



22115601



International Baccalaureate®  
Baccalauréat International  
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**PHILOSOPHY  
HIGHER LEVEL  
PAPER 1**

Tuesday 3 May 2011 (afternoon)

2 hours 30 minutes

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**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.

*In your answers you are expected to:*

- *present an argument in an organized way*
- *use clear, precise and appropriate language*
- *identify any assumptions in the question*
- *develop a clear and focused argument*
- *identify the strengths and weaknesses of your response*
- *identify counter-arguments to your response, and address them if possible*
- *provide relevant supporting material, illustrations and/or examples where appropriate*
- *develop a critical evaluation of ideas and arguments*
- *conclude by making a clear, concise and philosophically informed 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.

I taught “War and Human Nature” again this fall. The course ponders the question, as my syllabus puts it, “Is war inevitable, or are peace and even universal disarmament possible?” During the first class, I posed that question to my undergraduate students. Thirteen said no, peace is not possible, and four said yes, it is.

That pessimistic response no longer surprises me. Two years ago, I had my students ask classmates: “Will humans ever stop fighting wars, once and for all? Why or why not?” Of the 205 respondents, 185 – more than 90 percent – replied no.

“From this survey,” one of my students wrote, “we can conclude that most college students have little faith in mankind.”

[Source: John Horgan, “Countering Students’ Fatalism Toward War”, <http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/forum/topics/countering-students-fatalism>, 26 September 2009]

*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.

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## 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 the extent to which any group can exercise power in the world is determined by its access to knowledge.
4. Evaluate the claim that determining the truth of my individual beliefs and experiences is a matter of determining how well they “fit in” with my other beliefs and experiences.

### **Optional Theme 2: Theories and problems of ethics**

5. To what extent can the responsibility for the predictable consequences of our actions be a moral principle?
6. To what extent should applied ethics be committed to the promotion of change in the world?

### **Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of religion**

7. Evaluate the philosophical problems associated with the use of religious language.
8. Evaluate the claim that God’s existence can be proved through observable features of the world.

### **Optional Theme 4: Philosophy of art**

9. Evaluate the claim that the main function of art is to humanize.
10. “Art that rejects pure beauty in favour of a social cause offends the aesthetic experience.” Discuss and evaluate.

**Optional Theme 5: Political philosophy**

11. Evaluate the grounds for political obligation.
12. Explain and discuss the notion of freedom within the state.

**Optional Theme 6: Non-Western traditions and perspectives**

13. With reference to one or more of the non-Western tradition(s) that you have studied, evaluate philosophically the relationship of materialism and the material world to metaphysics.
14. With reference to one or more of the non-Western tradition(s) that you have studied, evaluate philosophically the relationship between human and non-human beings.

**Optional Theme 7: Contemporary social issues**

15. To what extent is technological progress human progress?
16. Evaluate the relationship between gender and power.

**Optional Theme 8: People, nations and cultures**

17. The United Nations Millennium Declaration states: “We believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world’s people. For while globalization offers great opportunities, at present its benefits are very unevenly shared, while its costs are unevenly distributed.” Evaluate philosophically this claim.
  18. Evaluate the claim that since each culture is different and has its own systems of meaning and value, cultural relativism is an unavoidable philosophical position.
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