human beings transform the environment according to ends shaped by societies' needs and values. The present situation is characterized by the unprecedented environmental impacts brought about by the growth of advanced industrial technology in the last century. The relation between humans and the environment runs in both senses, from human to environment, and from the environment to humans. Answers might analyse different aspects of the complexity implied in this relationship. They might for instance tackle issues in relation to the global condition of human life, the well-being of future generations, and the responsibility for the non-human species. Candidates might refer to the ongoing discussions in relation to the need and possibilities of sustainable development and other environmental goals.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The societal uses of technology, *eg*: Dewey
- Social constructivist approach (technology and society co-construct each other)
- Aspects or dimensions of technology: a set or systems of artefacts; a form of knowledge (for the design, production, and use of technological artefacts); an expression of the will of its makers, designers and producers
- The extent to which technologies are linked to the systems of production
- The results produced by technology create situations in which responsibility for the aggregate or emergent consequences seems both nowhere and everywhere
- Attempts to integrate ethics and values into technical production processes that have become dissociated from society
- The debates on the proper scope and character of technology imply not just matters of sustainability, survival, and justice but also what it means to live well
- Alternative technologies
- Genetically modified organisms and biotechnology
- Philosophical analyses and evaluations of technology and nature in the philosophical tradition: from Aristotle to the present, *eg*: Bacon, Marx, Weber, Ortega y Gasset, Heidegger, Jonas
- Some contemporary approaches, *eg*: B. Charbonneau, J. Ellul, L. White
- Information technologies
- The idea that human beings need to move from a self-image that pictures humanity as conqueror of nature to one that pictures humanity as citizen of the biotic community
- The new challenges would demand new conceptions of duties and rights
- The impact of the media on contemporary life
- Philosophical implications of the environmental issues, *eg*: alleged human overpopulation and the justifications of different forms of birth control.

10. Evaluate the claim that some cultures are better than others.**[25]**

The question asks for an evaluation of a controversial issue and gives the opportunity to explore the wide-open notion of culture. It might be analysed in relation to the topic for study as it appears in the programme: multiculturalism. It provides a space for discussions of cultural and religious diversity in contemporary society, as well as questions about whether tolerance of different groups in society is the same as seeing everyone as equal citizens: the role of respect and the meaning of rights implies a real understanding of the others, not just tolerating them. This issue lends itself to a wide variety of perspectives. For example, discussions of the treatment of the possible marginalization of groups in society could also lead particularly well into more general discussions about the dominance of particular paradigms or cultures and the marginalization of particular perspectives. This variety of perspectives is also connected with the polysemic character of the notion of culture.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The species *Homo sapiens* started the elaboration of cultures around 70 000 years ago. For some the following development of these human cultures is called history. Since cultures appeared, they have continued to change and develop
- Human beings as “symbolic animals” interposing systems of signs or systems of expression between themselves and the world
- The variety of symbolic domains: art, languages, myths, religions
- Artefacts, technologies and the material dimensions of culture
- Turning points in the development of cultures, eg: agriculture, the invention of writing
- Co-evolution as an ongoing development of culture, eg: Dawkin’s memetics, Putnam
- The idea that human culture cannot become exempt from biological laws: human beings are still animals, and our physical, emotional and cognitive abilities are still shaped by the specific DNA. Modern societies are built from the same building blocks as *Neanderthal* or chimpanzee societies
- Cultural patterns accustom people, practically from the moment of birth, to think in determinate ways, to behave in accordance with certain standards, and to follow certain rules
- Cultures as systems of norms: biology enables, culture forbids
- Values and whether the differing value systems of cultures could dictate a hierarchy of cultures
- Possible arguments to sustain that some cultures (or some elements, eg: some norms or values) might be better than others: human nature and human rights
- Who sets the standard for a culture to be better and why?
- The necessity of dialogue as a means of constructing and comparing cultures, eg: Taylor, Buber
- Have all or some cultures become better as a result of progress or just by the passing of time? What is progress? What changes to make a culture better than another?

Optional theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. Evaluate the claim that the concept of a deity is nothing more than a human invention. [25]

The question invites candidates to explore whether the concept of a deity is simply a consequence of human construction or otherwise. Candidates might contrast this with the claim that the idea of a deity is innate in human beings and thus is not a human invention. Answers might argue that the concept of deity is an idea that emerges out of anthropomorphism wherein a deity is conceptualized like that of a human being, not necessarily physically but in a psychological sense in terms of a deity being considered as a wise, loving, willing, forgiving and kind entity or even a cruel and vengeful entity. Answers might claim that to have any sort of relationship in terms of trust or wonder, *etc* with such an entity requires projecting human qualities, otherwise human beings would not be able to conceptualize deities at all. However, this might not be the case and answers may argue that any deity is transcendent and as such is beyond human comprehension thus any attempt to create an image of a deity is based on erroneous premises. Some answers might contend that the concept of deity that humans have is not of human construct as humans can find, for example, God through faith and that it is not irrational to believe in God. Descartes's Trademark Argument arguing that God is innate might be legitimately advanced by some answers as a counterargument the view that the concept of deity is a human invention. Likewise, some answers might argue that the concept of a deity is a human idea that reflects some kind of human need or is even some kind of mistake and that we would be better off without it.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Critiques of religious belief such as Nietzsche's "suicide of reason" or Marx's "the sigh of the oppressed" leading to discussion on how or even why humans invent the concept of deity
- The ontological argument as an *a priori* case for the existence of the divine
- The argument from Feuerbach claiming God is the projection of the sum of man's qualities, so that "a poor man possesses a rich God"
- The Hegelian point where Hegel talks about the treasures we have squandered on the heavens
- Humean understanding that the idea of a deity is formed by reflecting on the operations of our own mind, and augmenting, without limit, qualities of goodness *etc*
- Marx's materialist approach asserting religion as being at the "heart of a heartless world" and that "man makes religion, religion does not make man" therefore as a consequence human beings invented religion, so they could appease misery, distress and hardship *etc*
- Religion as "the opium of the people" (Marx)
- Freud's view that belief in God reflects the need for a father figure who offers protection and security *etc*
- Kant's argument for imposition of order.

12. Evaluate the claim that it is reasonable to deduce the existence of a god from the fact that the universe appears to be highly ordered. [25]

The question invites candidates to consider and explore what is known as the “teleological argument” or “argument from/to design”. Some answers might argue that the world appears designed and therefore god(s) exist. Some answers might focus on the word “ordered” in the question and offer the view that there are two arguments that are spatial and temporal with the first depending largely on the spatial ordering of things and the second depending on temporal ordering. The “argument from/to design” explains that from looking at the complexity in the world there must have been an intelligent creator as there must be no other option. One approach that answers might explore is through analogy and specifically that of Paley’s argument that the universe is rather like that of a watch in terms of it being a complex of inter-related parts, an immensely rich structure, and so on. A similar argument comes from Hume and candidates may draw upon his argument found in the *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. A further approach answers might take is by looking at elements of complexity in the world through experience and coming to the conclusion that a designer is the only option. These approaches maintain that you can look at a result to see where it has come from as being teleological (a study of ends). Swinburne’s approach focuses on temporal order, *ie*: how things are arranged in time. Laws hold over time. Science cannot explain this. Some candidates might argue that science seems to presuppose this being the case. Swinburne comes to the conclusion that this temporal orderliness, “cries out for explanation in terms of some single common source with the power to produce it” (*The Existence of God*, Oxford University Press, 1991, p.145). God, suggests Swinburne, is the simplest explanation for this.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Aquinas’s fifth way of proving there is a God is based on the “guidedness” of nature as he claims “Goal-directed behaviour is observed in all bodies in nature”
- Paley’s watch analogy
- Hume’s machine analogy
- Hume’s rebuttal of the argument from analogy as he also points out that there may be any number of causes for the apparent design of the universe
- *Design qua Regularity*, argues that there is something regulating the universe
- *Design qua Purpose*, argues that the universe works to some predetermined purpose
- Darwin’s theory of evolution and its apparent refutation of the teleological argument
- Swinburne’s datum of temporal order where the teleological argument seeks to explain the natural bias that determines the regularity in the way the world is
- Phenomenal temporal order: temporal order that is readily apparent to embodied rational agents like human beings
- Fundamental temporal order: temporal order of the fundamental particles that the fundamental laws determine
- Mill’s objections to the idea that there is an intelligent designing power behind a perceived order in the universe.

Optional theme 6: Philosophy of science

13. Evaluate the claim that science develops through accumulation and progression. [25]

The question asks for an analysis and evaluation of how scientific knowledge develops. Popper's notion of the growth of knowledge might be seen as a way of interpreting and constructing the view presented in the claim. Evolutionary epistemology sees the development of scientific knowledge as a growing process that starts from problems and ends with problems. The starting problem (whether practical or theoretical) gives rise to a tentative theory advanced in order to solve this problem. The process continues by the error elimination, that is, the correction and refinement of the theory by critical tests, from which, in turn emerge problems that come from the previous phase of critical discussion of the proposed theory. Accordingly, the growth of knowledge is a cumulative process where theories replace others that seemed, at the time, more plausible. An opposite view regarding the change in science is Kuhn's, according to which scientific knowledge is not necessarily progressive and moves through paradigm shifts.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The traditional cumulative view of scientific knowledge: science is characterized by its progressive nature
- Standards or normative criteria which serve to identify improvements and advances in science, eg: systematization
- Science as a collective enterprise of researchers in successive generations, the notion of community of inquiry
- The focus on the logical structure of scientific theories and patterns of inference
- Criticisms of the view that science does not grow by accumulation of well-established truths: Popper's falsificationism, Kuhn's account of scientific revolutions, Feyerabend's thesis of meaning variance, Dewey's pragmatism
- Different approaches: successive theories may move toward the truth or progress as characterized by the problem-solving capacity of theories
- Historical classical examples: Newton's classical mechanics, quantum theory and theory of relativity; theory of evolution and its projection in the understanding of mind and culture
- The idea that there is a logical connection in the replacement of one theory by other: one could not appreciate Galileo's achievement without first understanding the widely accepted Aristotelian doctrines he struggled to defeat
- The view that if science is an activity which seeks knowledge, then it also seeks truth
- The claim that progress is an axiological or a normative concept. Accordingly, it has to be distinguished from other more neutral or descriptive terms such as change and development
- The extent to which normative concepts and axiological questions are involved in the idea of scientific progress
- Implications of science development: the impact of science on society
- Science changes in different social, historical and cultural contexts.

14. Discuss the impact of modern scientific thought on the understanding of nature. [25]

This question invites an investigation into the ways in which modern scientific thought in its different routes continue to change our understanding of nature. If nature is understood in its widest scope then answers might refer to the physical level, to life in general and even to the human being. Also, modern scientific thought might be widely understood to encompass its whole development in the last five centuries. In a broad sense this thought might be characterized by salient features such as: the admission of ignorance as an engine for investigation, the connection between observation and mathematics from which theories emerge, and the uses of these theories in order to acquire new powers and to develop new technologies, the role of hypothesis. Further, a central dimension characterizes modern scientific thought: the use of mathematical modelling in shaping knowledge.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Physics has always had an enormous influence on philosophical reflection; this was particularly evident in the 20th century
- The emphasis of modern science on the possibility of investigating nature based on the assumption that nature is something to be manipulated
- Pillars of modern physics which contributed to present understanding of nature: thermodynamics, quantum theory and relativity
- Thermodynamics and the scientific debate about the existence of atoms; the discussion between realism and instrumentalism
- Statistical mechanics introduced probability into the very core of matter; it also contributed significantly to the development of the philosophy of probability and game theory
- One of the most persistent influences of quantum theory: a fundamental physical theory could be indeterministic
- The nature of objectivity and the rationality of nature; the debate between Einstein and Bohr; the Copenhagen interpretation of the atom; Heisenberg's uncertainty principle
- The theory of relativity, both special and general, revolutionized the understanding of space and time and also challenged traditional geometry
- The application of thermodynamics to astronomy, quantum theory and relativity
- Relativity and quantum revolutions moved the limits of human perception, experience and understanding towards both infinities (macroscopic and microscopic)
- The impact of biological knowledge on the public sphere, leading to questions such as: what kind of process is evolution? Are morals and meaning reducible to biology? What is the significance of genetic inheritance? What are the implications of the intentional modification of the molecular substrata of life?
- The impact of environmental science on our understanding of environmental ethics
- Effect of biological research into areas of inquiry such as: human nature, human mind and the nature of cognition, nature of human society and its rules
- The common idea that it is not possible to develop new technologies without scientific research and that research should result in new technologies.

Optional theme 7: Political philosophy

15. Evaluate the claim that the best society is one which gives freedom to challenge even basic beliefs. [25]

The question invites an evaluation of one of the basic tenets of liberalism, that being the freedom to do and think what one wishes. This freedom might be fundamental to a healthy, prosperous and progressive society. The notion of “best” in the question might be addressed in that it is often seen as an ideal condition and that in a *Realpolitik* environment such exercise of freedom would have some constraints. From a utilitarian perspective some would argue that the freedom granted would not extend to harming others and therefore the state would intervene to protect the rights and opportunities of individuals and groups. Essentially the “freedom for the pike is death to the minnows” and so the status and rights of minorities needs to be practised with the consequence that freedom might be limited. Similarly, with beliefs and ideas the opportunity to challenge potentially erroneous beliefs seems to be essential for a better society. Some would hold that this challenge to beliefs is the only way that society would progress and improve. This level of liberalism again might be seen as resting on high degrees of reason, consideration, compassion and toleration. Perhaps the “myth of freedom” is argued, in that again in practice freedom is inevitably limited by one’s economic and social circumstances. Those at the lower end of the wealth spectrum might be seen to have less freedom than those with wealth. In contrast an opinion might hold that those less encumbered by wealth have more freedom. The challenge to even basic beliefs might inevitably be limited, in that there should be an acceptance that intolerance needs to be limited.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Differences between liberty of action and liberty of thought, negative liberty *versus* positive liberty
- Different models of society, *eg*: Plato, social contract theory
- Degrees of tolerating the intolerant
- The benefits of being able to challenge everything: spontaneity, originality, and development of new ideas
- The interaction between majorities and minorities in both political and moral stances
- The tyranny of the majority, *eg*: de Tocqueville, Ortega y Gasset
- Protection of rights of minorities
- Basic agreed standards and expectations for all; a “capabilities approach”
- The liberal views of Mill, Berlin and Popper along with Marcus might be discussed
- The mechanism to establish beliefs and values of a society. Should there be protection for some basic values. How/who defends the opportunity to challenge beliefs
- Is a democracy the best form of establishing such freedom? Could a benevolent dictator achieve the same end?

16. Evaluate anarchism as a political position.**[25]**

This question invites an evaluation of the idea of anarchism both from a historical perspective and the challenge to the role of the state in today's complex urban environments. Anarchism formally denies the existence of the state. It denies a need for coherent centralized political control. A *laissez-faire* approach gives opportunity for individuals and groups to act independently and develop their own values. Inherently there might seem to be a contradiction in that once individuals come together an embryonic state is forming. However traditional positions of the Diggers of the 17th century or Godwin in the 19th century or Proudhon, reflect the same objectives as Taoists in early China. They wish to delegitimize the state and question its morality. Within the 21st century this might be seen as anti-globalization and challenges to the lack of government response to a "climate crisis". The interconnectivity of the world today seems to prevent a retreat to ruralism, self-sufficiency and total moral relativity. The impact and dependency on technology in our everyday lives raises questions as to whether an anarchic lifestyle is at all achievable, sustainable and in fact beneficial to more than a few. A market driven society might discourage an anarchic condition and also the possible perceived nature of humans might make such a condition essentially impossible to maintain. In contrast the market and economics might protect the individual in a new form of a "state of nature" (Nozick).

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The anarchist concept of the state of nature
 - Taoists views of "anti-polity" as a form of anarchism
 - Whether the lack of ostracism, religious retribution and familial pressures in a modern urban environment is compatible with anarchism
 - Ideas of property and its protection; or the notion that its possession is theft; or a source of inequality, *eg*: Rousseau
 - Moral anarchism
 - Nozick's "free riders"
 - Anarchism leading to a rejection of sophisticated technologies and globalization
 - Anarchism and violence and/or anarchism and feminism, *eg*: Goldman
 - The degree to which "people power" is a form of anarchism; contemporary examples might be used to illustrate "street power"
 - The problem of anarcho-capitalism; market forces controlling and protecting rather than the state and political forces. Rather than no state there would be "no such thing as society"
 - The dangers of statehood in terms of war and pollution
 - Comparison and contrasts between anarchism and other political positions, *eg*: liberalism, socialism, communism, federalism.
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