8824 – 5601M/5604M

Markscheme

November 2024

Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 1

21 pages

How to use the Diploma Programme Philosophy markscheme

The assessment markbands constitute the formal tool for marking examination scripts, and in these assessment markbands examiners can see the skills being assessed in the examinations. The markschemes are designed to assist examiners in possible routes taken by candidates in terms of the content of their answers when demonstrating their skills of doing philosophy through their responses. The points listed are not compulsory points, and not necessarily the best possible points. They are a framework to help examiners contextualize the requirements of the question, and to facilitate the application of marks according to the assessment markbands listed on page 6 for the core theme and page 9 for the optional themes.

It is important that examiners understand that the main idea of the course is to promote *doing* philosophy, and this involves activity and engagement throughout a two-year programme, as opposed to emphasizing the chance to display knowledge in a terminal set of examination papers. Even in the examinations, responses should not be assessed on how much candidates *know* as much as how they are able to use their knowledge in support of an argument, using the skills referred to in the various assessment markbands published in the subject guide, reflecting an engagement with philosophical activity throughout the course. As a tool intended to help examiners in assessing responses, the following points should be kept in mind when using a markscheme:

- The Diploma Programme Philosophy course is designed to encourage the skills of *doing* philosophy in the candidates. These skills can be accessed through reading the assessment markbands in the subject guide
- The markscheme does not intend to outline a model/correct answer
- The markscheme has an introductory paragraph which contextualizes the emphasis of the question being asked
- The bullet points below the paragraph are suggested possible points of development that should *not* be considered a prescriptive list but rather an indicative list where they might appear in the answer
- If there are names of philosophers and references to their work incorporated into the markscheme, this should help to give context for the examiners and does *not* reflect a requirement that such philosophers and references should appear in an answer: they are possible lines of development.
- Candidates can legitimately select from a wide range of ideas, arguments and concepts in service of the question they are answering, and it is possible that candidates will use material effectively that is *not* mentioned in the markscheme
- Examiners should be aware of the command terms for Philosophy as published on page 54 of the Philosophy subject guide when assessing responses
- In Paper 1, examiners must be aware that a variety of types of answers and approaches, as well as a freedom to choose a variety of themes, is expected. Thus, examiners should not penalize different styles of answers or different selections of content when candidates develop their response to the questions. The markscheme should not imply that a uniform response is expected
- In markschemes for the core theme questions in Paper 1 (section A) the bullet points suggest possible routes of response to the stimulus, but it is critical for examiners to understand that the selection of the philosophical issue raised by the stimulus is *entirely at the choice of the candidate* so it is possible for material to gain credit from the examiner even if none of the material features in the markscheme.

Note to examiners

Candidates at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the core theme (Section A). Candidates at Higher Level answer **two** questions on the optional themes (Section B), each based on a different optional theme.

Candidates at Standard Level answer **one** question on the optional themes (Section B).

Paper 1 core theme markbands

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is minimal or no explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • There is little relevant knowledge demonstrated, and the explanation is superficial. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is descriptive and lacking in analysis.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is implied but not explicitly identified. There is some limited explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material or links to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is demonstrated but lacks accuracy and relevance, and there is a basic explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is some limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response, although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is a basic explanation of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • Knowledge is mostly accurate and relevant, and there is a satisfactory explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally organized, and can be easily followed. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is good justification of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge. There is a good explanation of the issue. Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately. • The response contains critical analysis. There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. Most of the main points are justified.
21–25	• The response is well structured, focused and effectively organized. • The philosophical issue raised by the stimulus material is explicitly identified. There is a well-developed justification of how the issue relates to the stimulus material and to the question of what it is to be human. • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge. There is a well-developed explanation of the issue. There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response. • The response contains well developed critical analysis. There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. All or nearly all of the main points are justified. The response argues from a consistently held position about the issue.

Section A

Core theme: Being human

Extract

1. With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human. [25]

The following paragraphs provide only a framework to help examiners in their assessment of responses to this question. Examiners should be responsive to a variety of philosophical perspectives and approaches. Examiners should be aware that candidates might respond to this passage in a variety of ways including ones not mentioned in the summary below.

This stimulus raises the issues of self-identity and personhood and the ways we establish, develop, communicate and maintain self, especially through narratives. It is worthwhile noting here that while many responses might focus on the use of narratives, responses can follow other approaches to the issues of identity and personhood. To achieve an authentic sense of self one must be able to unify one's life experiences in a narrative which has a beginning, a development and a forecasted conclusion. One's personal narrative provides a dynamic framework within which the sameness of the self over time can be maintained while retaining coherent possibilities for the diversification and development of the self over time. The narrative is where personal meaning is constructed. Within the context of exploring notions of the self and self-identity, questions of freedom regarding one's choice amongst possibilities might be considered. The narrative and its place in defining the self and self-identity invites creativity and innovation. Here, the existentialist theme of freedom in creating the self can be examined. The challenges of communicating one's narrative to others invites an examination of various philosophical perspectives on how one relates to others. Finally, various schools of thought can be considered which shed light on the ways in which a self can be defined. Here, the contributions of, for example, existentialism, rationalism, Buddhism, nihilism and theism might be relevant.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The nature, characteristics and functions of narrative in defining the self, *eg*: the use of narrative in understanding the self in, for example, Plato, Levinas, Nussbaum, Birch, Heckler, Rosenzweig
- Narrative as a private experience; narrative as a shared experience
- The role of others and intersubjectivity in the shaping of the self through narrative, *eg*: Sartre
- Narrative as a context for the sharing of moral, religious, political and personal insights
- Multiculturalism and variety of narratives
- Public, common, cultural sources of narratives might be mentioned, *eg*: religions, traditions, political conceptions of the self
- Narrative as monologue; narrative as dialogue; narrative as moral dialogue
- The self as real; the self as a by-product of brain activity; the self as an illusion, *eg*: views of the self in philosophers such as Hume, Locke, Descartes, Kant, Jung, Freud, Taylor
- Authenticity and freedom; freedom of choice; free will; condemned to be free, *eg*: Sartre, de Beauvoir, Levinas
- Existence in time: our experience of the past, present and future; locating the self in time, *eg*: Heidegger
- Life as a static, pre-determined package; life as undetermined project, *eg*: existentialism, phenomenology
- The self as stable and unchangeable; the self as dynamic, flexible and unpredictable
- Prioritizing possibilities: values, responsibilities, obligations, duties
- Relationships with others in sharing/determining life-options
- Contributions of psychology, neuroscience and cognitive science regarding the value of narrative in defining the self
- Contributions of philosophical views on an understanding of the self: existentialism, substance dualism, monism, determinism, rationalism, teleology, deontology, theism.

Image

2. With explicit reference to the stimulus and your own knowledge, discuss a philosophical issue related to the question of what it means to be human. [25]

The following paragraphs provide only a framework to help examiners in their assessment of responses to this question. Examiners should be responsive to a variety of philosophical perspectives and approaches. Examiners should be aware that candidates might respond to this passage in a variety of ways including ones not mentioned in the summary below.

The stimulus raises the issue of personal identity in the context of a digital culture. The stimulus confronts the fact that we have evidently transferred ourselves and our identities to a digital universe in which traditional notions of personal identity, interpersonal relationships, and the sharing of our identities with others have radically changed. The image invites an exploration of other key concepts and topics of study drawn from the Subject Guide, *eg*: freedom, mind and body, agency, gender, freedom and responsibility. How we establish our identity, prove our identity, manage our identity, validate our identity, protect our identity and eventually share our identity have impacted on how we perceive ourselves as persons. The digitalization of our identities has caused us to broadcast our personhood showcasing only what we wish and digitally hiding or manipulating what we do not wish to disclose. In this sense we can avoid the challenges and opportunities of face-to-face interaction and enter into a universe in which we create ourselves and manage the impressions we wish to make on others. The challenges of real-life situations are lost along with a growing unfamiliarity with the skills and techniques of initiating, developing and maintaining interpersonal relationships. Questions related to privacy, the protection of personal information and the laws that govern the sharing of online, digitalized information concerning personal identity are forced to the forefront. Questions of alienation, isolation and aimlessness might emerge. The stimulus also challenges us to consider whether we can update our online identities in the same way that we can develop our personalities in real life situations.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The challenges of technology and technological culture to personhood, *eg*: John Barlow and the disappearance of oral communication; Elizabeth Reid and the disappearance of physicality in interpersonal communication
- Social media and personal identity: the existential crisis *vs*. The techxistential crisis
- Digital identity vs. personal identity; to what extent can personal identity be captured electronically/digitally, *eg*: Borgmann on social hyperreality; Dreyfus on internet anonymity
- Manipulation and violation of personal identity in the technological environment
- The right to dignity, integrity and anonymity regarding the electronic storage of personal information; threats to interdependence, intersubjectivity
- Legal and moral norms regulating the access to and dissemination of elements of digital identity
- What is the impact on electronic and digital identity on face-to-face interpersonal interaction?
- Philosophical approaches that highlight the dignity and integrity of the self with those factors that threaten interdependence, intersubjectivity and/or community
- Traditional views of personal identity *versus* personal identity in the era of Artificial Intelligence and digital culture, *eg*: comparison and contrast with the views of Descartes, Hume, Locke, Nietzsche
- Does contemporary technology's handling of personal identity increase alienation, isolation and exploitation?
- Non-Western perspectives on issues of personal identity, *eg*: Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, African traditions, Asian traditions
- Is the electronic storage and sharing of information a matter of convenience or one of necessity?
- Is the digitalization of our identities an inescapable fact of our contemporary situation
- What are the positive aspects and uses of information technology regarding personhood and personal identity?
- Will personal identity be absorbed into a seamless environment of computing, advanced networking technology and social media *eg*: universe *versus* metaverse
- How can we ensure information security, personal data protection and the right to privacy in the digital age?

Paper 1 Section B markbands

Mark	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–5	• The response is poorly structured, or where there is a recognizable essay structure there is minimal focus on the task. The response lacks coherence and is often unclear. • The student demonstrates little relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The essay is mostly descriptive. There is no discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Few of the main points are justified.
6–10	• There is some attempt to follow a structured approach although it is not always clear what the answer is trying to convey. • The student demonstrates knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme, but this knowledge lacks accuracy and relevance. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is limited analysis but the response is more descriptive than analytical. There is little discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Some of the main points are justified.
11–15	• There is a clear attempt to structure the response although there may be some repetition or a lack of clarity in places. • Knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme is mostly accurate and relevant. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • The response contains analysis, but this analysis lacks development. There is some discussion of alternative interpretations or points of view. Many of the main points are justified.
16–20	• The response is structured and generally organized, and can be easily followed. • The response contains accurate and relevant knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. Philosophical vocabulary is mostly used appropriately. • The response contains critical analysis. There is discussion and some assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. Most of the main points are justified.
21–25	• The response is well structured, focused and effectively organized. • The response contains relevant, accurate and detailed knowledge of philosophical issues arising from the optional theme. There is appropriate use of philosophical vocabulary throughout the response. • The response contains well-developed critical analysis. There is discussion and assessment of alternative interpretations or points of view. All or nearly all of the main points are justified. The response argues from a consistently held position about the issue.

Section B

Optional theme 1: Aesthetics

3. Evaluate the claim that a work of art is above all an adventure of the mind. [25]

The claim (by Ionesco) invites an exploration of the origin of art. Candidates might consider the difference between *poiesis* and *mimesis*, as in Aristotle, and whether art is more a creative activity rather than an imitative activity. Answers might refer to the concepts of technique and expression, as explained by Croce: art calls for both technical skills and expressive feelings. Candidates might discuss whether art can have political or social functions and provoke strong reactions. Hence, candidates might consider the issues of any aesthetic judgments if art is unconventional or revolutionary: candidates might refer to Kant or Nietzsche. Answers might evaluate the role of art when it is produced under patronage or in conditions of political or religious censorship. Finally, candidates might consider the role that nature might play in influencing the work of an artist, *eg*: Emerson.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Distinction between *poiesis* and *mimesis*, *eg*: Aristotle
- Art as a blend of technical skills and expressive feelings, *eg*: Croce
- The work of art in the Greek mathematical standard versus art as intuition and pure expression in Romanticism
- Art and emotion, particularly the role of music, *eg*: Nietzsche, Plessner, Adorno
- The possible social, political, and religious functions of art, *eg*: Dewey
- Art creation under patronage or censorship
- Aesthetic judgment, particularly for controversial works of art, *eg*: Kant, Nietzsche
- Apollonian and Dionysian, *eg*: Nietzsche
- Art as imitation of nature, *eg*: Seneca, Emerson
- Whether technology fosters creativity or reproducibility, *eg*: Benjamin.

4. Evaluate the claim that "the big secret about art is that no one wants it to be true". [25]

The claim invites an exploration of the nature of art and its possible relationship with truth. Candidates might discuss whether art is to be meant as *mimesis* or as *poiesis*, *eg*: Aristotle: artistic activity could be inspired by imitation of nature, *eg*: Emerson, or by creativity, *eg*: Croce. Answers might also consider whether the content of artistic production has to be related to truth or it can challenge knowledge, biases, and stereotypes: candidates might refer to the School of Frankfurt and the Critical Theory, *eg*: Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse. Also, candidates might mention the cases when art is used for political or religious purposes, in terms of propaganda or censorship, or as a result of patronage. Hence, candidates might discuss whether art can play a social role, *eg*: Dewey, Croce. Finally, an answer might focus on artistic language and whether it has to follow scientific language, *eg*: Wittgenstein, Ortega y Gasset.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The nature of art as imitation (*mimesis*) or creation (*poiesis*), *eg*: Aristotle
- Art as imitation of nature, *eg*: Emerson
- Art as pure creative activity, *eg*: Croce
- Art and truth: conservatism or revolutionary, *eg*: the Frankfurt School, Critical Theory
- The use of images in art to deliver fake content, *eg*: Debord and the society of the spectacle
- The difference between essence and representation, *eg*: Feuerbach
- The content of artistic production as shaped by social habits, *eg*: Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse
- The relationship with truth when art is used for political or religious scopes, *eg*: propaganda, censorship, patronage
- Possible social functions of art, *eg*: Dewey, Croce
- Language and expression in art, *eg*: Plessner, Wittgenstein, Ortega y Gasset
- Postmodernism and the rejection of "grand narratives" opening up the concept of "truth" in art to multiple interpretations, *eg*: Lyotard, Deleuze.

Optional theme 2: Epistemology

5. To what extent can beliefs be justified through reason alone? [25]

This question asks about the debate between empiricism and rationalism. Rationalists such as Leibniz argue that knowledge comes from reason. Empiricists such as Hume argue that knowledge comes primarily from experience. The question also links to the distinction between *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge. Candidates might choose to focus on reason and knowledge. They might refer to Kant's idealism where the external world is beyond us, and we only have access to how it appears to us. Here, reason mediates between our experiences and what we know. Alternatively, candidates might point out that even empirical knowledge is subject to reason. They might focus on empiricism, and, for example the work of the logical positivists and the Vienna Circle. They might discuss radical skepticism, and the idea that without *a posteriori* beliefs, all of our beliefs might be divorced from the external world, akin to Brain in a Vat scenarios.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- *A priori* knowledge
- Ayer's synthetic analytic distinction
- *A posteriori* knowledge
- Empiricism *eg*: Hume
- Rationalism *eg*: Plato
- Kant's synthetic *a priori* position
- Innate ideas and innate dispositions in relation to rationalism
- Descartes's concept of clear and distinct ideas
- Theistic rationalism, where true ideas are given by God/god(s) *eg*: Berkeley
- Radical skepticism and the brain in a vat thought experiment
- Examples of rationalism in action such as the ontological argument for the existence of God/god(s).

6. To what extent do technologies promote the spreading of knowledge? [25]

Technology, particularly technologies used for communication, have led to an explosion of the amount of information publicly accessible. It has also led to an opening up of who is able to disseminate ideas, giving voices to previously marginalized views. This question asks about the impact of these trends on knowledge dissemination. It calls to mind “fake news” and problems with misinformation. Candidates might point to the spread of conspiracy theories, the formation of echo chambers, and the use of the internet to promote political ideologies. On the other hand, they might point to the availability of peer reviewed journals, good science journalism and sites such as Wikipedia which make information available to all, as cases where technology does support knowledge dissemination. They might refer to epistemic injustice, and the role of technologies in providing a forum for historically marginalized voices.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Questions about who controls knowledge *eg*: Plato’s Republic
- Power and knowledge *eg*: Fricker and testimonial injustice
- Freedom of speech and societal progress *eg*: Mill
- Examples such as Trump’s use of social media
- The anti-vax movement and its social media presence
- Echo chambers and social media
- The digital divide
- Ownership and knowledge on the internet *eg*: Elon Musk and Twitter, Mark Zuckerberg and Facebook
- The democratization of knowledge through technology
- Misinformation and policing of the internet
- The impact of technology on what constitutes “knowledge” itself; *eg*: Heidegger and “enframing”, Foucault and the ‘historical *a priori’.*

Optional theme 3: Ethics

7. Explain and discuss the foundation of moral judgments. [25]

The question relates to one of the suggested examples for discussion in the meta-ethics topic of the Subject Guide. It opens a wide scope for explanation and discussion on the foundation for moral judgments. Answers might be focused on the foundation of moral judgments or any or some of the specific concepts implied. Moral sentimentalists, such as Adam Smith and Hume, argue that moral judgments spring from natural benevolent impulses, such as sympathy and affection, which are rooted in emotional reactions to others and their conduct. A different view sustains that reason is able to grasp moral truths built into the natural or divine order, the metaphysical foundations of reality, the relations among ideas, and the nature of reason itself. An alternative approach: reflective equilibrium, *eg*: Goodman and Rawls. It recognizes that people hold many values and takes a more holistic approach, seeing moral values as being held together in a flexible web of mutual interdependence. Answers might also offer a different concept as foundation or question the possibility of moral foundation itself.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The physical and social worlds change, the moral life can or should not depend on one main invariable fixed principle
- The usually called moral realism: there are facts of the form “such and such is morally right or wrong.” Further, cognitivism holds that such facts can be known
- Those who deny there is any fact of the matter about which acts are morally right or wrong are called non-realists or anti-realists
- Some non-realists might think that their position entails that all moral judgments
- are meaningless
- The foundationalist view which holds that morality rests on one or more basic principles, which can justify all particular moral judgments.
- The extent to which it is possible to feel what other people feel?
- Moral intuition as the capacity to know or apprehend something directly, without any need for a justification, *eg*: the perception of “good”
- The consistency constraint as condition for moral justification; Kant’s “categorical imperative” places consistency at the centre of ethics
- The extent to which a moral justification can be fully coherent, but wrong from other points of view
- Practical reasoning as a foundation for moral theory
- Nihilism, understood as “everything is permitted,” cannot provide any foundation, ground, or reason for morality
- Forms of moral skepticism; moral beliefs have purely subjective or internal bases.

8. To what extent should the principle of autonomy guide ethical decision making? [25]

The concept of autonomy is at the centre of contemporary ethical discussions, both at a theoretical and practical level, including applied ethics. For instance, it is central to Kant’s deontological ethics and its multiple projections, and it is the first principle in the four-principle approach developed by Beauchamp and Childress in bioethics. Therefore, the question offers an opportunity to explore one or more of the various paths implied in it. Answers might focus on the concept of autonomy, the extent of its application, and even the unconditional character of ethical principles according to some views. They can also develop analyses with reference to an area of applied ethics. In medical ethics the legitimacy of “living wills” or “advance directives” is at present a contested social and moral issue. These documents might be considered as a testimony in favour of the argument that one of the most important bases for the human capacity to act in moral ways is the ability to choose for oneself. Autonomy requires, at the very least, an absence of compulsion. For Kant autonomy is required for truly moral action.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The expressions of people’s will if they become unable to do so because of illness or injury
- The tension or conflict between individual’s wishes or interests and what others think best
- Ethical conflicts: goods, duties, values, claims, and principles may be irreducibly plural and complex
- Cases; *eg*: the 2005 case of Terri Schiavo, the brain-damaged American woman whose husband and parents fell into a legal wrangle concerning her wishes
- No medical treatments ought to be administered to patients without their informed consent to any procedures or therapies
- James Taylor's views on autonomy in bio medics
- Autonomy, heteronomy and approaches to freedom
- The concept of autonomy and political freedom; ideas about what people are and what they are capable of doing or not doing
- Does the state have the moral responsibility to interfere in people’s lives for their own good?
- Moral agency, deontological ethics and universalizability. Kant’s formulas of autonomy *eg*: the will of every rational being as a will that legislates universal law
- Approaches to moral autonomy and the issues involved from the perspective of forms of moral relativism
- The unique, discrete structure of moral language (*eg*: Mackie)
- Confucian ethics: self, autonomy, and community
- Mill’s high evaluation as ideals of individuality and autonomy
- Moral particularism: one should always judge what is the right thing to do by seeing what particular act is right in that circumstance
- Role in applied ethics especially abortion *eg*: Judith Jarvis Thompson and the violinist.

Optional theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. Evaluate the view that technology shapes its users into tools of the technology, not the other way around. [25]

This question explores a contemporary issue about technology, which is philosophically interesting on different levels, be they the ethics of companies that ensure technologies are addictive and need regular maintenance for profit purposes, or the epistemological issue of how technology relates to human knowledge, especially in the realm of Artificial Intelligence (AI). How contemporary societies check on technological development, trade and import it, and how data is commodified in the use of that technology, offer further areas for possible exploration. Technology builds on the gains and progress of the past, and it is the human mind that utilizes the use of technology for addressing human problems or needs, thus giving the initial impression that technology is a tool for human use. But, the technology is rarely understood by the users, who utilize the functionality of a machine or app or programme, unaware of the design or coding behind it, which could be manipulating the user to give data away unknowingly. Does AI represent a potential threat to human authority in and over the planet? Is AI actual intelligence, or is it strictly formal programming by a real human, enabling mimicry and fast processing, but no independent intelligence in the machine? Is new technology affecting our relationship with work, the public space and real-time (and space) socializing? Does the development of new technologies have sufficient political oversight?

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Artificial Intelligence
- The language of programming and technology – formal or with inbuilt adaptability?
- Data gathering through use of technology, unknown by the user
- Commercial manipulation of products to ensure further financial exposure of the purchaser
- Taylor's view of the impact of technology on the individual
- Gehlen's work on the industrial revolution and mass society
- Political control or lack of it in the process of new technological development
- Global *vs* national reach of technology and the implications for cultural understanding and behaviour
- The 'extended mind' thesis of Clark and Chalmers
- International law and technology (see products used in warfare)
- Technology companies manipulating design to ensure further purchasing
- The new field of technological ethics
- The power of major technological companies (see Apple, Meta *etc*)
- Material analysis of impact of technology on society.

10. Evaluate the view that there can be no rights without responsibilities. [25]

This question explores the nature of rights in contemporary society. Political language and social and legal debate often refer to rights, but the provenance or derivation of those rights are often ignored. Candidates may want to discuss the assumptions and beliefs of how rights originate before discussing the duties of responsibility that must accompany the granting and possession of rights. In a system of legal rights, the responsibilities of those in receipt of the rights, or in a position to be granting the rights, are made clear through legislation. Some thinkers believe rights exist for humans as natural possessions thanks to the human condition. In recent times rights have been extended to members of the non-human animal kingdom and to the natural environment in debates about the nature of the planet. A test is to ask who is responsible for granting that right. Where such responsibilities can be enunciated, then supporters believe there is clarity over the possession of that right. If it was claimed that every child has a right to be loved, the question that arises is, who has the duty to love each child, even if that child no longer has any existing family? In this way, rights can be tested, although those that believe in the natural universal rights of humans might extend more responsibilities to social institutions, such that desired rights become the responsibility of the state to provide. Ultimately, is it the principle of utility and the pursuit of happiness that decides for most people the granting of rights and the responsibilities that then ensue?

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Universal, natural, inalienable rights
- Legal and constitutional rights as social conventions or constructs
- Responsibilities as duties that accompany rights in a form of social contract
- Where does the responsibility for granting and preserving rights start and end? Family? Local society? Regional or national government? Social institutions?
- Rights and the principle of utility, see Mill
- Rights defended in a rule-based system
- The cost of maintaining rights
- Are some rights more fundamental than others?
- The limits of rights – animals? the environment?
- Rawls and fairness *versus* equality in terms of individual rights and social justice
- Rights and justice and liberty.

Optional theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. Evaluate the view that for God/god(s) to exist in reality would be greater than for God/god(s) to exist in the mind alone. [25]

This question invites an exploration of the ontological argument for the existence of God/god(s). This argument has been given several iterations and is a deductive argument based on analytic, *a priori* reasoning. Here, the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises and, if the premises are valid, the conclusion must be as well. However, given that the reasoning is *a priori*, critics of the ontological argument claim that it does not say anything about the world outside the concepts of the premises. The ontological argument attempts to conclude that something in reality is 'better' than something in the mind alone, and this draws the criticism of the argument, with some thinkers pointing to the faulty association of the word 'better' with the fact of being real. One challenge asks if the argument can simply 'think things into existence' (see Gaunilo's perfect island) but modern thinkers like Malcolm and Plantinga still attempt to defend it as a valid proof of God/god(s). Answers are able to support or challenge the view in the title, drawing on the definition of God/god(s) as "something than which nothing greater can be conceived" and working on whether existence in reality can validly be considered greater or better than existence in the mind alone.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Various iterations of the ontological argument – Anselm, Descartes, Malcom, Plantinga
- Criticisms of the argument – Gaunilo wonders if anything that can be conceived necessarily has to exist
- Hume's criticism of the notion that 'God/god(s) exists' is an analytical statement, given its contradiction is not meaningless
- Kant's criticisms rest on the claim that 'existence is not a predicate'
- Is Anselm's argument aiming to prove God/god(s)'s existence or define understanding of God/god(s) if God/god(s) exists?
- A consideration of the shape of the argument – deductive *versus* inductive arguments; which type of arguments offer the best route to proof of God/god(s)'s existence?
- People's experience of God supports the premise that God is a real possibility since people don't have experiences of logically impossible things like square circles – Leftow, Pruss.

12. Explain and discuss the use of prayer as a way of experiencing God/god(s). [25]

This question can be answered from the perspective of religious experience. Prayer is a form of religious experience in that it implies a direct communion between individuals and the divine. It can be the starting point for miracles, or it can be a personal conversation with deities. Prayer also raises the problem of evil: how can an omniscient, omnibenevolent deity choose to answer some prayers and not others and allow some evil to occur even when the individual is directly asking for help. Candidates might explore whether the testimony of those whose prayers have been answered provides a good argument for the existence of the divine, particularly in the face of the testimony of those whose prayers have not been answered. Prayer might be analysed using William James's account of religious experience from *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Candidates might discuss the morality of petitionary prayer on behalf of themselves, or intercessory prayer which is an appeal for help on behalf of a loved one, when greater evils exist in the world. On the other hand, they might characterize prayer as an expression of faith. Another way of looking at prayer is that it is symbolic, and that the language of prayer should not be taken literally but understood as an expression of something beyond human understanding. Candidates might discuss whether deities without a physical presence are able to intervene in the world and respond to prayer: this links to the idea of omnipotence.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Accounts of religious experience, *eg*: William James, St Theresa of Avila, St Augustine
- The problem of evil and whether omnibenevolent, omniscient and omnipotent deities would allow prayers to go unanswered. They might refer to examples such as the use of prayer during the holocaust
- Religious language, and whether prayer ought to be taken literally
- Whether a deity without physical form is capable of responding to prayer
- The role of organized religion when it comes to prayer: can individuals petition the divine themselves or do they need to go through a member of the priesthood?
- Buddhism and meditation in contrast to the use of prayer
- The significance of prayer in Islam as one of its five pillars
- The diversity in the practice of prayer in creative expressions of religious identity
- Different purposes of prayer: petitionary, intercessory, adoration, thanksgiving
- Prayer as an expression of faith
- Arguments from religious experience based on prayer
- Examples of prayer working or not working
- Miracles, and the use of miracles as an argument for the existence of the divine.

Optional theme 6: Philosophy of science

13. Evaluate the claim that modern physics describes the world as it really is. [25]

This question relates to the metaphysics of science. Concepts such as time and space, which are commonly used in physics, alongside causality, determinism, and physical laws can all be questioned. Candidates might discuss the theoretical nature of much of physics. They might use this to explore the status of scientific theories, drawing on debates about realism and anti-realism in science. Attention might be drawn to areas of theoretical physics where numerous different competing theories co-exist such as debates about the origins of the universe. Candidates might explore theories such as quantum mechanics which is successful at making predictions but is difficult to make sense of. They might consider whether concepts such as time, space and energy relate to our everyday understanding of the world, and the extent to which this shapes scientific work.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Physical laws as models for explaining the world
- Scientific realism *eg*: Putnam
- Scientific anti-realism *eg*: Laudan
- Theoretical physics and its relationship to empiricism
- Abstract concepts such as space and time, and their role in scientific theories
- Metaphysics of space and time *eg*: pre-Socratic philosophers such as Thales and Parmenides
- Debates about the origins of the universe *eg*: Big Bang theory, String Theory, the cosmological argument for the existence of God/god(s), Steady State theory
- How to interpret disagreement within physics
- Quantum mechanics as an example of a theory with predictive power, but difficult to grasp metaphysics
- Unobservable entities and theory formation *eg*: atoms and atomic theory
- Uncertainty and physics
- Determinism and causal laws.

14. Evaluate the claim that scientific research should not be driven by society's needs. [25]

This question addresses the relationship between pure and applied science, whilst also drawing on questions about the impacts of science on society, and the influence of society on science. One approach might be to argue that science is intrinsically valuable and should be funded and undertaken regardless of the utility of its findings. This might be linked to the intrinsic value of truth, or it might be justified because expanding bodies of knowledge is useful in the long term. Candidates might take a different approach, pointing to the impact of science on society. They might look at atrocities undertaken in the name of science, such as Nazism and eugenics. Candidates might question whose needs should influence science research. They might point to the dominance of the needs of advantaged groups, *eg*: the crisis in women's medicine. Some might worry that instrumentalizing science might prevent new discoveries by constraining the scientific method.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Research ethics *eg*: animal testing
- Responsibilities associated with science
- The use of mis-use of science *eg*: eugenics
- Ethical issues in the sciences *eg*: reproductive medical ethics
- "pure" *vs* "applied" sciences
- The intrinsic value of scientific knowledge
- Ethical theories such as utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics *eg*: Bentham, Kant, Aristotle
- The utility of science
- Societal problems that require scientific solutions *eg*: climate change, covid-19
- Whether societal considerations limit the scientific method
- Discussions of the scientific method *eg*: Bacon, Popper, Kuhn, Feyerabend.

Optional theme 7: Political philosophy

15. Explain and discuss how the government derives its power over the individual in the state. [25]

Individuals are members of a state by dint of geography and politics, and this question explores how a government relates to those individuals, possibly by looking at its origins or the way in which the government is formed contemporaneously (*eg*: by which system of rule, like democracy or monarchy). Traditionally, the origins of government formation and power are explained through appealing to some form of consent given by the individual to be ruled by the government, and in this there is appeal to some form of social contract being established between the individual and the government. Consent might be given through voting in an election, or more passively through choosing to conform to laws set by the government and not rebelling. Is this actual consent? Is the only way for the individual to withdraw consent to rebel or emigrate? Some thinkers see the government as limiting the power of individuals over each other thus providing protection (Hobbes) where others see the government as preserving possessions and the ability to work (Locke). Rousseau sees the government as enabling full human development and guaranteeing the 'general will' even though the pre-socialization life as a noble savage might have been more blissful. Bentham and Mill see the government's task as preserving and increasing the happiness or utility of the majority, and in their discussions can be found different accounts of how rights might (or might not) help preserve the individual's happiness. Candidates can explore the ways in which consent might be withdrawn.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- Social contract theories of consent to be governed
- Different social contract theories – Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Rawls
- Individual freedom and liberty – see Mill, Hayek, Nozick
- Different systems of government – democracy, autocracy, monarchy, oligarchy *etc*
- How does consent work in the contemporary world?
- Equality and liberty
- Weber's theory that a state has central administrative and organising power over the individual living in a defined territory
- The relationship between government and law-making
- Government and justice – distributive and retributive
- The will of the majority *vs* minority groups
- How might consent be withdrawn?

16. Evaluate the view that justice is about what is right, not what is good. [25]

This question invites an exploration about the possible difference between how justice functions in a state in contrast with how morality works for individuals – or the government – of that state. Candidates might explore different versions of the moral law, but when morality and justice are spoken of together, they might draw upon the work of Plato, especially in his *Republic* or the natural law of the Aristotle tradition, developed by Aquinas within a religious understanding in medieval times. Bentham and Mill worked on the principle of utility encouraging a view of what was the route to good actions through the notion of utility. Rawls developed an influential account of what could count for social justice, which encompassed a consideration for the progress of other people and a concern for those living in less favourable circumstances. In this way, Rawls's theory of social justice encompasses judgements that many believe to have a moral element and imperative. Others might treat morality and justice distinctly and deny the premise that social justice is a thing to be pursued (see Hayek and Nozick). In this, the notion of justice would be that it defends fairness on the grounds of laws passed by government without that government having to promote positive actions to encourage opportunity in pursuit of a misplaced sense of 'fairness'. Some thinkers see morality as deriving from a divine law that can be known through faith, and justice is the responsibility of the government to uphold those moral truths in public life. Theocracies enforce laws being founded on the divine will and are applied through the cleric authorities (see the recent upheaval in Iran over women's 'immoral' dress in public). Some candidates may regard the spheres of justice and morality being on the one hand, public, and on the other, private. Candidates might explore the application of punishment as the prime role of justice in the state.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:

- The distinction between distributive and retributive justice
- The relationship between justice and the will of the people
- Is justice the right or will of the strong?
- What is public morality?
- How do laws draw on moral law in their creation and application?
- How might any individual know what is 'right'?
- How might any individual know what is 'good'?
- Justice as fairness – see Rawls
- Social justice – can it be justified? And, if so, how?
- Positive discrimination as fairness
- Marxism sees law as a commodity of the powerful and will offer a critique of what constitutes true fairness in the working of the civil and criminal law of the nation state.
- Punishment and justice
- Anarchists deny the authority of any government over matters of justice or morality.
- The compromise between individual freedom and public morality and justice
- "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes*" – who will guard the guards themselves? The issue of authority in matters of justice and morality – perhaps illustrating from different forms of government, *eg*: theocracy, monarchy, one-party democracy, dictatorship, multi-party democracy, oligarchy.