Diploma Programme
Programme du diplôme
Programa del Diploma

Markscheme

May 2024

Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1

21 pages

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	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is minimal or no explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • There is little relevant knowledge demonstrated, and the explanation is superficial. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is descriptive and lacking in analysis.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is some limited explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is demonstrated but lacks accuracy and relevance, and there is a basic explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is some limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response, although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is a basic explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is mostly accurate and relevant, and there is a satisfactory explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally 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	• 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

Excerpt

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.

This question requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts in the set passage related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. The passage is taken from the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and mentions freedom, alludes to human nature, and concerns relationships between people in a society. Candidates might also want to explore the fact that it specifies human beings, thus excluding animals or other contenders for personhood. Candidates might refer to the idea of human rights and universality, asking whether there is anything in common between people. They may point to the role of human rights in society, and to the relations between people. Alternatively, the idea of freedom might be questioned, with candidates asking whether people can really be born free and equal. This could be linked to authenticity, and the idea that existence precedes essence. The idea that reason and consciousness are central to having rights, and personhood is another avenue of possible discussion. Candidates might also draw on the list of properties in Article 2 that should not be used to exclude people and discuss them in relation to personhood. They may also pick up on the use of the term 'brotherhood' as inherently exclusionary and discuss feminist perspectives on such language use.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The requirements for living a flourishing life e.g. Nussbaum and the capabilities approach
- Whether there is such thing as a universal human nature
- The idea of equality e.g. Hobbes's claim that everybody is born equal
- Freedom in relation to determinism, compatibilism, and libertarianism
- Social determinism
- The self and the other, the social dimension of the recognition of rights and dignity
- The idea that people are born with an essence that defines them e.g. Sartre's claim that existence precedes essence
- Political philosophy in relation to rights e.g. Kantian ethics and the categorical imperative
- Alternatives to rights e.g. Hobbes's state of nature, utilitarianism
- Rousseau and a social contract based on the common good and general will
- Equality, justice, flourishing and social contract theories
- Mill, rule utilitarianism and rights
- Cultural relativism, and whether freedom and equality are universal attributes
- Speciesism in relation to universal rights only applying to human beings e.g. Singer
- How to define human beings
- The use of the term 'brotherhood'
- 'Race' and 'sex' as social categories and the difficulties associated with taking such a view e.g. Appiah, Haslanger
- The validity of social categories such as 'nationality' in determining identity
- Whether languages, political and religious views or property are essential aspects of identity
- The concept of personhood
- The application of the UNDHR in contemporary society, including the exclusion of various social groups such as refugees, and xenophobic, racist, homophobic, sexist, etc. trends in politics and policies.

Image

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.

This question requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts in the set image related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. The image shows a woman being prepared for plastic surgery. This raises a broad range of questions about identity over time, the relationship between the physical self and identity, the social formation of identity, and authenticity. Candidates might discuss physicalism and views of the self. If identity is physical, then physically altering a person alters their identity. This might be contrasted with alternative accounts of personal identity such as Locke's view that consciousness shapes identity. Another route for discussion might be social pressure and the compulsion to alter the self to fit societal norms. This could be presented in terms of social and cultural identity. Another possibility is a discussion of authenticity, in relation to existentialism. Candidates might also refer to technology and the ability to change the self, or even relate plastic surgery to transhumanism, or digital existence in cyberspace. They might question the boundaries of what it is to be a person, and when interventions might transcend or degrade personhood. There may be discussion of the relationship between gender and body, particularly the objectification of women.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Physicalism, materialism and the relationship between identity and physical form
- How identity persists over time e.g. the Ship of Theseus
- The consequences of altering physical identity on interpersonal relations
- Individualism and authenticity e.g. Taylor
- Existentialism and essence e.g. Sartre, de Beauvoir
- The relationship between technology and personhood
- Ideas surrounding transhumanism
- The role of society and social norms in shaping identity
- Social media and its impact on body image and identity
- Necessary and sufficient conditions of personhood
- Whether physical alterations blur the line between personhood and technology
- Body image and social pressure to achieve perfection
- The meaning of body and views on the body, e.g. de Beauvoir, Ortega y Gasset
- Feminist responses to the objectification of the body
- The role of social conformity in shaping identity.

Paper 1 Section B markbands

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. The response lacks coherence and is often unclear. • The student demonstrates little relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is mostly descriptive. There is no discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The student demonstrates knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, but this knowledge lacks accuracy and relevance. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Some of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • Knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme is mostly accurate and relevant. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally 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	• 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 artists belong to their works, not the works to the artists. [25]

The claim invites an exploration of the meaning of art and artwork and the relationship between them. Candidates might consider the distinction between *poiesis* and *mimesis* in discussing the different functions that art creation can have. On the one hand, the artist could be interpreted as serving or imitating beauty; on the other hand, the artist could be interpreted as an active creator of their own works. Candidates might consider the role that fantasy, and imagination play in the process of making art, e.g. Croce, Dewey, Adorno. The claim also invites a possible exploration of the issues related to the ownership of a work of art: candidates might consider the concept of property as linked to creation, e.g. Locke's theory of value based on labour. Candidates might highlight whether technology impacts the relationship between a work of art and the artist, as in the case of digital reproduction, e.g., Benjamin's concept of 'aura' and the issue of reproducibility of artworks. They might also draw on the ability of AI to create artworks, and whether AI has any ownership over the works of art it produces. Responses might consider the social role that art plays beyond the artist's purposes, e.g., Dewey, or the cases of patronage in art. Here, the social role of art can surpass the intentions of the artist thus implying that the artists belong to their works rather than the works to the artists.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The distinction between art as *poiesis* and *mimesis*, e.g. Plato, Aristotle
- Art as imitation of nature, e.g. Emerson
- The concept of sublime, e.g. Kant, Nietzsche
- The role of fantasy and imagination in art, e.g. Dewey, Croce, Adorno
- Artworks and emotion: the concepts of intuition, e.g. Romanticism, Shaftesbury
- The role of interpretation of an artwork, e.g. Croce, Habermas
- Artworks and ownership: the issue of property, e.g. Locke's theory of value and labour
- Whether technology impacts artworks and artists: the issue of reproducibility of works of art, e.g. Benjamin
- The uniqueness of creation in making art, e.g. Benjamin's concept of 'aura'
- The role of patronage in artist's production
- The possible social functions of art beyond the artist's purpose, e.g., propaganda or censorship
- The role of technology, e.g. Benjamin, digital art (NFT).

4. Evaluate the claim that all art is but imitation of nature. [25]

The claim, referring to Seneca, invites an exploration of the origin and function of art. Candidates might consider the relationship between art and nature and whether art is imitation of nature or is something else. Hence, responses might refer to the distinction between *poiesis* and *mimesis*, which can be found in Aristotle. Aristotle differentiates between imitation and creation, thus reflecting Seneca's claim. Candidates might pinpoint the different functions of art and the meaning of art depending on whether it is intended as creation or imitation. Responses might explore the relationship between art and nature as in Emerson's view. Other central concepts that might analysed are those of experience, which can be connected to art and nature, as in Dewey's or Croce's views. Candidates might discuss Nietzsche's distinction between Apollonian and Dionysian. Finally, candidates might refer the role of fantasy and imagination as ways to making art. They might consider whether limiting art to imitations of nature is realistic considering the many roles that art plays to individuals and in society. They might also reflect on the role of the intention of the artist when it comes to how we understand art.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Difference between *poiesis* and *mimesis*, e.g. Plato, Aristotle
- Art as a productive activity grounded in nature, e.g., Emerson
- Catharsis as a central function in art, e.g. Aristotle
- Art and nature as experiences, e.g. Dewey, Croce
- Apollonian and Dionysian, e.g. Nietzsche
- Technology and art creation: the issue of reproducibility, e.g. Benjamin
- Photography and art as imitation
- Technology and art creation: the issue of digital and virtual art as opposed to any imitation of nature
- The role of fantasy and imagination in art, e.g. Adorno, Dewey
- Whether art can have a social, political, or religious function, e.g. the School of Frankfurt
- Specific forms of art that can or cannot imitate nature: painting, sculpture, architecture.

Optional theme 2: Epistemology

5. Evaluate the claim that "the limits of my language are the limits of my world". [25]

This is a statement made by Wittgenstein's *Tractatus.* In his later work, Wittgenstein held that the meaning of language derives from its use. In the context of this question, candidates may explore a range of different epistemological questions. They might question the relationship between language and knowledge. How we speak about the world both shapes and constrains the sorts of things that we can say about it. This might be related to theories of truth, such as the correspondence theory of truth. Alternatively, candidates might consider radical skepticism. If our knowledge of the world is mediated through language, then to what extent does it track an external reality? Furthermore, if meaning is developed through use, then this might suggest that knowledge is socially constructed. Some may use this idea in relation to objectivity and subjectivity.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Philosophy of language in relation to epistemology e.g. the Vienna circle's view that all meaningful statements can be reduced to sense data, to their relations, or to logical truths
- Wittgenstein's claim that language limits what we can know, and conversely that meaning derives from use
- Language and reference to the external world e.g. Russell, Frege
- Cultural relativism and the idea that different languages and cultures shape knowledge
- Objectivity as a counter to the influence of language
- The limits of what we can know e.g. Plato's Cave
- The extent to which we can have knowledge of the external world at all e.g. radical skepticism, Nagels's 'brain in a vat' thought experiments where our sense data does not correspond to the external world
- Empiricism and sense data as a basis for knowledge that does not rely on language
- Theories of truth e.g. the Correspondence Theory
- Discussions of how we acquire knowledge e.g. through testimony, social relations, the role of rationality, the senses
- Taoism and the use of metaphor to counter the limits created by language.

6. To what extent does knowledge come from the senses? [25]

This question is about the justification of beliefs, and the empiricism *versus* rationalism debate. Rationalists such as Leibniz hold that knowledge is primarily a product of our a priori beliefs and rational capacities. On the other hand, empiricists such as Hume argue that knowledge is primarily the product of our senses and our grasp of the outside world. Descartes holds that indubitable *a priori* beliefs justify our *a posteriori* beliefs. He is thus sometimes interpreted as holding empiricist views despite ultimately resting them on rationalist premises. Kant's emphasis on rational faculties that shape how we understand the empirical world is also sometimes seen as a fusion of empiricism and rationalism. Candidates might provide examples of fallible *a posteriori* beliefs, and seemingly infallible a priori beliefs. They might discuss philosophy of science and the scientific method as a means of building knowledge based on the senses. They might also present an account of logical positivism and its attempt to reduce all knowledge claims to sense data.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The fallibility of the senses such as optical illusions
- The role of sense data and observations in the sciences
- Social influences on observations e.g. the Hawthorne effect
- The relationship between theory, rationality, and observation e.g. Kuhn and the theory ladenness of observations
- The logical positivists and the use of sense data to determine the meaningfulness of statements e.g. Popper and falsification
- Empiricism e.g. Hume, Locke
- Rationalism e.g. Leibniz
- Plato and the fallibility of the senses and importance of reason
- Berkeley, empiricism, and God/god(s)
- Descartes's use of rationalism and sense data to support the claim that we have true beliefs about the world
- The definition of knowledge as justified, true belief
- Correspondence theory, and whether sense data is a reliable means of accessing truth.

Optional theme 3: Ethics

7. Evaluate the claim that the rightness of moral action comes from living a good life. [25]

The claim states that living a good life is not just something desirable and a goal to be achieved by moral action but also that it is the ground on which the rightness of moral action is to be based. Therewith, the question shows a normative dimension, since it refers to a moral principle as well as a meta-ethical one, given that it puts in play a possible origin of moral values. Answers might understand the idea of living a good life as practically equal to happiness and explain this following an Aristotelian line of thought. They might also present other different views, including deontology or consequentialism. Other options as possible ground for the rightness of moral action, e.g. respect for the moral law, duty or responsibility to society or humanity. Further, answers might be focused on the central issue of validity and justification of moral judgments, with some of them sustaining a moral relativistic position. Issues related to life within the context of applied ethics, e.g. genetic engineering and human enhancement or the balance of life and the environment, might also be paths to be transited by the answers.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Conceptions of the good and what good life might be
- Happiness, *eudaimonia*, well-being, as what is non-instrumentally or ultimately good for a person
- *Eudaimonia* seems to be restricted to human beings; views that relate the good life to nature
- Living a good life, self-interest, and egoism
- Life as a moral or meta-moral value, Nietzsche
- Good life, health, and sickness; genetic engineering and human enhancement
- Civic life and the common good, the *polis*
- Good life as central concept; other approaches, e.g. deontology, utilitarianism, Taoism
- The principle of utility and the hedonic calculus
- Grounds of rightness and moral principles. Does moral principle apply everywhere, and at all times, or is morality somehow bounded by space or time (moral relativism, universalism in ethics)?
- The extent to which there is a circular reasoning in accounts of the good life: “What is the good life? Acting virtuously”, “What is acting virtuously? Living the good life”
- Challenges to the pre-eminence of moral principles, e.g. feminist ethics
- Skepticism about the claims of morality, e.g. Nietzsche
- The extent to which being moral would bring happiness, overall – not just to an individual but to society as a whole, e.g. utilitarianism, Nussbaum, Sen, Singer
- Approaches, cases, and issues from areas of applied ethics e.g. distribution of wealth and ethical responsibilities to humanity.

8. To what extent should ethics be more about self-interest than about the interests of others? [25]

The question is based on one of the discussion questions in the normative ethics topic as presented in the *Guide*. It presents a conflict central to ethical analysis, which also has been the focus of social and political discussion. Consequently, it allows for the exploration of different interpretations and the development of various lines of answering to it. Answers might choose one of the options and mainly argue in favour of one side; for instance, following Emerson's view that "all sensible people are selfish," which might be related to the stance that in fact everyone is always selfish. On the other hand, the "possibility of altruism" (T. Nagel) has been also sustained as a basic requirement for the grounding of moral principles which state rational conditions on desire and action. Answers might also consider the possibility of an alternative to the exclusive opposition interpretation. The answers might be also related to other central notions: the self, evolution, and ethics, free will and self-deception. Answers might analyse ethical approaches and specific cases, moral situations and concerns coming from applied ethics.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Evolutionary accounts; the idea that morality simply masks naked self-interest from the struggle for survival
- The conflict between self-interest and the interests of others within classical approaches to morality: teleological, deontological, utilitarian
- The extent to which the idea that being good is a form of "enlightened self-interest" (de Tocqueville) is plausible
- Does enlightened self-interest give people a reason for being altruistic, or does it show
- genuine altruism is not possible?
- The extent to which altruism and self-interest are compatible
- If ethics must be rational, and one may rationally (consistently, etc.) act for the sake of self-interest, then acting selfishly meets at least a rationality test for morality
- The view that ethics is about altruism and considering the welfare of others
- Forms of egoism: psychological and ethical (Jane Rachels)
- The view that ethics can be about cooperation
- Kant's categorical imperative. By focusing on the universalizability of a maxim, Kant highlights the importance of the interests of others rather than self interest. The view that we should treat others as ends in themselves, not means to an end. If being good and being selfish happen to require the same things, then selfishness would be something to celebrate
- Adam Smith's argument that selfishness in economic affairs is morally justified because it serves the common good in the most efficient way
- Singer and the effective altruism movement
- As citizens of the same world, we have a duty to act in a way that respects the person and interests of everyone
- Historical changes in the understanding of social interaction and humanity as a value
- The conflict between self-interest and the interests of others from religious optics: "Love others as yourself."

Optional theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. Evaluate the claim that technology will change how humans interact for the better. [25]

This question is about the way technology helps us communicate and assists in the workplace, perhaps to replace human labour at a saving for employers, with possible impact on the way humans work. Marx saw technology as playing a vital role in the interaction between humans and nature. He thought that innovation would make products so cheap to produce, that it would accelerate the end of capitalism. Others saw technology as being harnessed by capitalist businesses in order to make the labour force cheaper to employ, while other accounts draw on the Marxist tradition of seeing a movement in history towards different modes of working and relating to work and leisure time. Modern technology has had huge impacts on both the working environment (see the way technology supported working from home during imposed lockdowns in the global pandemic) and the leisure activities of people's lives at home. Technology has supported new ways of communication including interactivity through gameplaying or the use of avatars in the metaverse. While many speak of technology as a tool for humans, some critics suspect technology companies of creating apps that make their use addictive. Others point to deliberate obsolescence in the design of technological products, so that continuing purchasing will be required as the dependency on the product continues. Research is being undertaken to investigate the possible impact of social media on loneliness, given humans interact less in a shared physical space. Studies are not yet able to articulate a cause of loneliness through use of social media apps, but a correlation exists. Arendt explores the way that technology interacts with the phenomenon of human work and sees a danger in use of technology to concentrate on narrow issues of human welfare, thus acting in opposition to the rich relationship humans can develop in work, citizenship, and interactivity.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Technology and its influence on changing patterns of work
- Communication technology (e.g. social media, email, media streaming) and the impact on global understanding
- Arendt and the place of technology in work
- Taylor and the relationship between the individual and technology
- Bauman's concept of 'liquid modernity'
- The influence of technology on cultural understanding and interaction
- The changing face of the workplace
- The shared space – are some work and leisure activities requiring of physical contact
- Political philosophy and the role of technology and innovation – see Marx
- Ethical issues surrounding technology
- Artificial Intelligence – is it intelligence?
- New capabilities of Artificial Intelligence
- The issue of truth and its verification in the modern technological world.

10. Explain and discuss the view that the only rights we have are our legal rights, prescribed by the nation state. [25]

This question offers a chance to discuss what the challenges and attractions are of taking the view that rights arise in a social setting, as opposed to being innate in humans. It asks about how legal rights come about and who guarantees or polices them. The possession of legal rights comes about insofar as the law permits those rights. The arbiter of our rights, then, is legislation which will reflect the structures of the nation state and the way law is formed, enacted, and policed in that state. In this way, legal rights are the result of social realities and are subservient to the law. Bentham saw the laws that should be enacted as vehicles towards people's happiness but took the view that rights in themselves were 'nonsense on stilts'. Rights, then, are not derived from the way things exist naturally or by dint of metaphysical realities, instead they are societal constructions. Legal rights will vary from nation state to nation state, and it is not possible to describe a law that deprives us of rights as violating any natural or metaphysical reality. A law that appears unfair or discriminatory would be subject to protest and potential review through political and social engagement in the particular nation state. Legal rights, then, would appear subject to arbitrary whims of the state authorities or populace of the state, and rights would not be considered universal. Rights would be formed relative to the cultural setting of the nation state and issues like race, ethnic, gender, sexuality, religious freedom, free thought etc. would have no objective means of being defined, save, perhaps, how they contribute to happiness or peace or submission to authority in the state.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- How legal rights are set
- Legal rights as deriving from a social construct as opposed to an appeal to inalienable realities of existence
- The contrast with universal rights
- The contrast with natural rights
- The accompanying responsibilities attached to legal rights – where does the system of law fit in with the government of the nation state?
- Conflicts about rights occurring within the nation state
- Conflicts about rights occurring between nation states
- Possible bases for the creation and implementation of legal rights – utility or social happiness, religious conformity, social cohesion, the maintenance of authority and power
- Theories of natural moral law
- Social contract theories e.g. Locke, Rousseau, Hobbes
- Mill's treatment of individual liberty within his utilitarian scheme of thought
- The issue and role of punishment with misapplication or misuse of legal rights
- The challenge to individual freedom and liberty with legal rights
- Theocracies and legal rights (see recent protests in Iran)
- Legal rights for those who are stateless e.g. refugees.

Optional theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. Explain and discuss the problems in defending omnibenevolence as a characteristic of God/god(s). [25]

This question explores the claim that God/god(s) is/are all good, and some of the implications of this claim for the coherence of God/god(s)'s attributes and characteristics. In speaking about omnibenevolence, believers are faced with the issues of its possible incoherence in and of itself and when set aside other attributes or characteristics of God/god(s). If God/god(s) is/are all good and the creator and cause of the moral law, then is that moral law an arbitrary product of God/god(s)'s whim? Are there no separate criteria by which a moral judgement could be made? If God/god(s) is/are good, then any discussion of morality then becomes a tautology. Or is God/god(s)'s omnibenevolence a matter of God/god(s) wanting what is good for us? This is explored in the Euthyphro dilemma and explored by Aquinas in his exploration of the coherence of God/god(s)'s attributes. Another question is the empirical experience of a world full of suffering and what is termed 'evil'. Omnibenevolence is also challenged in a famous argument against the existence of God/god(s) termed, often, 'the problem of evil', whereby the presence of evil and suffering in the world counts as evidence against God/god(s)'s omnibenevolence or God/god(s)'s omnipotence, or both. If God/god(s) could stop suffering, God/god(s) would be omnibenevolent, and if God/god(s) is/are omnipotent and omnibenevolent, why has suffering not been wiped out - and why did evil exist in the first place?

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Omnibenevolence and its possible limits given God/god(s)'s sovereignty and omnipotence
- The Euthyphro dilemma
- 'God/god(s) is good' as a tautology and the arbitrary nature of moral law if God/god(s) is/are responsible for it
- Possible solutions to the Euthyphro dilemma, including Aquinas's work on the necessary characteristics and nature of God/god(s)
- The problem of evil and suffering
- The 'inconsistent triad' given the characteristics of God/god(s) as omnipotent and omnibenevolent and the existence of evil
- Free will as a solution
- Eschatological verification of God/god(s)'s omnibenevolence (Hick)
- Alternative accounts of God/god(s)'s attributes and characteristics – e.g. process theology, deism.

12. Evaluate the view that religious belief and experience arise because of human need. [25]

In and after the Enlightenment, thinkers such as Hume, Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx offered alternative explanations of how belief in God/god(s) and religious experience came about, based on human need as opposed to divine scriptural revelation. Their works often involved a form of anthropological exploration (especially that of Nietzsche) of religion. There was also analysis of the language of religion (see Hume, Tillich, Barth) and some writers (e.g. Freud, Jung, and William James) looked at psychological explanations of religious belief and experience. This question invites candidates to explore the question from a wide angle and offers the chance for an evaluation of the persuasiveness of different accounts of religion as a system of belief and activity, originating in the needs of humans. Is there any means of proof in this analysis? Do some accounts assume a knowledge of human needs where there is no direct evidence, and thus the accounts commit a form of the genetic fallacy? In asserting alternative explanations for the origins and continuing existence of religious belief and activity, do we learn more about the values of the authors as opposed to their subject matter? Some answers might explore the way religious language works, including covering how analogy, metaphor, myth, symbol, or a language game might explain how religious believers connect with the activity of their religion.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Hume and the basis of religion being in the human need for comfort and reassurance
- Nietzsche with his theory based on human social development in different stages of societal evolution (see the slave herd mentality)
- The genetic fallacy as a criticism of Nietzsche
- Freud’s view that the religion fulfils the unconscious mind's need for wish fulfilment and God/god(s) providing the comforting father-figure for people wanting reassurance
- Jung’s view that believed religion was a psychological response to the unknown with both an inner experience of the self and a response to the history and culture of the outer world
- Marx’s view that religion suppressed the workers with a promise of future happiness, not available to them in the unequal world of capitalist minority ownership
- Feuerbach’s view that religious belief is a projection of our human values
- Tillich and symbolic language meeting inner need
- Wittgenstein offering an explanation of religion through his language game analysis, meaning religion is a form of activity with its own rules that are shared by fellow members
- Are such accounts reductive? See Mary Midgely in her criticism of the misuse of science (see Dawkins) in offering accounts of the pre-scientific origins of religion
- Is religious experience a matter for neurologists or psychologists to study? See William James.

Optional theme 6: Philosophy of science

13. Evaluate the claim that all science is based on observation. [25]

Bacon defines the scientific method as based on observation. Through the use of inductive reasoning, scientific theories collect observations and generalize to universal claims. This is preserved in Popper's falsificationism, where a theory is scientific if it is falsifiable by some observation, although instead of inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning is emphasized. In both cases, the scientific method relies on observations. The problem of induction might be discussed in relation to the value of observations to science. Furthermore, candidates might respond to Popper's deductive use of observation by pointing to objections such as Kuhn's view that observations themselves are not theory free. They might also consider whether the scientific method is definable. Candidates may discuss empiricism in general, and Van Fraassen's view that scientific theories need to account for observations but are undetermined by them. This may lead to a discussion of realism and anti-realism about scientific theories.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Inductivism as key to the scientific method e.g. Bacon
- The relationship between new observations and established theory e.g. Galileo
- The problem of induction e.g. Hume, Russell
- Falsificationism e.g. Popper
- Problems with falsificationism and with observations in general e.g. Kuhn
- Empirical adequacy and the view that although scientific theories must accommodate observations, there will always be multiple theories available for any single set of observations e.g. Van Fraassen
- Non-empirical aspects of the scientific method such as abduction e.g. Peirce
- The role of society on science
- Scientific realism e.g. Putnam
- Anti-realism e.g. Laudan's pessimistic meta-induction argument
- The importance of purpose and motive in observations e.g. Dewey.

14. Evaluate the claim that scientific research should be guided by ethics. [25]

This question relates to the accountability and responsibility of the scientist. It asks about the relationship between ethics and science. Candidates might discuss some of the clashes between ethics and science, such as cases where scientific advances have been put to unethical uses, e.g. nuclear technologies and nuclear weapons. Conversely, they might point to the scientific advances reached in pursuit of unethical causes such as the development of the internet for military purposes. Candidates might instead choose to focus on particular issues at the interface between science and ethics such as medical ethics and issues like genetic modification. Alternatively, they might explore the impact of ethical considerations on scientific method e.g. restrictions on animal testing, or strict regulation of testing on humans. Candidates might point to the objectivity of science as a pursuit that is separate from social concerns, or they may cast science as serving society and so intrinsically linked to ethical issues.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Ethical theories e.g. utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics
- Objectivity in the sciences
- The use of observations as value neutral
- Whether scientific theories and methods can ever be value neutral
- The intrinsic value of science- does it outweigh ethical issues?
- Whether the personal attributes of scientists make a difference to the science conducted
- Science as it is used to pursue ethical causes e.g. vaccine development to save lives
- Science and the pursuit of unethical causes e.g. the development of nuclear weapons
- Ethical issues arising from new technologies e.g. reproductive health and reproductive ethics
- The ethics of allocation of funding and resources e.g. funding space exploration when there are immediate problems on earth
- The relationship between companies, profit and science e.g. big pharma
- Medical ethics
- Ethical research practices e.g. animal testing.

Optional theme 7: Political philosophy

15. Explain and discuss the origin of the state. [25]

Political philosophy has been widely known for offering an explanation of the origins (and thus speculating about the current role) of the state in relation to individual members of that state. There is no clear definition of what comprises a state, but a shared space under a form of government, which entails a legal system are common features of explanations about how and when the state is formed. Different forms of rule in a state are imagined, from the divine right of kings in early English empirical writers (see Hobbes) and the traditions of the wise ruler in Eastern literature (see Lao Tzu), to democratic traditions in the modern era or the existence of one-party dictatorship. In considering the origins of the state, many writers consider the importance of the consent of the population to be governed by the state. This often involves a discussion about a form of contract being established, even if it is not actually signed or consciously agreed to by members of the state. Such approaches lead to speculation about life prior to the formation of the state and this what the state offers to its citizens. Criticisms of the ideas of a 'social contract' include the difficulty of speculating about such origins from the perspective of modern history and the difficulty of members of the state conceding that they had ever consented to be governed from birth. How was consent granted initially? And how does that initial consent relate to the continuing consent of people to be governed in a state?

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Factors that might explain the forming of states in human societies – religion, economics, culture, language, geography, and conflict
- Plato's views on the origin and composition of the state
- The limits and extent of state government
- Different modes of government of the state
- Social contract theories – from Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau to modern theories of the social contract, like Rawls
- Rawls's 'veil of ignorance' for the conceptual forming of a new state with true social justice
- Hume's criticism of consent ever being granted by a citizen to be ruled in a state (see analogy with the Press Gang and the ship)
- Grounds in which consent can be withdrawn
- What is in the possession of the individual as opposed to the government?
- Force, revolution and law.

16. Evaluate the view that human rights should be universal. [25]

This question explores the universality of rights, even though responses may question the very assumption that rights exist. What constitutes a right and how is it granted? What are the responsibilities attached to particular rights that are deemed universal? Who has a duty to carry out the responsibilities to enforce the universal right and how is that process policed? What are the conditions that can make a particular right universal? The relationship between legal and constitutional rights. Are rights in existence simply by virtue of being human, or do they arise as a result of our political or social contexts? The so-called 'right to work' is harder to justify in terms of the responsibility for upholding it than the 'right to equality under the law'. Human rights is an enlightenment concept, fully fleshed out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and other Protocols and Conventions, such as the International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first articles uphold the dignity, liberty, and equality of all humans. With the declaration coming from the United Nations, a parallel process of international law was established, most notably, in matters of warfare. But there is no universal agreement about the reach of the laws. Some nations state them as ideals, while others incorporate them into their domestic law. The language of rights offers an investigation into concepts like utilitarianism and deontology as motivations or rules for upholding rights. In the modern day different political philosophies give different places to rights, see Rawls, Hayek, Nozick, Nussbaum or Singer.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- What are the grounds for asserting a universal right?
- Who asserts the universal right and who enforces or polices it?
- What, if any, are the differences between universal rights and other human rights?
- The utilitarian *versus* deontological debate about rights
- Modern political approaches to individual rights
- The place of religion and sanctity in discussing universal rights
- Issues that attract discussion about how rights might not be experienced as universal in different parts of the world – see discrimination on grounds of gender, sexuality, age, ethnicity and race, religion, disability etc.
- The place of ideology and coloniality in human rights and the United Nations e.g. Mazower
- Bentham described rights as 'nonsense on stilts' but Mill believed they assisted in upholding the general happiness of society.