

2006 Philosophy

Higher

Finalised Marking Instructions

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HIGHER PHILOSOPHY 2006

NB. These marking instructions are to be used in the context of a markers meeting where there is discussion about the application of these instructions to sample scripts.

All essay answers are marked out of 25.

The logic option is also marked out of 25.

In their essays candidates are rewarded according to the quality of thought revealed in their answers. They are not rewarded solely or even mainly for the quantity of knowledge conveyed. "Quality of thought" is taken as including the extent to which the candidate:

- gives an answer which is relevant to the question and relates explicitly to the terms of the question
- argues a case when requested to do so
- makes the various distinctions required by the question
- responds to all the elements in the question
- where required explains, analyses, discusses and assesses rather than simply describing or narrating
- answers with clarity and fluency and uses appropriate philosophical language.

The following descriptions provide some additional guidance on the features of essays categorised as A, B and C respectively. Clearly, many essays will exhibit some, though not all of the features listed in any one category. Others will be stronger in one area than another. These characteristics do however, provide a general indication of aspects to be expected in an essay at a particular marks band.

A: Total 18 – 25 marks

The answer covers all or most of the main points relevant to answering the question, with development (definition; explanation; exemplification; quotation; etc) as appropriate. The essay is a closely-argued and sustained response to the question, making effective use of philosophical concepts and terminology and presenting an effective exposition and evaluation of the texts and/or positions under consideration.

B: Total 15 – 17 marks

Most of the answer engages with the question and is a coherent response. Exposition of the texts and/or positions under consideration is accurate. There will be some coherence to the candidate's analysis of the philosophical argument or issue, and appropriate evaluation and some attempt will be made to arrive at a conclusion which relates to the rest of the answer.

C: Total 13 – 14 marks

The candidate demonstrates sufficient competence in the subject area, and a grasp of the texts and/or positions under consideration. There may be omission or inaccuracy, but there will be basic analysis of the argument or issue and limited evaluation.

In marking essays the full range of marks is available to be awarded. It is important to bear in mind that most candidates will have had little contact with philosophy before. Marking should reflect what it is reasonable to expect from a newcomer to the subject and quality is rewarded accordingly. Full marks are attainable for answers written within the time constraints even though these can never be a fully comprehensive analysis of the arguments or issue.

Non-standard answers, as long as these are supported by appropriate reasons or argumentation, should not be penalised but marked according to the criteria outlined above. In the case of logic, non-standard answers should be accepted and rewarded accordingly if the reasons given are appropriate to the question asked.

The detailed information which follows indicates the points that a candidate is likely to make in response to the questions. This list is not to be considered exhaustive and it is also possible for candidates to write high quality essays and not mention all the points listed.

SECTION A: CLASSIC TEXTS

Candidates must answer ONE question.

1 Plato

Discuss the role of the theory of forms in Plato's Republic. (25)

- outline the theory of Forms
- provides answers to questions: what exists, what is the nature of what exists
 - universals and particulars
- knowledge must be of what is real so must be of the Forms
- knowledge of good is knowledge of the Form of Good
 - moral implications of this
- only true philosopher has knowledge
 - so only philosophers fit to govern
- appropriate criticisms of the theory
- evaluative comments on whether the theory fulfils this role

To be awarded 13/14 marks a candidate should show some awareness that the question is about the role of the Forms. To be awarded 18 marks or above there should be substantial discussion of the role of the Forms. Although the answer may also contain other material.

2 Descartes

Discuss the role of the dream and demon hypotheses in Descartes' Mediations. (25)

- outline Descartes' project
- method of doubt explained
- Descartes' shortcut: isolate foundational beliefs
- a posteriori foundation: senses are reliable
- dream hypothesis: cannot rule out possibility that I am dreaming
- application of hyperbolic doubt to a posteriori belief
- a priori foundation: reason is reliable
- Demon hypotheses: cannot rule out possibility of systematic deception

The above bullet points should not be taken as excluding the interpretation that the demon doesn't add any extra doubts. A legitimate interpretation may say that the demon is a psychological device designed to sustain all previous doubts.

To receive 18 marks or above there should be substantial discussion of the dream and demon hypotheses but there may well be additional material providing context or discussing 'the cogito', which is what the two hypotheses are aiming to establish.

ALL ESSAYS SHOULD BE MARKED WITH REFERENCE TO THE RANGE DESCRIPTIONS ON PAGE 2.

3 Aristotle

Discuss the role of virtue in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. (25)

- central task of text is to set out the conditions of the good life
- key question: what is the good life?
- Aristotle's answer: performance of a person's function with excellence
 - ie virtue
 - appropriate example
- moral and intellectual virtues
- Aristotle's account of the acquisition of virtues
- relativity of the virtues – the mean
- appropriate evaluative comments, eg
 - do people have a function?; is there only one function?; comments on the mean

4 Hume

Critically evaluate Hume's theory of causality. (25)

- the conventional view of the nature of causality
 - contiguity, cause comes first, necessary connection causality
 - key role for necessary connection
- key question for Hume: what is the origin of these ideas?
- outward impressions of the first two but not of necessary connection
- rejection of rationalist view of causation
- Hume's conclusion: source is inward impression
 - role of human nature/habit
- criticisms
 - unclear if Hume regards causality as an objective feature of the world
 - inconsistent in that it proposes to be a science but arguably undermines science
 - Hume is unclear about what he means by a 'determination of a mind'
 - constant conjunction leading to belief in cause can be questioned
 - single event leading to belief; multiple conjunctions failing to lead to belief
 - contiguity and priority of cause can be questioned.

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SECTION B: PROBLEMS IN PHILOSOPHY

Candidates must answer ONE question.

1 Induction

How far can inductive reasoning be defended? (25)

- define the problem of induction; why inductive reasoning seems to be important
- claims that inductive reasoning can be defended
 - Russell: it is an instinctive belief and independent principle
 - Ayer: it is a pseudo-problem; rational approach requires using proven methods.
- claims that inductive reasoning cannot be defended
 - Hume: habit and custom
 - Popper: find another way to defend beliefs; falsification
- evaluate comments on the various responses

2 Scepticism

Does coherentism give an adequate account of knowledge? (25)

- details of the coherentist position
 - mutually supporting statements
- reasons for coherentism
 - impossible to find foundations for knowledge
 - idealist claims that there is no possibility of correspondence to the external world
- problems with coherentism
 - possible problems of using circular arguments
 - possible to have more than one coherent set of beliefs
 - leads to epistemological relativism
 - problems with defining what is meant by coherent
 - problems with deciding on how large the coherent set needs to be.

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3 Existence of God

“The universe requires an ultimate explanation.”

Discuss with reference to the cosmological argument.

(25)

- a posteriori
- chain of cause and effect requires an ultimate cause
- reference to classical statements of the argument, eg Aquinas, Aristotle
- distinction between necessary and contingent existence
- principle of sufficient reason – since everything requires an explanation the universe requires an explanation
- answer to the problem of infinite regress
- identification of problems associated with argument, eg
 - who/what caused God
 - Russell – the cosmos is a brute fact
 - Hume/Kant – can the ‘principle of sufficient reason’ be applied to the whole universe
 - Kant – collapses into the ontological argument
 - leads to a narrow definition of God
 - natural forces may meet the requirement of a first cause

4 Free-will and Determinism

Are free-will and determinism compatible?

(25)

- definition of determinism
 - every event, including human actions, has a sufficient set of causes
- libertarian definition of freedom
 - the power to originate decisions
- compatibilist definition of freedom
 - the lack of coercion/constraint
- whether or not they are compatible depends on what is meant by freedom
 - evaluation of libertarian definition
 - incoherent; difficult to distinguish from chance
 - makes sense of our feeling of freedom
 - needed to make sense of rational thought
 - evaluation of compatibilist definition
 - makes morality baseless
 - difficult to justify the distinction between external and internal constraints

5 Moral Philosophy

What does it mean to say that an action is morally right or wrong?

(25)

- objective theories outlined: theological moral realism, Utilitarianism
 - standard criticisms
- subjective theories outlined: emotivism, prescriptivism
 - standard criticisms
- statement of personal conclusion

NB students will be credited if they choose to focus on either an objective or a subjective response to this question rather than giving both responses.

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6 Social Philosophy

“Trying to create a society with a reasonable degree of equality is so important that it justifies interfering with people’s individual liberty.”

Discuss.

(25)

- definition of ‘liberty’ and ‘equality’ in this context
- explanation of the tensions between liberty and equality
 - clarification of how liberty might be affected by aiming for equality
- appropriate arguments for the priority of some kind of equality
 - argument based on notions of justice
 - possible benefits to society/greater good
- appropriate arguments for the priority of individual liberty
 - argument based on the priority of property rights
 - possible benefits to society/greater good
 - the possibility of individual liberty being a first principle

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SECTION C: MORAL PHILOSOPHY

If this optional section is chosen, candidates must answer ONE question.

- 1 Sometimes a country decides that it is necessary to launch a pre-emptive strike against another country, ie it decides it is necessary to attack first on the basis of a perceived threat.

How might a Utilitarian and a Kantian respond to this policy?

(25)

- explain the main features of Utilitarianism, eg
 - consequentialism, hedonism, impartiality, Act and Rule
- explain the categorical imperative
 - two formulations of the categorical imperative
- application of Utilitarianism to pre-emptive strike
 - assumption that we can make reasonably successful predictions
- application of Kantian ethics to pre-emptive strike
 - identifying a maxim
- evaluate comments about applying the theories
 - problems of identifying consequences either way
 - problems of calculating resultant happiness
 - problems of identifying a maxim
 - problems of conflict duties

NB it should be noted that Kant seems to argue in favour of pre-emptive strike in the *Metaphysics of Morals* and against them in *Perpetual Peace* but there is no expectation that candidates will have specific knowledge of these texts

- 2 Evaluate Utilitarian approaches to voluntary euthanasia.

(25)

- explanation of what is meant by voluntary euthanasia
- explain the main features of Utilitarianism, eg
 - teleological consequentialist, not concerned with motives.
 - hedonism and the hedonic calculus
 - impartiality
 - Act and Rule
- Application of the theory to voluntary euthanasia
 - each case decided according to its circumstances
- Evaluation of the adequacy of the theory
 - intuitively appropriate focus on the person's happiness/well-being
 - patient's happiness/well-being could be outweighed by others well-being
 - even if it leads to an acceptable conclusion on this issue does not demonstrate that it is adequate as an ethical theory (could justify unethical actions, eg involuntary euthanasia)
 - students may argue that utilitarianism is inadequate as an ethical theory irrespective of the issue.

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3 Kant argues that we have an absolute and unconditional duty to act in a certain way. How far do you agree? **(25)**

- outline the main features of Kantian ethics
 - deontological
 - moral principles independent of experience
 - distinction between hypothetical and categorical imperatives
 - definition of duty
 - personal preferences and inclinations not a trusted guide
 - different formulations of the Categorical Imperative
- evaluation of Kantian Ethics
 - respects all humans as rational agents
 - credit given for motivation even if consequences are unfavourable
 - problems: conflicting duties, prima facie duties, underestimates the importance of consequences

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SECTION D: LOGIC

If this optional section is chosen, candidates must answer ALL questions.

1. Consider the following argument and the form provided:
“No intellectuals are athletic because all philosophers are intellectuals and no philosophers are athletic”

All A are B
No A are C
No B are C

Define the following terms:

(To illustrate your answer you may use examples from the above argument.)

- (a) Premises – statements/reasons that support a conclusion
- (b) Conclusion – the point that the argument is trying to establish
- (c) Constants – the parts of an argument or argument form that provide the structure of the argument and remain the same even if the content of the variables is changed.
- (d) Variables – letters used to represent the content of the argument
- (e) Propositions – statements expressed by sentences that are capable of being true or false.

(5)

(The structure of this question is designed to assist the students by giving them material that they can use to help clarify their definition. Students should not be penalised if they give a clear definition without using the given material. Therefore: – definition and example = 1 mark; only definition = 1 mark; only example = 0 marks; definition and wrong example = 0 marks)

2. Which of the following is **not** a true statement about philosophical arguments?

- (a) An argument must have premises that are either true or false.
- (b) An argument may be represented by more than one logical form.
- (c) An argument must have a conclusion that is implied by the premises.
- (d) An argument may have less than two premises.

(1)

Answer = c

3. Consider the following argument:

“If the death penalty doesn’t reduce crime then we should never reinstate it. However, the death penalty does reduce crime so we should reinstate it.”

(a) Give **two** possible forms for this argument. For each form state what the variables stand for. **(2)**

eg P $P =$ if the death penalty doesn’t reduce crime then we should never reinstate it.

Q $Q =$ the death penalty does reduce crime

R $R =$ we should reinstate it (ie the death penalty)

$P \rightarrow Q$ $P =$ the death penalty doesn’t reduce crime

$\frac{\sim P}{\sim Q}$ $Q =$ we should never reinstate it (ie the death penalty)

$\sim P \rightarrow Q$ $P =$ the death penalty reduces crime

$\frac{P}{\sim Q}$ $Q =$ we should never reinstate it (ie the death penalty)

(b) Assess the argument for validity.

The argument is not valid **(1)**

4. If a valid argument has a false conclusion, must one of the premises be false? Give reasons for your answer. **(2)**

Yes. It follows from the definition of validity because if the argument is valid and both premises were true then the conclusion would also be true.

5. Consider the following argument:

All species of bird have two eyes

A chicken has two eyes

So a chicken must be a bird

What is wrong with this argument?

- (a) Its validity but not its soundness
- (b) Its soundness but not its validity
- (c) Both its validity and soundness
- (d) There is nothing wrong with this argument **(1)**

Answer = c

6. Consider the following argument:

“Although the dog is bigger than the cat, the budgie is bigger than the dog. So, although it may surprise you, the budgie is bigger than the cat.”

(a) State which one of the following is true of the above argument

- (i) The argument is invalid but sound.
- (ii) The argument is invalid and unsound.
- (iii) The argument is invalid but there is not enough information to say whether it is sound.
- (iv) The argument is valid and sound.
- (v) The argument is valid but unsound.
- (vi) The argument is valid but there is not enough information to say whether it is sound. **(1)**

Answer = vi

(b) Is it possible for this argument to have the form:

P & Q?
R

If yes, then state what the variables stand for. If no, then explain why not. **(2)**

Yes.

P = the dog is bigger than the cat

Q = the budgie is bigger than the dog

R = the budgie is bigger than the cat

NB. Students must not include, “Although”; “So, although it may surprise you” or “Therefore”

7. An argument has the following form.

P
P
P

Without knowing its content, is it possible to tell whether this argument is sound given the form alone? Explain your answer. **(2)**

No. To know if an argument is sound one needs to know if the premises are true.

8. Is it possible for a fallacy to be valid?
If no then explain why; if yes then provide an example. **(2)**

Yes. Any appropriate example.

9 Amphiboly and Equivocation are often classified as “fallacies of ambiguity”.
Clearly explain the difference between these two fallacies giving an example of each. **(4)**

Amphiboly is an ambiguity in the structure of a statement; equivocation is an ambiguity that arises because of a word that has more than one meaning.

Any appropriate examples.

(1 mark for each explanation and 1 mark for each example)

10 Read the following:

“The world doesn’t need great men and women. If Columbus had never gone to sea someone else would have discovered America; if Pierre and Marie Curie had died in childhood someone else would have discovered radium; if Einstein had never been born someone would have eventually done the maths.”

Name and explain the fallacy contained within this argument. **(2)**

Fallacy of composition. Just because something is true of the members of a set does not mean it is true of the whole set. Although each great person might be replaced it does not follow that we can do without great people for it may be that they will have to be replaced by other people who would be considered great.

Total (25)

[END OF MARKING INSTRUCTIONS]