



National 5 Philosophy

Course code:	C854 75
Course assessment code:	X854 75
SCQF:	level 5 (24 SCQF credit points)
Valid from:	session 2022–23

The course specification provides detailed information about the course and course assessment to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year. It describes the structure of the course and the course assessment in terms of the skills, knowledge and understanding that are assessed.

This document is for teachers and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver the course.

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Course overview

The course consists of 24 SCQF credit points which includes time for preparation for course assessment. The notional length of time for a candidate to complete the course is 160 hours.

The course assessment has two components.

Component	Marks	Duration
Component 1: question paper	80	2 hours and 20 minutes
Component 2: assignment	20	See course assessment section

Recommended entry	Progression
<p>Entry to this course is at the discretion of the centre.</p> <p>Candidates should have achieved the fourth curriculum level or the National 4 People and Society course or the National 4 Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course or equivalent qualifications and/or experience prior to starting this course.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Higher Philosophy course◆ Higher Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies course◆ other SQA qualifications in social studies, social science or related areas at SCQF level 5 or SCQF level 6

Conditions of award

The grade awarded is based on the total marks achieved across all course assessment components.

Course rationale

National Courses reflect Curriculum for Excellence values, purposes and principles. They offer flexibility, provide more time for learning, more focus on skills and applying learning, and scope for personalisation and choice.

Every course provides opportunities for candidates to develop breadth, challenge and application. The focus and balance of assessment is tailored to each subject area.

The course builds on candidates' existing knowledge and curiosity about philosophy.

Candidates are introduced to the structure of arguments. They examine philosophical ideas and are encouraged to take an enquiring and reflective approach to the study of philosophy.

Purpose and aims

The course develops reasoning skills by focusing on abstract concepts and philosophical problems.

The course:

- ◆ develops basic knowledge and understanding of philosophy
- ◆ encourages candidates' ability to engage with abstract thought
- ◆ offers candidates insight into the ideas of others

Candidates develop a range of skills, including:

- ◆ analysing arguments
- ◆ recalling, selecting and using specified knowledge
- ◆ explaining philosophical ideas and theories
- ◆ explaining criticisms of philosophical ideas and theories
- ◆ presenting ideas in a logical sequence in an extended piece of writing

Who is this course for?

This course is suitable for learners with the recommended entry level, who have an interest in philosophy.

Course content

The National 5 Philosophy course has three areas of study. Each area offers opportunities for candidates to focus on particular skills.

Arguments in Action

Candidates develop the ability to examine and assess the reliability of simple arguments.

Knowledge and Doubt

Candidates examine theories regarding the nature of knowledge and how it is acquired. They are introduced to criticisms of these theories.

Moral Philosophy

Candidates examine theories regarding moral decision-making and how these theories might be applied to specific situations. They are introduced to criticisms of these theories.

Skills, knowledge and understanding

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course

The following provides a broad overview of the subject skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the course:

- ◆ analysing simple arguments
- ◆ recognising common fallacies used in arguments
- ◆ knowing, understanding and being able to explain philosophical positions and theories
- ◆ applying philosophical positions and theories to specific situations
- ◆ explaining criticisms of philosophical positions and theories
- ◆ investigating a philosophical question or claim
- ◆ presenting ideas in a logical sequence in an extended piece of writing

Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment

The following provides details of skills, knowledge and understanding sampled in the course assessment.

Component 1: question paper

The question paper samples from the following areas of study:

Arguments in Action

Candidates must be able to identify, explain and give examples of the following terms to show their understanding:

- ◆ statement
- ◆ argument
- ◆ premise
- ◆ conclusion
- ◆ valid and invalid

Candidates must be able to:

- ◆ distinguish statements from questions, commands, exclamations and arguments
- ◆ identify premises and conclusions in an argument
- ◆ present an argument in standard form
- ◆ analyse simple arguments: identifying valid and invalid arguments; identifying informal fallacies within an argument
- ◆ identify, explain and give examples of the following common fallacies:
 - attacking the person; a conclusion is established on the grounds that an irrelevant personal characteristic is used as justification for rejecting what someone claims in an argument
 - false dilemma: a conclusion is established on the grounds that it is the best of the two options presented in the argument, when in fact more than two options are available
 - illegitimate appeal to authority: a conclusion is established on the grounds of a claim made by an authority when that authority is not established as authoritative on facts relevant to the argument
 - slippery slope: a conclusion (that an initial first step should not be taken) is established on the grounds that the first step will inevitably lead to further events and/or actions and/or commitments that are undesirable, without providing good reasons to suppose that further events will follow

Knowledge and Doubt

Candidates must understand and be able to explain the following concepts:

- ◆ the distinction between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that' — knowledge as 'justified, true belief' (the tripartite theory of knowledge)
- ◆ empiricism — all knowledge of the world ultimately depends on experience (Locke's blank sheet of paper)
- ◆ rationalism — at least some knowledge of the world can be gained through reason and innate ideas (Leibniz' block of marble)
- ◆ scepticism — the claim that knowledge (perhaps in just some cases; perhaps in all cases) is unattainable: sceptical arguments; infinite regress of justification

For **Descartes**, candidates must be able to comment on:

- ◆ method of doubt: senses, dreaming, and deceiving God argument

Senses argument

- ◆ Descartes' claim that many of the beliefs he has taken to be completely reliable come from his sense experience
- ◆ his assertion that his senses have been shown to deceive him
- ◆ his conclusion that it might be wise not to trust in them completely
- ◆ his examples of the kinds of things our senses deceive us about — things that are very small or very far away

Dreaming argument

- ◆ Descartes' point that the senses initially seem to be reliable for things that are very obvious, such as the fact that he is sitting by the fire holding a piece of paper in his hands
- ◆ his belief that he sometimes thinks he is sitting by the fire when in fact he is in bed, dreaming that he is awake
- ◆ his view that, in dreams, we can have the experience of seeing things yet these things are not there in reality
- ◆ his suggestion that perhaps all his supposed experiences of the external world are, similarly, a product of his mind
- ◆ his claim that there are no definitive signs by which he can distinguish wakefulness from sleep
- ◆ his conclusion that, as he could be dreaming, he cannot trust any knowledge gained from his sense experiences

Deceiving God argument

- ◆ Descartes' use of the deceiving God argument to cast doubt over knowledge based on reason; for example God may even be deceiving him about mathematical truths
- ◆ his speculation that God is deceiving him about the existence of the entire world
- ◆ his conclusion that the foundations for all his knowledge are undermined by the possibility that God might be deceiving him

Malicious demon

- ◆ Descartes' conclusion that, by the end of the Method of Doubt, he can raise a doubt about every single one of his former beliefs without exception
- ◆ his tendency to keep falling back into his old beliefs
- ◆ his adoption of the malicious demon as a device he can use to deceive himself that his previous beliefs are actually false
- ◆ his speculation that the external world might be a complete illusion

The Cogito

- ◆ Descartes' consideration of the possibility that he might not exist
- ◆ his claim that even the malicious demon cannot deceive him about his existence for, if he is being deceived, he undoubtedly exists
- ◆ if he is doubting that he exists, then doubting is a form of thinking
- ◆ Descartes' conclusion that, if he is thinking, he must exist — I think therefore I am

For **Hume**, candidates must be able to comment on:

- ◆ Hume's distinction between impressions and ideas, including his distinction between simple and complex ideas
- ◆ Hume's explanation of the distinction between impressions and ideas with illustrative examples; heat, anger and love
- ◆ his explanation of the distinction between simple and complex ideas with the examples of the 'golden mountain' and 'virtuous horse'
- ◆ his response to the belief that we can imagine things we have never experienced
- ◆ his explanation of how the imagination works in the ways we compound, transpose, augment and diminish simple ideas

Hume's two arguments concerning the origin of ideas

Argument 1: All ideas can be traced back to earlier impressions

- ◆ Hume's argument that any idea no matter how complex, can always be traced back to the impressions we have experienced
- ◆ his explanation of how the complex idea of God can be traced back to earlier impressions.

Argument 2: if I don't have the impression, then I don't have the corresponding idea.

- ◆ Hume's argument that, when the person does not have an impression, then they also don't have the corresponding idea
- ◆ his claim that they will lack the corresponding idea as they have not gained the impression to derive the idea from
- ◆ his three examples of this: malfunctioning senses, absence of relevant experience, absence due to species limitation

Missing shade of blue

- ◆ Hume's introduction of the missing shade of blue as a counter-example to his claim that all ideas are derived from impressions
- ◆ Hume's rejection of the counter-example as problematic for his theory on the grounds that it is so singular an example that it is scarcely worth observing

Candidates should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the listed content of Descartes and Hume and explain criticisms (strengths and weaknesses) of these positions and theories.

Candidates are not expected to engage with the original texts of Descartes and Hume.

Moral Philosophy

Candidates must be able to explain two moral theories: utilitarianism and one other.

Candidates must be able to apply these theories to specific situations.

For utilitarianism:

- ◆ the greatest happiness principle: the principle that the more happiness and the less unhappiness an action produces, the more morally praiseworthy it will be; an action is right if it produces the greatest happiness for the greatest number and wrong if it produces the reverse of happiness
- ◆ consequentialism: the view that the consequences of an action are the primary factor in calculating its moral worth; the greater the consequences an action produces the more morally right the action is; actions with bad outcomes are immoral
- ◆ equity: the principle that claims everyone's interests are of equal importance or at least are worthy of equal consideration; everyone's happiness counts equally in our moral decision making
- ◆ hedonism: the theory that all human beings naturally seek pleasure and avoid pain; pleasure is the only good; pleasure or happiness is the only thing worth valuing
- ◆ calculating potential happiness: Bentham's hedonic calculus; describing the hedonic calculus as a quantitative tool which measures how much utility an action produces; naming and explaining the component parts; applying the calculus to a situation
- ◆ Calculating potential happiness: Mill's distinction between higher and lower pleasures; describing the theory of higher and lower pleasures; explaining 'quantitative' and 'qualitative'; giving examples of higher and lower pleasures; explaining competent judges;

Candidates should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the listed content above and give appropriate criticisms.

Three common criticisms of utilitarianism

- ◆ evil pleasures: the criticism that not all pleasures are good; maximising happiness may lead to evil pleasures; the possibility that someone may derive great pleasure from the suffering of others; why this is a problem for utilitarianism because most people would view inflicting suffering on others as wrong; appropriate examples
- ◆ difficulty of predicting consequences: events can turn out differently from expected; we have no control over anything but our own actions, so unexpected consequences can happen; long-term versus short-term consequences; actual versus intended consequences; local versus global consequences; appropriate examples
- ◆ tyranny of the majority: possibility of majority exploiting the minority when maximising happiness; the problem of justice for the minority; examples of situations where the happiness of the minority appears to be sacrificed for the benefit of the majority; what the majority want is not necessarily right as it ignores justice and/or rights of the minority; appropriate examples

For the other moral theory:

- ◆ the main features
- ◆ three common criticisms: candidates should be able to write about these in a similar level of detail to the criticisms of utilitarianism above

Component 2: assignment

Candidates are required to investigate a philosophical question or claim.

This includes:

- ◆ introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it
- ◆ using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim
- ◆ explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim
- ◆ presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment

Skills, knowledge and understanding included in the course are appropriate to the SCQF level of the course. The SCQF level descriptors give further information on characteristics and expected performance at each SCQF level (www.scqf.org.uk).

Skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

This course helps candidates to develop broad, generic skills. These skills are based on [SQA's Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#) and draw from the following main skills areas:

1 Literacy

- 1.1 Reading
- 1.2 Writing
- 1.3 Listening and talking

5 Thinking skills

- 5.3 Applying
- 5.4 Analysing and evaluation

These skills must be built into the course where there are appropriate opportunities and the level should be appropriate to the level of the course.

Further information on building in skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work is given in the course support notes.

Course assessment

Course assessment is based on the information provided in this document.

The course assessment meets the key purposes and aims of the course by addressing:

- ◆ breadth — drawing on knowledge and skills from across the course
- ◆ application — requiring application of knowledge and/or skills in practical or theoretical contexts as appropriate

This enables candidates to:

- ◆ demonstrate knowledge and understanding of philosophical positions and theories from across the course to answer questions in a question paper
- ◆ select, use and analyse relevant knowledge to investigate a philosophical question or claim

Course assessment structure: question paper

Question paper

80 marks

The question paper samples philosophical knowledge and understanding from across the course. Candidates are required to integrate and apply knowledge and understanding to respond to questions.

The question paper gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ analysing simple arguments
- ◆ recognising common fallacies used in arguments
- ◆ knowing, understanding and being able to explain philosophical positions and theories
- ◆ applying philosophical positions and theories to specific situations
- ◆ explaining criticisms of philosophical positions and theories

The question paper has 80 marks out of a total of 100 marks. Two questions are worth 30 marks each and one question is worth 20 marks. The question paper therefore constitutes 80% of the course assessment.

Setting, conducting and marking the question paper

The question paper is set and marked by SQA, and conducted in centres under conditions specified for external examinations by SQA. Candidates complete this in 2 hours and 20 minutes.

Specimen question papers for National 5 courses are published on SQA's website. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question papers candidates sit. The specimen papers also include marking instructions.

Course assessment structure: assignment

Assignment

20 marks

The assignment gives candidates an opportunity to demonstrate the following skills, knowledge and understanding:

- ◆ introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it
- ◆ using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim
- ◆ explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim
- ◆ presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment

Candidates do this by choosing and investigating a philosophical question or claim, and producing a report based on this investigation.

The assignment has 20 marks out of a total of 100 marks for course assessment. The assignment therefore constitutes 20% of the course assessment.

Setting, conducting and marking the assignment

The assignment gives candidates an open choice of topics within guidelines set by SQA. Evidence is submitted to SQA for external marking. All marking is quality assured by SQA.

Assessment conditions

The assignment has two stages:

- ◆ research
- ◆ production of evidence

Time

Candidates choose and investigate a philosophical question or claim. The research stage includes choosing an issue, collecting evidence, organising, evaluating and preparation time for the production of evidence. This stage has been designed to be capable of completion over a notional period of 8 hours.

The production of evidence stage is when the candidate produces a report on the issue. This must be completed within 1 hour and in one sitting. Candidates should undertake the production of evidence stage in time to meet the submission date set by SQA.

Supervision, control and authentication

The research stage is conducted under some supervision and control. This means that, although candidates may complete part of the work outwith the learning and teaching setting, assessors should put in place processes for monitoring progress and ensuring that the work is the candidate's own and that plagiarism has not taken place.

For example:

- ◆ interim progress meetings with candidates
- ◆ questioning
- ◆ candidate's record of activity/progress
- ◆ assessor observation

Group work approaches are acceptable as part of the research stage. However, there must be clear evidence for each candidate to show that they have met the evidence requirements.

The **production of evidence stage** is conducted under a high degree of supervision and control. This means that:

- ◆ candidates must be in direct sight of the assessor (or other responsible person) during the period of the assessment
- ◆ candidates must not communicate with each other
- ◆ candidates may use their Philosophy resource sheet for support but must enclose it with their report

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

Resources

During the research stage, there are no restrictions on the resources to which candidates may have access.

During the final production of evidence stage, candidates should only have access to the Philosophy resource sheet.

The purpose of the resource sheet is to support the candidate during the writing stage. It should be no more than 200 words in length. It may contain:

- ◆ a plan of the assignment
- ◆ quotes, extracts, diagrams, charts, tables
- ◆ bullet lists

The resource sheet is not assessed. However, it must be included with the written report from the candidate.

Reasonable assistance

Assessors should provide reasonable guidance on the types of issue which enable candidates to meet all the requirements of the assignment. They may also give guidance to candidates on the likely availability and accessibility of resources for their chosen issue.

Candidates should work on their research with minimum support from the assessor.

Assessors must exercise their professional responsibility in ensuring that evidence submitted by a candidate is the candidate's own work.

Candidates must undertake the production of evidence independently. However, reasonable assistance may be provided prior to the production of evidence taking place. The term 'reasonable assistance' is used to try to balance the need for support with the need to avoid giving too much assistance. If a candidate requires more than what is deemed to be 'reasonable assistance', they may not be ready for assessment or it may be that they have been entered for the wrong level of qualification.

Reasonable assistance may be given on a generic basis to a class or group of candidates, eg advice on how to develop a project plan. It may also be given to candidates on an individual basis. When reasonable assistance is given on a one-to-one basis in the context of something that a candidate has already produced or demonstrated, there is a danger that it becomes support for assessment and assessors need to be aware that this may be going beyond reasonable assistance.

In the research stage, reasonable assistance may include:

- ◆ directing candidates to the instructions for candidates
- ◆ clarifying instructions/requirements of the task
- ◆ advising candidates on the choice of issue
- ◆ advising candidates on possible sources of information
- ◆ arranging visits to enable gathering of evidence
- ◆ interim progress checks

In preparing for the production of evidence stage, reasonable assistance may include advising candidates of the nature and volume of specified resources which may be used to support the production of evidence.

At any stage, reasonable assistance does not include:

- ◆ providing the issue
- ◆ directing candidates to specific resources to be used
- ◆ providing model answers or writing frames specific to the task (such as outlines, paragraph headings or section headings)
- ◆ providing detailed feedback on drafts, including marking

Evidence to be gathered

The following candidate evidence is required for this assessment:

- ◆ Philosophy resource sheet: this must be a single sheet of A4 with no more than 200 words on it
- ◆ candidate assignment evidence produced under a high degree of supervision

If a candidate does not submit a resource sheet, a penalty of 4 marks out of the total 20 marks is applied.

Volume

There is no word count for the assignment. However, the Philosophy resource sheet should have no more than 200 words on it.

Grading

A candidate's overall grade is determined by their performance across the course assessment. The course assessment is graded A–D on the basis of the total mark for all course assessment components.

Grade description for C

For the award of grade C, candidates will typically have demonstrated successful performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Grade description for A

For the award of grade A, candidates will typically have demonstrated a consistently high level of performance in relation to the skills, knowledge and understanding for the course.

Equality and inclusion

This course is designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

For guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs, please follow the link to the assessment arrangements web page: www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements.

Further information

The following reference documents provide useful information and background.

- ◆ [National 5 Philosophy subject page](#)
- ◆ [Assessment arrangements web page](#)
- ◆ [Building the Curriculum 3–5](#)
- ◆ [Design Principles for National Courses](#)
- ◆ [Guide to Assessment](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Framework and SCQF level descriptors](#)
- ◆ [SCQF Handbook](#)
- ◆ [SQA Skills Framework: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life and Skills for Work](#)
- ◆ [Coursework Authenticity: A Guide for Teachers and Lecturers](#)
- ◆ [Educational Research Reports](#)
- ◆ [SQA Guidelines on e-assessment for Schools](#)
- ◆ [SQA e-assessment web page](#)

Appendix 1: course support notes

Introduction

These support notes are not mandatory. They provide advice and guidance to teachers and lecturers on approaches to delivering the course. They should be read in conjunction with this course specification and the specimen question paper and/or coursework.

Approaches to learning and teaching

The National 5 Philosophy course has three areas of study:

- ◆ Arguments in Action
- ◆ Moral Philosophy
- ◆ Knowledge and Doubt

There is no recommended teaching order for this course – the three areas of study can be covered in any order.

Teaching the content for Arguments in Action and the introduction to Knowledge and Doubt in the order listed in the course specification would be helpful to candidates because this approach will help to build up knowledge and skills. Descartes and Hume can be taught in any order as can Moral Philosophy.

While there is no specified introductory content in Moral Philosophy, it might be useful to consider questions such as the following:

- ◆ What is it that makes an action right or wrong?
- ◆ Are people capable of acting morally or is everyone selfish?
- ◆ Why should I do the right thing?
- ◆ What is the purpose of moral theories?
- ◆ How do moral theories help us to make decisions?

The following tables provide information that teachers and lecturers could use to support the development of skills, knowledge and understanding required for the National 5 Philosophy course.

Question paper

Common queries	Clarification						
Structure of the question paper	<p>The exam will broadly follow the pattern of the specimen question paper. There will be three sections in the exam paper:</p> <table data-bbox="591 501 1102 612"> <tr> <td>Arguments in Action</td> <td>20 marks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Knowledge and Doubt</td> <td>30 marks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Moral Philosophy</td> <td>30 marks</td> </tr> </table> <p>The mark range will be from 1 to 10 marks. The number of questions will vary from year to year. Further information on the types of questions found in the question papers can be found in appendix 2.</p>	Arguments in Action	20 marks	Knowledge and Doubt	30 marks	Moral Philosophy	30 marks
Arguments in Action	20 marks						
Knowledge and Doubt	30 marks						
Moral Philosophy	30 marks						
The marking of standard form questions	<p>Candidates are expected to make sure that each premise/conclusion is a stand-alone meaningful claim, for example:</p> <p>'But then people spend huge amounts of money' will not be accepted; it should be written as 'People spend huge amounts of money.'</p>						
Analysing simple arguments	<p>Candidates should be able to identify valid and invalid arguments and if arguments contain any of the four informal fallacies listed in this course specification.</p>						
Candidates and the texts of Descartes and Hume	<p>Unlike the Higher Knowledge and Doubt, this is not a text-based section so candidates are not expected to read the texts of Descartes and Hume. However, candidates are expected to be very familiar with the areas listed in this course specification. Relevant extracts from the texts are included in appendix 4 to support teachers and lecturers. Some of these extracts have been annotated with additional headings — it is important that these annotations are not viewed as part of the original texts.</p>						
Candidates and the texts of Bentham and Mill	<p>Candidates are not expected to read the texts of Bentham and Mill. However, candidates are expected to be very familiar with the areas listed in this course specification. Extracts from relevant texts are included in appendix 4 to support teachers and lecturers.</p>						

Common queries	Clarification
The optional moral theory	Since National 5 Philosophy was first introduced in 2014, nearly all centres have chosen Kantianism or Virtue ethics as their optional moral theory. However, there are other moral theories which would also be acceptable to study, for instance situational ethics, natural law and ethical egoism. Whatever moral theory is chosen, it is important that candidates can apply their chosen theory to specific situations.

Assignment

Common queries	Clarification
Assignment as a teacher- or lecturer-led whole class exercise	This is not acceptable. It would be beyond the level of intended support.
All candidates in a school investigating the same philosophical question or claim	This approach is against the spirit of the task. Candidates are expected to choose their own question or claim.
Limit to the type of philosophical question or claim which can be chosen	In theory, there is no limit. However, some questions are clearly more straightforward than others are and the ability of candidates needs to be considered when discussing a proposed question with them. Candidates also must be sure that they are discussing a philosophical question or claim.
Setting the context for the chosen philosophical question or claim	In their introduction, candidates should clearly show what area of philosophy their question or claim is drawn from and say why it is important/interesting. Good practice would be stating their conclusion to their question or claim in their introduction and making it clear that they are going to argue to that conclusion. Irrelevant narrative such as biographical details should be avoided.
Describing philosophical responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim	Candidates can describe the views/theories of specific philosophers here, for example Kant's moral theory. Or they can describe views/theories without reference to specific philosophers, for example hard determinism in the context of the free will debate.

Common queries	Clarification
Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim	<p>One way of analysing relevant information is by making relevant connections between concepts – for example, when writing about free will and determinism:</p> <p>Clearly showing that, despite differences to hard determinism, soft determinists fully accept that all human behaviour is determined/subject to the laws of cause and effect.</p>
Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim	<p>One way of analysing relevant information is by explaining possible implications or consequences, for example, when writing about Kant's view of morality:</p> <p>Considering Kant's view that a moral action is one that we are duty bound to perform, and what the implications of that view might be in relation to doing charitable work because we feel guilty if we don't.</p>
Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim	<p>One way of analysing relevant information is by considering different interpretations of a concept, for example, when writing about free will and determinism:</p> <p>Considering different interpretations of 'free' in the context of the free will versus determinism debate, and how we make different judgements about human behaviour in the light of these definitions.</p>
Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim	<p>One way of analysing relevant information is by identifying alternative viewpoints, for example, when writing about knowledge:</p> <p>Explaining that, while many philosophers might accept the definition of knowledge as justified true belief, Gettier challenges this view by exposing the problem of accidental correctness.</p>
Plagiarism	<p>This is a major concern, and teachers and lecturers are advised to read the following information on plagiarism.</p> <p>http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/Guidance_on_conditions_of_assessment_for_coursework.pdf</p>

Identifying arguments across the course

The following are examples of relevant arguments in action across the course that candidates will find helpful to consider.

Arguments in action	Arguments across the course	Presentation of arguments in Knowledge and Doubt in standard form
Descartes	Senses argument	Premise 1: My senses sometimes deceive me. Premise 2: I should never trust something that has deceived me even once. Conclusion: I should not trust my senses.
Descartes	Dream argument	Premise 1: I often have perceptions when awake that are similar to those I have while I am dreaming. Premise 2: There are no definite signs to distinguish dream experiences from waking experiences. Conclusion: It is possible that I am dreaming right now and that all of my perceptions are false.
Descartes	Deceiving God argument	Premise 1: It is believed that there is a God who has created me and who is all powerful. Premise 2: He has it in his power to cause me to be deceived about simple mathematical truths. Conclusion: It is possible that I am deceived about simple mathematical truths.
Descartes	Malicious demon argument	Premise 1: Instead of assuming that God is the source of my deceptions, I will assume that there exists a malicious demon, who is capable of deceiving me in the same way I supposed God to be able. Premise 2: He has it in his power to cause me to be deceived about what my senses tell me as well as simple mathematical truths. Conclusion: I have reason to doubt what my senses tell me as well as the mathematical truths that I seem to know.
Descartes	Cogito	Premise 1: A malicious demon might be causing me to doubt my existence. Premise 2: Doubting is a form of thinking. Premise 3: Thinking things exist. Conclusion: I think, therefore I am.

Arguments in action	Arguments across the course	Presentation of arguments in Knowledge and Doubt in standard form
Hume	Impressions and ideas	Premise 1: There is a considerable difference between experiencing something and afterwards remembering it. Premise 2: Feeling heat and afterwards remembering it are two very different perceptions. Premise 3: Experiencing being in love and remembering it are two very different perceptions. Conclusion: The mind is divided into impressions and ideas on the basis of force and liveliness.
Hume	Simple and complex ideas	Premise 1: A golden mountain (a complex idea) is two simple ideas joined together – gold and a mountain. Premise 2: The idea of God (a complex idea) is several simple ideas joined together by the mind. Conclusion: All our complex ideas are copies of simple impressions joined together.
Hume	Missing shade of blue	Premise 1: A person may be able to form the idea of a missing shade of blue, even if they haven't previously experienced it, if all the other shades are arranged in an ordered sequence. Premise 2: The example is so singular it's hardly worth noticing and on its own is not worth altering our general theory. Conclusion: All our ideas are copies of impressions.

Recommended textbooks for teachers and lecturers

Area of study	Recommended textbooks
<p>Arguments in Action</p> <p>Candidates must be able to identify, explain and give examples of the following terms to show their understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ statement◆ argument◆ premise◆ conclusion◆ valid and invalid <p>Candidates must be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ distinguish statements from questions, commands, exclamations and arguments◆ identify premises and conclusions in an argument◆ present an argument in standard form◆ analyse simple arguments◆ identify, explain and give examples of the following common fallacies:<ul style="list-style-type: none">— attacking the person— false dilemma— illegitimate appeal to authority— slippery slope	<p>The glossary in appendix 3 of this document gives the accepted definitions of the terms in Arguments in Action.</p>

Area of study	Recommended textbooks
<p>Knowledge and Doubt</p> <p>Candidates must understand and be able to explain the following concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the distinction between ‘knowing how’ and ‘knowing that’ — knowledge as ‘justified, true belief’ (the tripartite theory of knowledge) ◆ empiricism — all knowledge of the world ultimately depends on experience (Locke's blank sheet of paper) ◆ rationalism — at least some knowledge of the world can be gained through reason and innate ideas (Leibniz' block of marble) ◆ scepticism — the claim that knowledge (perhaps in just some cases; perhaps in all cases) is unattainable 	<p>Additional support materials (appendix 4)</p> <p>Robert Martin, <i>Epistemology: A Beginner's Guide</i> (Beginner's Guides) 2010 Oneworld Publications</p> <p>Thomas Nagel, <i>What Does It All Mean?: A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy</i> 1989</p> <p>Nigel Warburton, <i>Philosophy: The Basics</i> 2012</p>
<p>For Descartes, candidates must be able to comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ method of doubt: senses, dreaming, and deceiving God argument ◆ malicious demon ◆ the Cogito 	<p>Additional support materials (appendix 4)</p> <p>G. Hatfield, <i>Descartes and the Meditations</i>, Routledge, 2003</p>
<p>For Hume, candidates must be able to comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ arguments concerning the origin of ideas ◆ impressions and ideas including simple and complex ideas ◆ missing shade of blue 	<p>Additional support materials (appendix 4)</p> <p>Harold Noonan, <i>The Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Hume on Knowledge</i>, Routledge, 1999</p> <p>Alan Bailey & Dan O' Brien, <i>Hume's 'Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding'</i>, Bloomsbury, 2006</p>
<p>Candidates should be able to demonstrate their understanding of the listed content of Descartes and Hume and explain criticisms (strengths and/or weaknesses) of these positions and theories.</p>	<p>Textbooks as recommended above</p>

Area of study	Recommended textbooks
<p>Moral Philosophy</p> <p>Candidates must be able to explain two moral theories: utilitarianism and one other.</p> <p>Candidates must be able to apply these theories to specific situations.</p> <p>For utilitarianism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the greatest happiness principle ◆ consequentialism; equity; hedonism ◆ calculating potential happiness: Bentham’s hedonic calculus; Mill’s higher and lower pleasures ◆ three common criticisms of utilitarianism: evil pleasures; difficulty of predicting consequences; tyranny of the majority 	<p>Additional support materials (appendix 4)</p> <p>Roger Crisp, <i>Routledge Philosophy GuideBook to Mill on Utilitarianism</i> Routledge 1997</p> <p>H. LaFollette (ed.), <i>Blackwell Guide to Ethical Theory</i> Blackwell, 2000</p>
<p>For the other moral theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ the main features ◆ three common criticisms 	<p>Textbooks as recommended above</p>

Preparing for course assessment

Each course has additional time which may be used at the discretion of the teacher or lecturer to enable candidates to prepare for course assessment. This time may be used near the start of the course and at various points throughout the course for consolidation and support.

Course assessment takes the form of a question paper and an assignment, which draw on the skills, knowledge and understanding developed across the course.

Developing skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work

Course planners should identify opportunities throughout the course for candidates to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

Candidates should be aware of the skills they are developing and teachers and lecturers can provide advice on opportunities to practise and improve them.

SQA does not formally assess skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work.

There may also be opportunities to develop additional skills depending on approaches being used to deliver the course in each centre. This is for individual teachers and lecturers to manage.

Skills	Examples of opportunities to develop these skills within Philosophy
1 Literacy	
1.1 Reading	<p>Reading in philosophy involves the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented in sources, for a purpose and within a context. It includes handling information to make reasoned and informed decisions.</p> <p>Candidates should naturally be exposed to a range of written sources in the delivery this course. This may include engagement with primary and secondary philosophical texts. This will develop their ability to read and comprehend texts and moreover acquire the skill of reading between the lines and identifying hidden assumptions.</p> <p>These sources could take the form of websites, textbooks, class notes or newspapers, which could be used to identify a range of arguments from a variety of issues.</p>

Skills	Examples of opportunities to develop these skills within Philosophy
1.2 Writing	<p>Writing in philosophy involves the ability to create texts which communicate ideas, opinions and information, to meet a purpose and within a context. Candidates are to be given the opportunity to respond in written form to examples and problems encountered in the delivery of this course.</p> <p>This writing could take the form of short response answers to set questions, summarising and explaining key ideas, or could be a typed contribution to an online message board or forum.</p> <p>Regardless of how this is accommodated, care is to be taken to emphasise the importance of communicating clearly in writing, considering the need for precise use of language. The careful study of arguments should itself help instil a renewed awareness of the importance and impact of the written word.</p>
1.3 Listening and talking	<p>Listening in philosophy involves the ability to understand and interpret ideas, opinions and information presented orally for a purpose and within a context, drawing on non-verbal communication as appropriate. Talking means the ability to communicate orally ideas, opinions and information for a purpose and within a context.</p>
5 Thinking skills	
5.3 Applying	<p>Applying in philosophy involves the ability to use existing information to solve a problem in a different context, and to plan, organise and complete a task. Wherever possible candidates are to be given the opportunity to apply the skills, knowledge and understanding they have developed to novel examples and scenarios.</p> <p>This should become routine as candidates acquire philosophical techniques and a technical vocabulary and practise their application to problems and arguments that have been supplied for them or that they have identified themselves.</p>

Skills	Examples of opportunities to develop these skills within Philosophy
5.4 Analysing and evaluating	<p>Analysing and evaluating in philosophy involves the ability to identify and weigh-up the features of a situation or issue and to use your judgement of them in coming to a conclusion. It includes reviewing and considering any potential solutions. The ability to analyse and evaluate philosophical positions, theories and arguments is the chief objective of the areas of study.</p> <p>In Arguments in Action, candidates should be routinely given opportunities to assess arguments for their reliability using the concepts they have been taught. Examples used should vary in complexity and sophistication to stretch candidates and develop their capacity for analysis. At a simple level of analysis, candidates should be able to identify premises and conclusions within arguments while more sophisticated examples may involve extrapolation of premises from a mixture of relevant and irrelevant information.</p>

There may be opportunities to develop other skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. For example, the use of learning logs/peer and self-evaluation of understanding of key philosophical ideas may contribute to the area of health and wellbeing and the skill of personal learning.

Appendix 2: types of questions and marking instructions

The questions in the question paper will have a mark range of between 1 and 10 marks.

Questions will focus on the specified content in the course specification. The following list of types of questions is not exhaustive.

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Arguments in Action	Questions that ask for the recall of key points of knowledge	What is meant by describing an argument as 'valid'? Your answer should include an example of a valid argument.	2	<p>Award 1 mark for the explanation of a valid argument and 1 mark for a correct example of a valid argument.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for any one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ an argument which would guarantee a true conclusion if the premises were true ◆ the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises ◆ an argument in which it is impossible for the conclusion to be false if the premises are true
Arguments in Action	Questions that ask for examples	Give an example of a sentence that is not a statement.	1	<p>Award 1 mark for any acceptable answer such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Do you want to go on a trip? <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Shut the door!

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Arguments in Action	Questions that ask for arguments to be written in standard form	<p>Read the following argument:</p> <p>‘You can’t afford to buy those trainers. If you had more money you could afford to buy them, but you don’t have the money.’</p> <p>Rewrite this argument in standard form.</p>	3	<p>Candidates should set out the argument in either of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Premise 1: If you had more money you could afford to buy those trainers. ◆ Premise 2: You don’t have more money. ◆ Conclusion: You can’t afford to buy those trainers. <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Premise 1: You need more money to buy those trainers. ◆ Premise 2: You don’t have more money. ◆ Conclusion: You can’t afford to buy those trainers. <p>Award 1 mark for setting out the argument in standard form — the statements must be on separate lines with the premises first and the conclusion last.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for identifying the premises.</p> <p>Award 1 mark for identifying the conclusion.</p> <p>Award a maximum of 2 marks if ‘them’ is not changed to ‘those trainers’ in the premise.</p>

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Arguments in Action	Questions that involve identifying missing premises and/or conclusion	<p>Add the missing conclusion to form a valid argument.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Premise 1: All fruits are edible. ◆ Premise 2: Apples are fruit. ◆ Conclusion: _____ 	1	Award 1 mark for 'Apples are edible'.
Arguments in Action	Questions requiring the explanation of specific informal fallacies	<p>Read the following argument:</p> <p>'You claim that the boy did not steal the goods but why should anyone listen to you? Your father was caught speeding on the motorway.'</p> <p>Explain the informal fallacy in the above argument. Your answer should directly refer to the above argument.</p>	3	<p>Award 1 mark for identifying Attacking the Person as the fallacy.</p> <p>Award 2 marks for explaining the Attacking the Person fallacy in relation to the argument.</p> <p>This is an informal fallacy in which someone uses an irrelevant attack on their opponent as a justification for rejecting a claim their opponent has made. (1 mark) In this case, the irrelevant claim is that the opponent's father was caught speeding on the motorway. (1 mark)</p>
Arguments in Action	<p>Multiple choice</p> <p>Questions requiring candidates to identify arguments</p>	<p>The following list contains arguments, commands and statements. State the three numbers that identify the arguments.</p> <p>(1) The dog lay on the floor. He snored loudly. It might sound gross but it was actually really cute.</p>	3	<p>Award 1 mark for each correct number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ (3) ◆ (4) ◆ (5)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
		<p>(2) Eew! Orange is your favourite colour? Gross! It's my least favourite.</p> <p>(3) Philosophy is very difficult. That means you will have to pay attention and work hard.</p> <p>(4) Fish have tails. Therefore fish can swim.</p> <p>(5) I went to bed late. I am extremely tired. So I probably won't do well in this test.</p> <p>(6) This toast is burnt! Annoying!</p> <p>(7) My legs are sore because I've been doing too much PE.</p> <p>(8) Shut the door! You're always leaving doors open!</p>		

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Knowledge and Doubt	Questions that ask for the recall of key points of knowledge	What is scepticism?	2	<p>Award 1 mark each for any two relevant points, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Scepticism is the claim that certain knowledge is unattainable. (1 mark) ◆ It is not possible for any knowledge claim to be properly justified. (1 mark)
Knowledge and Doubt	Multiple choice	<p>The following statements are about Descartes. Two of them are true.</p> <p>State the numbers that identify the two true statements:</p> <p>(1) Descartes was a sceptic. (2) Descartes was not a sceptic but adopted sceptical arguments. (3) Descartes considered that God might be deceiving him. (4) Descartes thought empiricism was superior to rationalism.</p>	2	<p>Award 1 mark for each correct number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ (2) ◆ (3)
Knowledge and Doubt	Questions that ask for an explanation of a philosophical concept or theory	Explain Descartes' method of doubt.	8	<p>Award 2 marks for a brief outline of Descartes' aims of his method of doubt such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ to find certainty (1 mark) ◆ to find a foundation for knowledge (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ to examine his beliefs and keep only true beliefs (1 mark) <p>Award 6 marks for accurate explanation of the stages of the method of doubt: 2 marks for each stage of the method of doubt; 1 mark for each accurate point. Candidates must refer to all three stages to gain 6 marks.</p> <p>Senses argument Candidates should cover the main points of Descartes' argument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ his assertion that his senses have been shown to deceive him (1 mark) ◆ his conclusion that it might be wise not to trust in them completely (1 mark) <p>Dreaming argument Candidates should cover the main points of Descartes' argument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ his claim that there are no definitive signs by which he can distinguish wakefulness from sleep (1 mark) ◆ his conclusion that, as he could be dreaming, he cannot trust any knowledge gained from his sense experiences (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<p>Deceiving God argument Candidates should cover the main points of Descartes' argument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Descartes uses the deceiving God argument to cast doubt over knowledge based on reason. (1 mark) ◆ Descartes concludes that the foundations for all of his knowledge are undermined by the possibility that God might be deceiving him. (1 mark)
Knowledge and Doubt	Questions that ask for explanations of criticisms of a philosophical concept or theory	Explain criticisms of Hume's theory of impressions and ideas.	4	<p>Award 1 mark for any of the following points, and a further mark for developing the point further.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Hume's atomistic theory fits in with our scientific understanding of the world. (1 mark) ◆ The distinction between simple and complex ideas allows Hume to account for acts of the imagination. (1 mark) ◆ Hume defends his position against criticism by pointing out that his distinction between impressions and ideas applies only to the healthy mind. (1 mark) ◆ Hume's theory gives strong arguments against innate ideas. (1 mark) ◆ It's not clear what Hume means by force and vivacity. (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It's questionable whether all impressions have more force and vivacity than all ideas. (1 mark) ◆ Not all ideas are faint (1 mark), for example nightmares as they might counts as ideas. (1 mark) <p>Award marks for appropriate criticisms of the missing shade of blue, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If there can be a missing shade of blue, there can be other missing sensations which may cause a problem for Hume's empiricism. (2 marks) <p>Award 0 marks for describing the missing shade of blue.</p> <p>Award a maximum of 2 marks for criticisms of the missing shade of blue.</p>

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Moral Philosophy	Questions that ask for the recall of key points of knowledge	State two features of Bentham's utilitarianism.	2	<p>Candidates must state two features of Bentham's Utilitarianism. The following are acceptable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Greatest Happiness Principle (1 mark) ◆ Consequentialism (1 mark) ◆ Equity (1 mark) ◆ Hedonism (1 mark) ◆ Hedonic Calculus (1 mark)
Moral Philosophy	Multiple choice	<p>The following statements relate to higher and lower pleasures. Two of them are true. State the numbers of the two true statements.</p> <p>(1) Mill said lower pleasures were things like reading and problem solving.</p> <p>(2) Higher pleasures are pleasures of the mind.</p> <p>(3) Bentham developed the idea of higher and lower pleasures.</p> <p>(4) The theory of higher and lower pleasures was devised to address a problem with the hedonic calculus.</p>	2	<p>Award 1 mark for each correct number:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ (2) ◆ (4)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
Moral Philosophy	Questions that ask for an explanation of a philosophical concept or theory	You have studied another moral theory as well as utilitarianism. Explain the main features of this theory.	6	<p>Award 1 mark for stating a feature and an additional mark for expanding on that feature:</p> <p>For candidates who have studied Kantianism, any main features, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ deontological theory (1 mark) — focus on duty (1 mark) ◆ it is based on intentions, (1 mark) not consequences (1 mark) ◆ reason is sovereign when making moral decisions (1 mark) ◆ Maxims are universalised (1 mark) using the Categorical Imperative (1 mark) ◆ no one should be used 'merely as a means to an end (1 mark) but always at the same time as an end in themselves' (1 mark) <p>For candidates who have studied Virtue Ethics, any main features, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ it is concerned with how to live a good life (1 mark) ◆ emphasis is on striving for a virtuous character (1 mark) rather than action (1 mark) ◆ an action is good if it is what a virtuous person would do (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ a virtuous person has to be aware of the choices he is making (1 mark) and why these choices are good (1 mark) ◆ virtues are what we need to live a good life (1 mark) <p>Note: other moral theories are also acceptable and you should award marks on merit.</p>
Moral Philosophy	Questions that ask for an explanation of criticisms of a philosophical concept or theory	You have studied another moral theory as well as utilitarianism. Explain three criticisms of this theory.	6	<p>Award 1 mark for stating a criticism and an additional mark for expanding on that point.</p> <p>Candidates who have studied Kantianism may identify the following criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Kantianism completely ignores consequences. (1 mark) Yet human beings intuitively look at consequences when making moral decisions. (1 mark) ◆ Kantianism ignores motives other than duty. (1 mark) Yet sometimes it would seem more morally praiseworthy to do something out of love, for example, rather than because it is your duty. (1 mark) ◆ Duties often seem to conflict with each other (1 mark), for example we may have a duty to keep a promise and a duty to tell the truth. It is difficult in such cases to know what is the right thing to do. (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<p>Candidates who have studied Virtue Ethics may identify the following criticisms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Virtue Ethics might not help us figure out what we ought to do in a moral dilemma (1 mark) as there is not a clear cut list of virtues. (1 mark) ◆ Virtues can sometimes come into conflict with each other (1 mark), for example it is virtuous to be kind and to be honest, but it is sometimes not possible to be both. It is difficult in such cases to know what to do. (1 mark) ◆ It seems that Virtue Ethics can be reduced to being like a deontological moral theory (1 mark) — honesty being a virtue is very much like a moral law that says ‘do not tell lies’. (1 mark) <p>Note: other moral theories are also acceptable and you should award marks on merit.</p>
Moral Philosophy	Questions that ask for application of moral theories to specific situations	You are in a shop and have an opportunity to steal a jacket. You know that your mother would be delighted to get this jacket for her birthday but you are not sure what to do. Explain how followers of utilitarianism might advise you to deal with this situation.	6	<p>Award 1 mark for each relevant point, which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The right thing to do will be the thing that leads to the best consequences — considering realistic consequences of stealing or not stealing the jacket. (1 mark) ◆ Discussion of short-term versus long-term consequences in relation to the scenario. (1 mark)

Area	Type of question	Example question	Max mark	Marking instructions
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Discussion of the intended versus the actual consequences in relation to the scenario. (1 mark) ◆ Utilitarians aim to bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number — discussion of who would benefit from the theft. (1 mark) ◆ Consideration of how the principle of equity influences the decision to steal or not steal the jacket. (1 mark) ◆ Weighing up the comparative pain and pleasure caused by the theft to everyone involved. (1 mark) ◆ Any relevant and specific reference to the hedonic calculus. (1 mark) <p>Award a maximum of 5 marks if the candidate does not say that utilitarians would think that stealing the jacket is wrong.</p>

Appendix 3: glossary

Philosophy is a subject that involves the use of technical terminology which may be new to the candidate. The following glossary is intended to provide support to candidates who are building their vocabulary and developing skills in philosophy.

Arguments in Action	
Argument	A collection of statements (the premises) put forward to support a central claim (the conclusion).
Attacking the person	This fallacy is committed if it is argued that p is false on the ground that it is advanced by a particular person, for example because that person stands to gain from our acceptance of it as true or because that person's behaviour is not consistent with the truth of p .
Deductive argument	An argument which attempts to prove certain conclusions based on what is contained in the premises alone. Eg: All cats have tails. Felix is a cat, therefore Felix has a tail.
False dilemma	This fallacy is committed if, in the course of an argument, it is presumed without argument that p and q are the only two possibilities, when in fact there are other possibilities.
Illegitimate appeals to authority	This fallacy is committed if a conclusion is inferred from the fact that some person or group asserts, without justifying the right of that person or group to be regarded as authoritative in this matter.
Informal fallacy	An argument, which may be formally valid yet is fallacious because it has false premises or ambiguous terminology or grammar.
Slippery slope	An informal fallacy which claims that one thing will inevitably lead later to another, usually worse, state of affairs, without further argument.
Standard form	A consistent way of organising and presenting arguments which involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ identifying the premises and conclusions ◆ presenting the premises and conclusion as stand alone statements ◆ listing the premises and conclusion in a logical sequence (eg premise, premise, conclusion) ◆ drawing an inference bar between the premises and conclusion
Statement	A sentence capable of being true or false (eg the sky is blue). Statements are also known as propositions.
Validity	A valid argument is one which would guarantee a true conclusion if the premises were true. An invalid argument does not guarantee a true conclusion when the premises are true.

Knowledge and Doubt	
A posteriori	Knowable or justified from experience.
A priori	Knowable or justified independently of experience.
Block of veined marble	A reference to Leibniz' claim that there are innate ideas and his metaphor of the mind as a block of veined marble.
Cartesian	The adjective from Descartes. Used to describe philosophical and other ideas related to Descartes.
Cartesian doubt	The sceptical method used by Descartes in which any belief that is not certain is treated as false.
Cogito	Latin for 'I think'. Used as a way of referring to Descartes' argument that he cannot doubt his own existence.
Complex idea	An idea that is built up from simple ideas.
Empirical knowledge	Knowledge gained through the senses/experiences.
Empiricism	An approach to philosophy which claims that knowledge is based on sense experience, that knowledge is not innate, and that knowledge cannot be discovered by reason alone.
Idea	In Hume's text, an idea is a perception — a mental entity, which is the faded remains of an earlier impression.
Imagination	In Hume's text, the imagination is the faculty of the mind which creates complex ideas, by augmenting, diminishing, compounding, or transposing.
Impression	In Hume's text, an impression is a perception — a mental entity, which is either inward (a feeling) or outward (the result of the operation of the senses).
Innate idea	An idea that is inborn (already in the mind at birth) and not the product of experience.
Malicious demon	Descartes imagined a malicious demon who would be capable of deceiving him into believing that there is a physical world when there is not. This gave him the means of to sustain the doubts he had already raised through his earlier arguments.
Method of doubt	Descartes' attempt to arrive at certainty by systematically doubting everything until he discovered something that could not be doubted.
Missing shade of blue	Hume's counter example to his theory that all ideas are based on corresponding impressions.
Perception of the mind	In Hume's text a perception is a mental item — either an impression or an idea.
Propositional knowledge	Propositional knowledge is 'knowing that' as opposed to 'knowing how'. This is knowledge of facts, knowledge that such and such is the case, for example that Ben Nevis is the highest mountain in Scotland.

Rationalism	An approach to philosophy which claims that some knowledge of the external world can be established by correct reasoning and without the use of sense experience.
Scepticism	The view that knowledge is impossible to attain because it is not possible for any knowledge claim to be properly justified.
Simple idea	A single idea based on one impression.
Tabula rasa/blank slate	A reference to Locke's claim that there are no innate ideas and his metaphor of the mind as a blank sheet of paper.
Tripartite theory of knowledge	The theory that knowledge consists of justified true beliefs and that these criteria are individually necessary and jointly sufficient for knowledge.
Moral Philosophy	
Competent judges	A term used by Mill to describe people best placed to judge between higher and lower pleasures. Competent judges are those who have experienced both sorts of pleasure.
Consequentialism	The view common to any first-order ethical theory that holds that the consequences of an action are the primary factor in calculating its moral worth.
Equity/equity principle	The principle that claims everyone's interests are of equal importance or at least are worthy of equal consideration.
Greatest happiness principle	This principle claims that the more happiness and the less unhappiness an action produces the more morally praiseworthy it will be.
Hedonic calculus	A method proposed by Jeremy Bentham of calculating how much utility an action produces.
Hedonism/hedonic principle	The principle that claims whether an action is morally right or wrong depends on whether it promotes the maximum pleasure.
Higher pleasures	A term used by Mill to describe intellectual pleasures such as literature, art or music, as opposed to the 'lower' physical pleasures.
Lower pleasures	A term used by Mill to describe non-intellectual pleasures such as food, drink and sex.
Moral dilemmas	An ethical problem which involves choosing between competing courses of action which may appear to be both morally praiseworthy or both morally blameworthy.
Normative ethics	The study of moral issues and the first order theories that attempt to resolve moral dilemmas. Concerned with answering the question of what it is that makes an action right or wrong.

Qualitative	Concerned with evaluating the non-measurable features of an object. A qualitative measure of a cake might be how tasty it is as opposed to a quantitative measure such as how heavy it is. Mill's theory of higher and lower pleasures is a qualitative approach.
Quantitative	Concerned with quantities or amounts of things. A quantitative measure of a cake might be how heavy it is as opposed to a qualitative measure such as how tasty it is. Bentham's calculus is a quantitative approach.

Appendix 4: additional support materials

Knowledge and Doubt text extracts for teachers and lecturers

John Locke — An Essay Concerning Human Understanding Book 2 chapter 1

Locke's blank sheet of paper

Let us then suppose the mind to have no ideas in it, to be like white paper with nothing written on it. How then does it come to be written on? From where does it get that vast store which the busy and boundless imagination of man has painted on it—all the materials of reason and knowledge? To this I answer, in one word, from experience. Our understandings derive all the materials of thinking from observations that we make of external objects that can be perceived through the senses, and of the internal operations of our minds, which we perceive by looking in at ourselves. These two are the fountains of knowledge, from which arise all the ideas we have or can naturally have.

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Gottfried Leibniz — New Essays on Human Understanding

Leibniz' block of marble

I have also used the analogy of a veined block of marble as opposed to an entirely homogeneous one or to an empty page. If the soul were like an empty page, then truths would be in us in the way that the shape of Hercules is in an uncarved piece of marble that is entirely neutral as to whether it takes Hercules' shape or some other. Contrast that piece of marble with one that is veined in a way that marks out the shape of Hercules rather than other shapes. This latter block would be more inclined to take that shape than the former would, and Hercules would be in a way innate in it, even though it would take a lot of work to expose the veins and to polish them into clarity. This is how ideas and truths are innate in us—as inclinations, dispositions, tendencies, or natural potentialities, and not as actual thinkings, though these potentialities are always accompanied by certain actual thinkings, often insensible ones, which correspond to them.

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Descartes' Meditation 1 — the text

Mediations On First Philosophy¹

in which are demonstrated the existence of God and the distinction between the human soul and the body

FIRST MEDITATION

What can be called into doubt

Why this process is necessary.

Some years ago I was struck by the large number of falsehoods that I had accepted as true in my childhood, and by the highly doubtful nature of the whole edifice that I had subsequently based on them.

The proposed strategy.

I realized that it was necessary, once in the course of my life, to demolish everything completely and start again right from the foundations.

The stated purpose

if I wanted to establish anything at all in the sciences that was stable and likely to last.

[Just part of the literary style.

But the task looked an enormous one, and I began to wait until I should reach a mature enough age to ensure that no subsequent time of life would be more suitable for tackling such inquiries. This led me to put the project off for so long that I would now be to blame if by pondering over it any further I wasted the time still left for carrying it out. So today I have expressly rid my mind of all worries and arranged for myself a clear stretch of free time. I am here quite alone, and at last I will devote myself sincerely and without reservation to the general demolition of my opinions.]

First part of the process.

But to accomplish this, it will not be necessary for me to show that all my opinions are false, which is something I could perhaps never manage. Reason now leads me to think that I should hold back my assent from opinions which are not completely certain and indubitable just as carefully as I do from those which are

patently false. So, for the purpose of rejecting all my opinions, it will be enough if I find in each of them at least some reason for doubt.

Proposed method.

And to do this I will not need to run through them all individually, which would be an endless task. Once the foundations of a building are undermined, anything built on them collapses of its own accord; so I will go straight for the basic principles on which all my former beliefs rested.

1. The unreliability of the senses.

Whatever I have up till now accepted as most true I have acquired either from the senses or through the senses. But from time to time I have found that the senses deceive, and it is prudent never to trust completely those who have deceived us even once.

The difficulty of doubting some sense information.

Yet although the senses occasionally deceive us with respect to objects which are very small or in the distance, there are many other beliefs about which doubt is quite impossible, even though they are derived from the senses—for example, that I am here, sitting by the fire, wearing a winter dressing-gown, holding this piece of paper in my hands, and so on. Again, how could it be denied that these hands or this whole body are mine? Unless perhaps I were to liken myself to madmen, whose brains are so damaged by the persistent vapours of melancholia that they firmly maintain they are kings when they are paupers, or say they are dressed in purple when they are naked, or that their heads are made of earthenware, or that they are pumpkins, or made of glass. But such people are insane, and I would be thought equally mad if I took anything from them as a model for myself.

2. The dreaming argument. **No sure signs of distinguishing dreaming from non-dreaming.**

A brilliant piece of reasoning! As if I were not a man who sleeps at night, and regularly has all the same experiences while asleep as madmen do when awake—indeed sometimes even more improbable ones. How often, asleep at night, am I convinced of just such familiar events—that I am here in my dressing-gown, sitting by the fire—when in fact I am lying undressed in bed! Yet at the moment my eyes are certainly wide awake when I look at this piece of paper; I shake my head and it is not asleep; as I stretch out and feel my hand I do so deliberately, and I know what I am doing. All this would not happen with such distinctness to someone asleep. Indeed! As if I did not remember other occasions when I have been tricked by exactly similar thoughts while asleep! As I think about this more carefully, I see plainly that there are never any sure signs by means of which being awake can be distinguished from being asleep. The result is that I begin to feel dazed, this very feeling only reinforces the notion that may be asleep.

Even dreams have content and seem to be constructed from resources that are real.

Suppose then that I am dreaming, and that these particulars—that my eyes are open, that I moving my head and stretching out my hands are not true. Perhaps, indeed, I do not even have such hands or such a body at all. Nonetheless, it must surely be admitted that the visions which come in sleep are like paintings, which must have been fashioned in the likeness of things that are real, and hence that at least these general kinds of things—eyes, head, hands and the body as a whole—are things which are not imaginary but are real and exist. For even when painters try to create sirens and satyrs with the most extraordinary bodies, they cannot give them natures which are new in all respects; they simply jumble up the limbs

of different animals. Or if perhaps they manage to think up something so new that nothing remotely similar has ever been seen before—something which is therefore completely fictitious and unreal—at least the colours used in the composition must be real. By similar reasoning, although these general kinds of things—eyes, head, hands and so on—could be imaginary, it must at least be admitted that certain other even simpler and more universal things are real. These are as it were the real colours from which we form all the images of things, whether true or false, that occur in our thought.

Things that might survive the dream argument.

This class appears to include corporeal nature in general, and its extension; the shape of extended things; the quantity, or size and number of these things; the place in which they may exist, the time through which they may endure, and so on.

Provisional conclusion.

So a reasonable conclusion from this might be that physics, astronomy, medicine, and all other disciplines which depend on the study of composite things, are doubtful; while arithmetic, geometry and other subjects of this kind, which deal only with the simplest and most general things, regardless of whether they really exist in nature or not, contain something certain and indubitable. For **whether I am awake or asleep, two and three added together are five, and a square has no more than four sides.** It seems impossible that such transparent truths should incur any suspicion of being false.

3. The deceiving god argument.

And yet firmly rooted in my mind is the long-standing opinion that there is an omnipotent God who made me the kind of creature that I am. How do I know that he has not brought it about that there is no earth, no sky, no extended thing, no shape, no size, no place, while at the same time ensuring that all these things appear to me to exist just as they do now? What is more, just as I consider that others

sometimes go astray in cases where they think they have the most perfect knowledge, how do I know that God has not brought it about that I too go wrong every time I add two and three or count the sides of a square, or in some even simpler matter, if that is imaginable?

Problems with the counter objection that God wouldn't do that.

But perhaps God would not have allowed me to be deceived in this way, since he is said to be supremely good. But if it were inconsistent with his goodness to have created me such that I am deceived all the time, it would seem equally foreign to his goodness to allow me to be deceived even occasionally; yet this last assertion cannot be made.

Even saying there is no God doesn't solve the problem.

Perhaps there may be some who would prefer to deny the existence of so powerful a God rather than believe that everything else is uncertain. Let us not argue with them, but grant them that everything said about God is a fiction. According to their supposition, then, I have arrived at my present state by fate or chance or a continuous chain of events, or by some other means; yet since deception and error seem to be imperfections, the less powerful they make my original cause, the more likely it is that I am so imperfect as to be deceived all the time.

Final conclusion.

I have no answer to these arguments, but am finally compelled to admit that there is not one of my former beliefs about which a doubt may not properly be raised; and this is not a flippant or ill-considered conclusion, but is based on powerful and well thought-out reasons. So in future I must withhold my assent from these former beliefs just as carefully as I would from obvious falsehoods, if I want to discover any certainty.

Second part of the process.

Why the first part isn't enough.

But it is not enough merely to have noticed this; I must make an effort to remember it.

My habitual opinions keep coming back, and, despite my wishes, they capture my belief, which is as it were bound over to them as a result of long occupation and the law of custom. I shall never get out of the habit of confidently assenting to these opinions, so long as I suppose them to be what in fact they are, namely highly probable opinions—opinions which, despite the fact that they are in a sense doubtful, as has just been shown, it is still much more reasonable to believe than to deny.

Assume the former beliefs to be false not just dubitable.

In view of this, I think it will be a good plan to turn my will in completely the opposite direction and deceive myself, by pretending for a time that these former opinions are utterly false and imaginary.

The reasons for doing so.

I shall do this until the weight of preconceived opinion is counter-balanced and the distorting influence of habit no longer prevents my judgement from perceiving things correctly. In the meantime, I know that no danger or error will result from my plan, and that I cannot possibly go too far in my distrustful attitude. This is because the task now in hand does not involve action but merely the acquisition of knowledge.

How to do so — the malicious demon.

I will suppose therefore that not God, who is supremely good and the source of truth, but rather some malicious demon of the utmost power and cunning has employed all his energies in order to deceive me.

[Note the emphasis on the demon deceiving about external things.]

I shall think that the sky, the air, the earth, colours, shapes, sounds and all external things are merely the delusions of dreams which he has devised to ensnare my judgement. I shall consider myself as not having hands or eyes, or flesh, or blood or senses, but as falsely believing that I have all these things. I shall stubbornly and firmly persist in this meditation; and, even if it is not in my power to know any truth, I

shall at least do what is in my power, that is, resolutely guard against assenting to any falsehoods, so that the deceiver, however powerful and cunning he may be, will be unable to impose on me in the slightest degree.

[Just part of the literary style.

But this is an arduous undertaking, and a kind of laziness brings me back to normal life. I am like a prisoner who is enjoying an imaginary freedom while asleep; as he begins to suspect that he is asleep, he dreads being woken up, and goes along with the pleasant illusion as long as he can. In the same way, I happily slide back into my old opinions and dread being shaken out of them, for fear that my peaceful sleep may be followed by hard labour when I wake, and that I shall have to toil not in the light, but amid the inextricable darkness of the problems I have now raised.

SECOND MEDITATION

The nature of the human mind, and how it is better known than the body

So serious are the doubts into which I have been thrown as a result of yesterday's meditation that I can neither put them out of my mind nor see any way of resolving them. It feels as if I have fallen unexpectedly into a deep whirlpool which tumbles me around so that I can neither stand on the bottom nor swim up to the top. Nevertheless I will make an effort and once more attempt the same path which I started on yesterday.]

Restatement of method

Anything which admits of the slightest doubt I will set aside just as if I had found it to be wholly false; and

Restatement of purpose.

I will proceed in this way until I recognize something certain, or, if nothing else, until I at least recognize for certain that there is no certainty. Archimedes used to demand just one firm and immovable point in order to shift the entire earth; so I too can hope

for great things if I manage to find just one thing, however slight, that is certain and unshakeable. **[Note: certainty is not an end in itself]**

Summary of progress so far.

I will suppose then, that everything I see is spurious. I will believe that my memory tells me lies, and that none of the things that it reports ever happened. I have no senses. Body, shape, extension, movement and place are chimeras. So what remains true? Perhaps just the one fact that nothing is certain.

The search for certainty (certain existence?) continues.

Yet apart from everything I have just listed, how do I know that there is not something else which does not allow even the slightest occasion for doubt?

God's existence not yet certain.

Is there not a God, or whatever I may call him, who puts into me the thoughts I am now having? But why do I think this, since I myself may perhaps be the author of these thoughts?

First suggestion that I must exist questionable because the existence of the body already doubted.

In that case am not I, at least, something? But I have just said that I have no senses and no body. This is the sticking point: what follows from this? Am I not so bound up with a body and with senses that I cannot exist without them? But I have convinced myself that there is absolutely nothing in the world, no sky, no earth, no minds, no bodies. Does it now follow that I too do not exist? No:

My existence is certain.

if I convinced myself of something then I certainly existed. But there is a deceiver of supreme power and cunning who is deliberately and constantly deceiving me. In that case I too undoubtedly exist, if he is deceiving me; and let him deceive me as much as he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing so long as I think that I am something. So after considering everything very thoroughly, I must finally conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist,

is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.

[Descartes goes on to argue that the mind is separate from the body and that in essence he is 'A thing that thinks'.]

But I do not yet have a sufficient understanding of what this 'I' is, that now necessarily exists. So I must be on my guard against carelessly taking something else to be this 'I', and so making a mistake in the very item of knowledge that I maintain is the most certain and evident of all. I will therefore go back and meditate on what I originally believed myself to be, before I embarked on this present train of thought. I will then subtract anything capable of being weakened, even minimally, by the arguments now introduced, so that what is left at the end may be exactly and only what is certain and unshakeable...

¹The text (not the headings and other annotations) is from *Meditations on First Philosophy*, in *Descartes: Selected Philosophical Writings*, translated by John

Hume's Enquiries – the text

Section 2: The origin of ideas

The distinction between impressions and ideas is introduced — the example of heat.

Everyone will freely admit that the perceptions of the mind when a man feels the pain of excessive heat or the pleasure of moderate warmth are considerably unlike what he feels when he later remembers this sensation or earlier looks forward to it in his imagination. Memory and imagination may mimic or copy the perceptions of the senses, but they can't create a perception that has as much force and liveliness as the one they are copying. Even when they operate with greatest vigour, the most we will say is that they represent their object so vividly that we could almost say we feel or see it. Except when the mind is out of order because of

Cottingham, Rev. ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988)

disease or madness, memory and imagination can never be so lively as to create perceptions that are indistinguishable from the ones we have in seeing or feeling. The most lively thought is still dimmer than the dullest sensation.

There are also inward impressions — the example of emotions.

A similar distinction runs through all the other perceptions of the mind. A real fit of anger is very different from merely thinking of that emotion. If you tell me that someone is in love, I understand your meaning and form a correct conception of the state he is in; but I would never mistake that conception for the turmoil of actually being in love! When we think back on our past sensations and feelings, our thought is a faithful mirror that copies its objects truly; but it does so in colours that

are fainter and more washed-out than those in which our original perceptions were clothed. To tell one from the other you don't need careful thought or philosophical ability.

Impressions and ideas defined.

So we can divide the mind's perceptions into two classes, on the basis of their different degrees of force and liveliness. The less forcible and lively are commonly called 'thoughts' or 'ideas'. The others have no name in our language or in most others, presumably because we don't need a general label for them except when we are doing philosophy. Let us, then, take the liberty of calling them 'impressions', using that word in a slightly unusual sense. By the term 'impression', then, I mean all our more lively perceptions when we hear or see or feel or love or hate or desire or will. These are to be distinguished from ideas, which are the fainter perceptions of which we are conscious when we reflect on [= 'look inwards at'] our impressions.

Despite what we might first think all ideas are based on impressions

It may seem at first sight that human thought is utterly unbounded: it not only escapes all human power and authority - as when a poor man thinks of becoming wealthy overnight, or when an ordinary citizen thinks of being a king - , but is not even confined within the limits of nature and reality. It is as easy for the imagination to form monsters and to join incongruous shapes and appearances as it is to conceive the most natural and familiar objects. And while the body must creep laboriously over the surface of one planet, thought can instantly transport us to the most distant regions of the universe - and even further. What never was seen or heard of may still be conceived; nothing is beyond the power of thought except what implies an absolute contradiction.

Complex ideas.

But although our thought seems to be so free, when we look more carefully we'll find that it is really confined within very narrow

limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts merely to the ability to combine, transpose, enlarge, or shrink the materials that the senses and experience provide us with.

In the original Hume says:

"all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of **compounding, transposing, augmenting, or diminishing** the materials afforded us by the senses and experience.

One example from outward senses and one from inward feelings.

When we think of a golden mountain, we only join two consistent ideas - gold and mountain - with which we were already familiar. We can conceive a virtuous horse because our own feelings enable us to conceive virtue, and we can join this with the shape of a horse, which is an animal we know. In short, all the materials of thinking are derived either from our outward senses or from our inward feelings: all that the mind will do is to mix and combine these materials. Put in philosophical terminology: all our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones.

Here are two arguments that I hope will suffice to prove this.

First argument—an inductive argument and the example of God.

When we analyse our thoughts or ideas - however complex or elevated they are - we always find them to be made up of simple ideas that were copied from earlier feelings or sensations. Even ideas that at first glance seem to be the furthest removed from that origin are found on closer examination to be derived from it.

The idea of God - meaning an infinitely intelligent, wise, and good Being - comes from extending beyond all limits the qualities of goodness and wisdom that we find in our own minds. However far we push this enquiry, we shall find that every idea that we examine is copied from a similar impression. Those who maintain

that this isn't universally true and that there are exceptions to it have only one way of refuting it - but it should be easy for them, if they are right. They need merely to produce an idea that they think isn't derived from this source. It will then be up to me, if I am to maintain my doctrine, to point to the impression or lively perception that corresponds to the idea they have produced.

Second argument—when the relevant impression has been denied.

a. malfunctioning senses.

If a man can't have some kind of sensation because there is something wrong with his eyes, ears etc., he will never be found to have corresponding ideas. A **blind** man can't form a notion of colours, or a **deaf** man a notion of sounds. If either is cured of his deafness or blindness, so that the sensations can get through to him, the ideas can then get through as well; and then he will find it easy to conceive these objects.

b. absence of relevant experience whether outward or inward.

The same is true for someone who has never experienced an object that will give a certain kind of sensation: a Laplander or Negro has no notion of **the taste of wine** because he has never had the sensation of tasting wine. Similarly with inward feelings. It seldom if ever happens that a person has never felt or is wholly incapable of some human feeling or emotion, but the phenomenon I am describing does occur with feelings as well, though in lesser degree. A gentle person can't form any idea of **determined revenge or cruelty**; nor can a selfish one easily conceive the heights of **friendship and generosity**.

c. absence due to species limitations.

Everyone agrees that non-human beings may have many senses of which we can have no conception, because the ideas of them have never been introduced to us in the only way in which an idea can get into the mind, namely through actual feeling and sensation.

The missing shade of blue.

(There is, however, one counter-example that may prove that it is not absolutely impossible for an idea to occur without a corresponding impression. I think it will be granted that the various distinct ideas of colour that enter the mind through the eye (or those of sound, which come in through the ear) really are different from each other, though they resemble one another in certain respects. If that holds for different colours, it must hold equally for the different shades of a single colour; so each shade produces a distinct idea, independent of the rest.

Reductio ad absurdum 'proof' that each shade produces a distinct idea.

(We can create a continuous gradation of shades, running from red at one end to green at the other, with each member of the series shading imperceptibly into its neighbour. If the immediate neighbours in the sequence are not different from one another, then red is not different from green, which is absurd.)

In the original Hume doesn't mention specific colours. He says: 'if this should be denied, it is possible, by the continual gradation of shades, to run a colour insensibly into what is most remote from it; and if you will not allow any of the means to be different, you cannot, without absurdity, deny the extremes to be the same.'

The thought experiment described.

Now, suppose that a sighted person has become perfectly familiar with colours of all kinds, except for one particular shade of blue (for instance), which he happens never to have met with. Let all the other shades of blue be placed before him, descending gradually from the deepest to the lightest:

Claim 1.

it is obvious that he will notice a blank in the place where the missing shade should go. That is, he will be aware that there is a greater quality-distance between that pair of neighbouring shades than between any other neighbour-pair in the series.

Claim 2.

Can he fill the blank from his own imagination, calling up in his mind the idea of that particular shade, even though it has never been conveyed to him by his senses? Most people, I think, will agree that he can.

Conclusion

This seems to show that simple ideas are not always, in every instance, derived from corresponding impressions.

It fails to undermine the general claim.

Still, the example is so singular that it is hardly worth noticing, and on its own it isn't a good enough reason for us to alter our general maxim.)

Hume's microscope—the philosophical application of the copy principle.

So here is a proposition that not only seems to be simple and intelligible in itself, but could if properly used make every dispute equally intelligible by banishing all that nonsensical jargon that has so long dominated metaphysical reasonings.

Those reasonings are beset by three troubles: (1) All ideas, especially abstract ones, are naturally faint and obscure, so that the mind has only a weak hold on them. (2) Ideas are apt to be mixed up with other ideas that resemble them. (3) We tend to assume that a given word is associated with a determinate idea just because we have used it so often, even if in using it we have not had any distinct meaning for it. In contrast with this, (1) all our impressions - that is, all our outward or inward sensations - are strong and vivid. (2) The boundaries between them are more exactly placed, and (3) it is harder to make mistakes about them.

The empiricist criteria of meaning.

So when we come to suspect that a philosophical term is being used without any meaning or idea (as happens all too often), we need only to ask: From what impression is that supposed idea derived? If none can be pointed out, that will confirm our suspicion that the term is meaningless, that is, has no associated idea. By bringing ideas into this clear light we may reasonably hope to settle any disputes that arise about whether they exist and what they are like.¹

¹Philosophers who have denied that there are any innate ideas probably meant only that all ideas were copies of our impressions; though I have to admit that the terms in which they expressed this were not chosen with enough care, or defined with enough precision, to prevent all mistakes about their doctrine. For what is meant by 'innate'? If 'innate' is equivalent to 'natural', then all the perceptions and ideas of the mind must be granted to be innate or natural, in whatever sense we take the latter word, whether in opposition to what is uncommon, what is artificial, or what is miraculous. If innate means 'contemporary with our birth', the dispute seems to be frivolous - there is no point in enquiring when thinking begins, whether before, at, or after our birth. Again, the word 'idea' seems commonly to be taken in a very loose sense by Locke and others, who use it to stand for any of our perceptions, sensations and passions, as well as thoughts. I would like to know what it can mean to assert that self-love, or resentment of injuries, or the passion between the sexes, is not innate! But admitting the words 'impressions' and 'ideas' in the sense explained above, and understanding by 'innate' what is original or not copied from any previous perception, then we can assert that all our impressions are innate and none of our ideas are innate. Frankly, I think that Mr. Locke was tricked into this question by the schoolmen [= mediaeval Aristotelians], who have used undefined terms to drag out their disputes to a tedious length

without ever touching the point at issue. A similar ambiguity and circumlocution seem to run through all that great philosopher's reasonings on this as well as on most other subjects.

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Utilitarianism text extracts for teachers and lecturers

Extract One

Jeremy Bentham, from An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.

Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do...

By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness, (all this in the present case comes to the same thing) or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community: if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual...

The community is a fictitious body, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its members. The interest of the community then is what? — the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it...

Extract Two

Jeremy Bentham, from An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation.

I Pleasures then, and the avoidance of pains, are the ends that the legislator has in view; it behoves him therefore to understand their value. Pleasures and pains are the instruments he has to work with: it behoves him therefore to understand their force, which is again, in other words, their value.

II To a person considered by himself, the value of a pleasure or pain considered by itself, will be greater or less, according to the four following circumstances:

- 1 Its intensity.
- 2 Its duration.
- 3 Its certainty or uncertainty.
- 4 Its propinquity or remoteness.

III These are the circumstances which are to be considered in estimating a pleasure or a pain considered each of them by itself. But when the value of any pleasure or pain is considered for the purpose of estimating the tendency of any act by which it is produced, there are two other circumstances to be taken into the account; these are:

- 5 Its fecundity, or the chance it has of being followed by sensations of the same kind: that is, pleasures, if it be a pleasure: pains, if it be a pain.
- 6 Its purity, or the chance it has of not being followed by sensations of the opposite kind: that is, pains, if it be a pleasure: pleasures, if it be a pain.

These two last, however, are in strictness scarcely to be deemed properties of the pleasure or the pain itself; they are not, therefore, in strictness to be taken into the account of the value of that pleasure or that pain. They are in strictness to be deemed properties only of the act, or other event, by which such pleasure or pain has been produced; and accordingly are only to be taken into the account of the tendency of such act or such event.

IV To a number of persons, with reference to each of whom to the value of a pleasure or a pain is considered, it will be greater or less, according to seven circumstances: to wit, the six preceding ones; viz.

- 1 Its intensity.
- 2 Its duration.

3 Its certainty or uncertainty.

4 Its propinquity or remoteness.

5 Its fecundity.

6 Its purity.

And one other; to wit:

7 Its extent; that is, the number of persons to whom it extends; or (in other words) who are affected by it.

V To take an exact account then of the general tendency of any act, by which the interests of a community are affected, proceed as follows. Begin with any one person of those whose interests seem most immediately to be affected by it: and take an account,

1 Of the value of each distinguishable pleasure which appears to be produced by it in the first instance.

2 Of the value of each pain which appears to be produced by it in the first instance.

3 Of the value of each pleasure which appears to be produced by it after the first. This constitutes the fecundity of the first pleasure and the impurity of the first pain.

4 Of the value of each pain which appears to be produced by it after the first. This constitutes the fecundity of the first pain, and the impurity of the first pleasure.

5 Sum up all the values of all the pleasures on the one side, and those of all the pains on the other. The balance, if it be on the side of pleasure, will give the good tendency of the act upon the whole, with respect to the interests of that individual person; if on the side of pain, the bad tendency of it upon the whole.

6 Take an account of the number of persons whose interests appear to be concerned; and repeat the above process with respect to each. Sum up the numbers expressive of the degrees of good tendency, which the act has, with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is good upon the whole: do this again with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is good upon the whole: do this again with respect to each individual, in regard to whom the tendency of it is bad upon the whole. Take the balance which if on the side of pleasure, will give the general good tendency of the act, with respect to the total number or community of individuals concerned; if on the side of pain, the general evil tendency, with respect to the same community.

VI It is not to be expected that this process should be strictly pursued previously to every moral judgment, or to every legislative or judicial operation. It may, however, be always kept in view: and as near as the process actually pursued on these occasions approaches to it, so near will such process approach to the character of an exact one.

Extract Three

John Stuart Mill, from *Utilitarianism*.

Now, such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure- no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit — they designate as utterly mean and grovelling; as a doctrine worthy only of swine ... the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable ... if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other ... (however) ... Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites, and when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification ... It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognise the fact, that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It

would be absurd that while, in estimating all other things, quality is considered as well as quantity, the estimation of pleasures should be supposed to depend on quantity alone. If I am asked, what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality, so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with, and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying, both, do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals, for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme, that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence ... It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.

It may be objected, that many who are capable of the higher pleasures, occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures, than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good ...

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final.

Extract Four

John Stuart Mill, from *Utilitarianism*.

The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible, is that people hear it: and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it.

Extract Five

John Stuart Mill, from *Utilitarianism*.

No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons.

Administrative information

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History of changes to course specification

Version	Description of change	Date
2.0	Course support notes added as appendix.	September 2017
3.0	Penalty for non-submission of resource sheet added to 'Evidence to be gathered' section. 'Reasonable assistance' section updated.	July 2019
4.0	Information added to 'Skills, knowledge and understanding for the course assessment' section	October 2019
5.0	Additional content added to appendix 2 to provide further information on types of questions. The tables now provide example questions and marking instructions.	December 2021
5.1	Under 'Knowledge and Doubt' heading on page 4, 'Infinite regress of justifications' updated to 'infinite regress of justification'.	May 2023

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