

Philosophy
Higher level
Paper 1

Thursday 5 November 2015 (afternoon)

2 hours 30 minutes

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Section A: answer one question.
- Section B: answer two questions, each chosen from a different Optional Theme.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[90 marks]**.

In your answers you are expected to:

- argue in an organized way using clear, precise language, which is appropriate to philosophy
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of appropriate philosophical issues
- analyse, develop and critically evaluate relevant ideas and arguments
- present appropriate examples providing support for your overall argument
- identify and analyse counter-arguments
- provide relevant supporting material, illustrations and/or examples
- offer a clear and philosophically relevant personal response to the examination question.

Section A

Answer **one** question from this section. Each question in this section is worth [30 marks].

Core Theme: What is a human being?

1. Read the following passage and develop your response as indicated below.

“Animal” is a negative term, but only because man has been made inappropriately privileged. It has been argued that whereas the traditional view supports Hamlet’s exclamation, “How like a god,” Pavlov emphasizes “How like a dog.” But is that a step too far? A god is the archetypal pattern of an explanatory fiction, of a miracle-working mind, of the metaphysical. Man is much more than a dog, but like a dog he is within the range of scientific analysis.

[Source: adapted from B F Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971), pages 200–201]

Write a response (of approximately 800 words) in which you:

- identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue in this passage that addresses the question, “what is a human being?”
- investigate **two** different philosophical approaches to the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified
- explain and evaluate the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified.

2. Look at the following picture and develop your response as indicated below.

Please go to this link:
<http://www.notdesking.co.uk/unhappy-youre-a-commuter/>

Write a response (of approximately 800 words) in which you:

- identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue in this picture that addresses the question, “what is a human being?”
- investigate **two** different philosophical approaches to the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified
- explain and evaluate the philosophical concept or philosophical issue you identified.

Section B

Answer **two** questions from this section, each chosen from a different Optional Theme. Each question in this section is worth [30 marks].

Optional Theme 1: Grounds of epistemology

3. Evaluate the claim that certainty of the truth of a proposition should be proportionately dependent on the strength of the evidence it presents.
4. Explain and discuss the view that reason plays a dominant role in our attempt to gain knowledge.

Optional Theme 2: Theories and problems of ethics

5. Evaluate the claim that for utilitarianism the purpose of ethics is the increase of happiness.
6. Evaluate the claim that moral judgments are simply expressions of positive or negative feelings.

Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of religion

7. “Matters of religion are like matters of sexual preference: they are not discussed in public, and even the abstract questions are discussed only by bores.” Discuss and evaluate this claim with reference to social conformity and personal religious commitment.
8. With reference to one or more of the philosophies of religion you have studied, evaluate the issue of relativism and its role within religion.

Optional Theme 4: Philosophy of art

9. “When I see a tiger in a picture, I do not feel moved to run away; and the painted clouds in a Monet do not prompt me to check whether I have my umbrella with me. Art is about seeing for the sake of seeing, and realizing to the full the potential freedom of the see-er.” Evaluate this view of the process of art.
10. Evaluate the extent to which the intellect should be involved in an appreciation of an artist’s work.

Optional Theme 5: Political philosophy

11. “An earthquake achieves what the law promises but does not in practice maintain: the equality of all men.” Evaluate the idea that all humans should be equal before the law.
12. Explain and discuss what makes government legitimate.

Optional Theme 6: Non-Western traditions and perspectives

13. With reference to one or more of the non-Western traditions you have studied, evaluate the distinction between, and meaning of, living beings and non-living objects.
14. With reference to one or more of the non-Western traditions you have studied, evaluate the possible political and economic relations with other cultures and societies, especially considering liberty, equality and civil rights.

Optional Theme 7: Contemporary social issues

15. Evaluate the claim that stratification (the ranking of different groups dependent on status) of a society is both inevitable and desirable.
16. Evaluate the claim that the government of a state has a duty to grant equality to all members of its community.

Optional Theme 8: People, nations and cultures

17. Evaluate the view that a nation can be defined as “a daily referendum dependent on the will of its people to continue living together”.
 18. Evaluate the grounds on which a member of one culture might claim to be able to judge the practices of another.
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