Markscheme

November 2019

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 Section A 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

1.   **Excerpt from *The Book of Disquiet***

      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 paragraph and discussion points 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 excerpt requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. Candidates might discuss the issue of human identity and how external, material, or cultural circumstances affect the way humans shape their identity. Candidates might analyse the structure of human reality and the elements that build it up, *eg* beliefs, sensations, and emotions. Responses might also include a discussion on whether the self-knowledge is shaped by cultural elements, or is dependent upon natural and innate structures only. Another possible element of discussion might refer to the relationship of self/other: is our identity the result of how the other sees us? And is it possible to get to know oneself? Candidates might also focus on the importance of perceptions and sensations in knowing oneself and whether this knowledge is possible, impossible, or limited. Responses might take into account the epistemological role of experiencing self-knowledge and how it relates to mental processes. Candidates might also consider the cognitive and deliberative functions that emotions can have, according to the most recent studies in neurosciences and philosophy of mind. Candidates might discuss how the human being can move from an isolated, unique world to a feasible social condition. Finally, responses might offer a view on the possibilities of human relationships and mutual understanding, compassion, respect and the possible consequences from an ethical standpoint.

      In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
      - Who am I?
      - Is there such a thing as the self?
      - Is it possible to know oneself?
      - How can we define the other with relation to the self? Or do we have to know the other in order to define ourselves?
      - To what extent are life conceptions dependent on power?
      - What is the role played by emotions, sensations, perceptions in knowing the self?
      - What is the role played by emotions, sensations, perceptions in knowing the world surrounding us? *Eg* Nussbaum's and Damasio's theories on emotions, neurosciences, philosophy of mind
      - Is mutual human understanding possible?
      - What is reality? Is it linked to how identity is shaped?
      - Is identity construction dependent upon cultural or natural elements?
      - Is there such a thing as free will?
      - What is the role played by gender, religion, or politics in shaping identity?
      - Can material conditions in which we live be overlooked?
      - How fixed/malleable is human nature?
      - Why do we believe that other people have minds like ours?
      - Can the process of self-knowledge be the source of existential angst?
      - Is it possible to know the other? Is it possible to ethically judge them?
      - The shaping of identity as part of a general, basic human need for organizing the self and the world.

2.   **Image**

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 paragraph and discussion points 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 question requires candidates to identify and discuss philosophical issues and/or concepts in the image related to the fundamental question of what it is to be human. Responses are likely to use the image to discuss issues of what the human being comprises. Candidates might discuss the relationship between physical and psychological aspects in shaping human identity and whether a knowledge of the self is possible. Moreover, candidates might identify the concept of conscience, whether such a thing exists, and how it relates to mind and body. Therefore, responses might analyse the idea of dualism in terms of mind-body theories, *eg* those of Descartes or Popper. Candidates might also discuss the nature of mind and whether it is a material substance and material processes or not. Responses might consider the role of emotions in knowing the self and the surrounding world and whether they contrast reason and logical thinking. Candidates might focus on the processes of shaping identity and personality and the role that experiences play in it, by making each person become a unique individual: are there common innate elements that make all people similar or can individuals differentiate from each other? Responses might consider the consequences of technological progress in shaping human identity and modifying the way we see ourselves and others. Another path that candidates might follow concerns the concept of will: do humans have free will or do their mind-body structure and the influence of technology make determinism the only possible ontological background? Another element that responses might present is related to bioethical issues, *eg* how technological development in medicine changes the definition of human beings in certain situations: end-of-life care, euthanasia, and coma. Finally, candidates might consider the differences between human identity and artificial intelligence and whether its progress can move us towards identity issues in computers and robotics.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Who am I?
- Is there such a thing as the self?
- Is it possible to know oneself?
- What is the role played by emotions and reason in knowing the self and the surrounding world? *Eg* Nussbaum's and Damasio's theories on emotions, neurosciences, philosophy of mind
- Does conscience exist and how does it relate to human mind and body?
- Mind-body theories, *eg* Descartes, Popper
- Is the mind made of material processes or not? *Eg* Plato, Descartes, Dewey, James.
- What is the role played by experience in shaping individuals? Are there common, innate qualities? Can individuals differentiate from each other?
- Is identity construction dependent upon cultural or natural elements?
- Free will versus determinism
- Can material conditions in which we live be overlooked?
- How fixed/malleable is human nature?
- Why do we believe that other people have minds like ours?
- Can the process of self-knowledge be the source of existential angst?
- Is it possible to know the other? Is it possible to ethically judge it?
- The shaping of identity as part of a general, basic human need for organizing the self and the world
- The role of technology in shaping human identity, *eg* television, the Internet, social networks
- The construction of a social self *versus* the individual self
- New ways of understanding and defining "the self" according to technological developments, *eg* bioethical issues arising from medical progress: end-of-life care, euthanasia, and coma.

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 art generates an experience that is an activity of consciousness which triggers human emotions.** **[25]**

This question invites an evaluation of the role of art in relationship to human emotions. Art in its many forms might have a function that triggers a creative response; it might release emotions that otherwise would not appear. It poses the issue as to whether the artist is intentionally producing a piece of art to affect the emotions of the artist or/and the audience. It also raises the issue of how much the consequence of encountering a work of art is controlled, and directed by the producer or left completely to the audience. Alongside this the producer might well desire one emotional response and the audience might experience quite another. Given that the claim ends with the creation of imagination, questions could be asked as to the extent to which other factors might be affecting the imagination prior to encountering the art. Therefore, how important was the work of art, in itself, in creating an audience response? Art functions as a means of releasing an artist's and the audiences' emotions and this factor takes art beyond the function of merely replicating nature. Examples could come from the whole spectrum of artistic activity. Counterpositions to this claim could come from theories of art that dwell on notions of form or artistic skill; formalist theories of art could be contrasted with expressionist theories.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The interplay between artist and audience in various art forms
- The degree to which the artist is aware of his intentions while producing the work of art
- How much is art produced for its own sake with no consideration of its impact upon an audience?
- Stendhal syndrome, or other experiences of personal significance while encountering art
- Differing functions of works of art in terms of propaganda, decoration or recording
- Contrasts between high and low art and the impact on an audience
- How is it possible to move from subjective emotion to objective interpretation?
- The relationship between emotions and spirituality in religious art
- Nietzsche's view of art
- The nature of how imagination affects our perception of artworks in particular.

4. **Evaluate the claim that art ought to contribute to improving society.** **[25]**

This question seeks an evaluation of the role of art as a socio-political tool for improving society. Art in all its forms is reflective of the society in which it is formed, but the issue is as to whether its role is to improve, and contribute to the positive development of that society that it exists within. Within both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, art was a tool of the political system, and degenerate art (art that was deemed not to support the objectives of the regime) was banned. For example, art forms such as social realism were encouraged by the Soviet Union, and futurism in fascist Italy. Art was, in those two political systems, seen as both a means of reflecting the values of the respective systems, and an agent of change to develop and grow these systems. Art and aesthetic judgements seem to have a role in forming culture. Art might also have a universalizing influence in terms of reflecting and cementing values of society, and the feelings of a given society. Art can and has been 'used' politically to further particular causes, for example religion in medieval Europe or revolution in the 20th century. Issues might be raised as to whether art is/should be a tool of propagandizing. Some artists are very much opposed to their works being used in this way, while others produce works that contribute to a political standpoint or a particular form of wellbeing. Issues might be raised as to how the art form can actually be so specially used, given that there can be no direct knowledge of the impact of the works on the populace at large.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The idea that art does have a social impact in terms of improving the human condition. Art might also reveal the darker, less positive aspects of the human condition, and therefore not have a positive impact
- Art as a means of self-knowledge (the individual) or societal knowledge (all humans or the crowd)
- Who should judge the impact of art?
- Possible connections to Plato's ideal city where art should be regulated, or Thomas More's *Utopia*
- Dewey's view on the social function of art as a means to educate
- Croce's view of the possibility of art having a social function
- Are there moral/religious considerations when placing art in society? Should artists be aware of these, and should they take responsibility for the impact of their works?
- Is the censorship of what is perceived to be degenerate art, justified?
- Should art have a defined function?
- Can art be neutralized and be devoid of its social context?
- How far is the intention or consequence a factor in defining the purpose of art? Can it be art without any intention or no intended outcome?
- Is good art that which has a purpose, and bad art that which has no purpose or intention?

Optional Theme 2: Epistemology

5.   **To what extent does knowledge require foundations?** [25]

The question asks for an explanation and evaluation of the extent to which knowledge should have foundations, and, if so, in what sense. The question reflects an ongoing controversy, which is already clear in Plato's *Theaetetus*. Ever since, epistemologists have tried to identify the essential, defining components of propositional knowledge, and the grounds upon which it can be justified. The key question is whether some beliefs (a) have their epistemic justification non-inferentially (that is, apart from evidential support from any other beliefs), and (b) supply epistemic justification for all justified beliefs that lack such non-inferential justification. Traditional foundationalism, represented in different ways by, for example, Aristotle, Descartes, Russell, C I Lewis, and Chisholm, offers an affirmative answer to this issue. On the other hand, a counter to foundationalism is the coherence theory of justification, that is, epistemic coherentism. This view implies that the justification of any belief depends on that belief's having evidential support from some other belief via coherence relations such as entailment or explanatory relations.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The relationship between opinion, belief, knowledge
- Justification as an essential condition in the classical approach within the traditional view, inspired by Plato and Kant among others: propositional knowledge has three individually necessary and jointly sufficient components: justification, truth, and belief; it is, by definition, justified true belief
- Controversy arises over the meaning of "justification" as well as over the substantive conditions for beliefs being justified in a way appropriate to knowledge
- Justification, language and meaning; the term "justification" belongs to a cluster of normative terms that also includes "rational", "reasonable" and "warranted"
- Foundationalists diverge over the specific conditions for non- inferential justification. Some identify non- inferential justification with self-justification. Others propose that non- inferential justification resides in evidential support from the non-conceptual content of non-belief psychological states: for example, perception, sensation, or memory
- Contemporary foundationalists typically separate claims to non- inferential, foundational justification from claims to certainty. They typically settle for a modest foundationalism implying that foundational beliefs need not be indubitable or infallible. This contrasts with the radical foundationalism often attributed to Descartes
- A contemporary version of epistemic coherentism states that evidential coherence relations among beliefs are typically explanatory relations
- A discussion on different theories of truth: coherence, correspondence and pragmatism
- Influential types of skepticism: knowledge-skepticism and justification-skepticism. Unrestricted knowledge-skepticism states that no one knows anything, whereas unrestricted justification-skepticism offers the more extreme view that no one is ever justified in believing anything
- The challenge to foundationalism that comes from probabilists: belief should not be treated as an all-or-nothing phenomenon, belief comes in degrees
- Another approach is proposed by those who advocate a naturalization of epistemology. They fault foundationalists, coherentists and probabilists for an overemphasis on *a priori* theorizing and a corresponding lack of concern with the practices and findings of science. The most radical naturalized epistemologists recommend that the traditional questions of epistemology be recast into forms that can be answered by science
- The role of whether a causal, conceptual or logical approach to foundational knowledge presupposes other knowledge; for example, possessing the colour blue might presuppose possessing the concept of colour.

6. **Discuss the role of reason in knowing the external world.** **[25]**

The question asks for an explanation and discussion of the central notions of reason and rationality in their application and shaping of the task of knowing the external world. Accordingly, the discussion might take different paths, *eg* related to the conceptions of reason developed in the history of thought or to some specific issues such as mathematics or scientific enquiry. There is a core of rationalist thinking that can be traced through two millennia of recorded philosophical development. The rationalist insists on the distinction between appearance and reality. Reality is revealed to our rational thought, which might also be called "reason" or "intellect". Since appearance is the way reality appears to us, philosophy has two important tasks. The first is to employ rational thought to reveal the truth about "the real". The second is to explain the appearances in terms of "the real". Why do we naturally fasten on apparent truth instead of "the real"? Why must "the real" appear as it does when our rationality is not specially applied to it? A central example of this philosophical attitude is the explanation of sense perception. Our sensing something to be coloured red is treated as depending on something that is ultimately not red – not really red – perhaps particles of light affecting our sense organs.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The primary and customary sense of the term "rationalism" characterizes a philosophical attitude toward knowledge. Knowledge itself is partly characterized both by the subjects, or possessors, of knowledge and by the objects of knowledge, the things to be known
- Traditional versions of rationalism identify the intellect, the mind, or the rational part of the soul as of primary importance in receiving and holding knowledge. The corresponding objects of knowledge are then non-sensory, general, and unchanging or eternal; Plato's epistemology
- The principal theoretical device for explaining the appearance of diversity in what is really simple depends on being able to think the same ideas under different aspects or regarding them in different ways
- Kant's view of the persistence of perceptions, *eg* the colour red
- Reference to Locke's and Hume's pathetic fallacy, *eg* primary and secondary qualities
- Descartes's rationalist epistemology analyses the distinction between knowledge that is transmitted via the senses and knowledge that is innate to the mind
- Contrast with empiricism, which takes sensory information as prior to, and providing data for, explanatory hypotheses. The role of these hypotheses is to classify, simplify, and interrelate the data. There is no sense in which the hypotheses are more true or real than appearances
- Modern science was taken to be the best, if not the only way, to discover the true nature of the world, most significantly expressed in laws of nature in mathematical form
- The role of reason in contemporary epistemology
- Reason in the 20th century philosophical tradition from the early Russell to Carnap. Analysis takes the objects of knowledge to be facts; facts are symbolized or expressed by propositions
- The role of reason in relation to other sources of knowledge in the process of knowing the external world
- Evaluations of the role of reason and different criticisms of reason: from Nietzsche and Freud to Feminist philosophy.

Optional Theme 3: Ethics

7.   To what extent is it justified to equate what is right with the will of God?   [25]

The question invites an evaluation of the degree to which the rightness of an action can be justified by an appeal to the will of God. In essence, the claim is that if God has willed, then it must be right. This can be seen as the Divine Command Theory. It is based on examples of actions from the three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Such a theory both gives reasons for right actions and gives the origin of moral codes. It raises morality above our obligation to a legal system. It raises the issue that laws of the state might be seen as immoral and therefore not followed. Morality might then been seen as personalized as it is difficult to prove the guidance or command of God as a justification for an action. Moral codes might be seen as inherent, as a religious stance would claim we are created by God, and therefore our individual conscience, and feelings of shame and guilt are inspired by God. Feelings of guilt might be explained by transgressing the will of God. A counterposition to this theory might come from the idea that God could commend absurd actions, but of course humans might wrongly interpret the action as absurd. The Euthyphro dilemma might also be explained: the difference being in that an action is right because God commanded it or that God commanded it because it is right. Examiners should be aware that candidates might challenge the fundamental basis of monotheism in favour of polytheism or atheism, *eg* Hinduism or Buddhism, polytheist views that moral values are not defined by supreme beings. Other theories might also be presented to justify right actions other than the will of God, such as self-interest or the general amelioration of the human condition. Divine command theory might imply absolutes in terms of a moral code, however given it is difficult to question the ultimate source this might be questioned.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Divine Command Theory removes the need to define what is good as it is by definition what God commands
- Reliance on the will of God can be used to justify what from other people's perspectives is wrong, *eg* the crusades, acts of terrorism, Jihad
- The stance of conscientious objectors and the relationship between God's will and a legal system
- The validity of the theory if the existence of God is questioned. Without God, would there be no moral codes?
- The degree to which Divine Command Theory can be applied to modern complex communities now heavily driven by science and technology
- The relationship of egoism and consequentialism to Divine Command Theory
- Nietzsche's view of the relationship of religion and morality
- Psychological (Freud), sociological (Durkheim) and ideological (Marx) challenges to the authority of religion and morality.

8. **Evaluate the claim "that morality is what the majority […] happen to like, and immorality is what they dislike".** **[25]**

This question seeks an evaluation as to whether morality can be absolute or if it is dependent upon place, and the condition of the society at the time. It might lead to a discussion as to whether an individual, alone, can define what is right. It allows for an exploration as to validity of ethical relativism, which challenges whether there are fixed absolutes. Therefore it follows that each society can be right or wrong in their belief. It raises issues as to whether one society can judge the values of another. Therefore universality of a moral stance might not be possible. With respect to the majority, determining what is right, it raises the question as to their role, and the corresponding status and role of a minority. Is the minority lost and suppressed or oppressed or would the majority tolerate differences and variants of what is perceived to be right. Morality might become relative. Judgements could not be made about actions, for example during the Inquisition or acts of genocide. Fixed standards and expectation might be brought into question. The issue of how universal standards might be established could be discussed as well as the validity of retroactive judgements.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Can one set of moral standards transcend or supersede all others?
- Are there limits to what is acceptable in pluralistic societies?
- Could one fundamental absolute of "respecting one another" work in all societies?
- The meaninglessness of moral statements if they can become invalid in different social contexts
- The status of minorities if the majority defines what is acceptable and right
- The role of human reason in determining what is moral. Does or can human reasoning vary depending on culture and time?
- If the consequences of an action determine whether it be right, does this allow for a relativist position?
- The consequences of individuals defining their own right of action. Would any common morality exist?
- Theories about ethical language such as emotivism, intuitionism
- Nietzsche's views on morality
- How far does a rejection of reason in favour of passion, and the rise of a creative individual, challenge morality in a fundamental way?
- Sources of morality.

Optional Theme 4: Philosophy and contemporary society

9. **Evaluate the view that a tolerant society should not promote any particular lifestyle as superior.** **[25]**

The question invites answers that address the notion of tolerance based on rights and duties, utility, respect, philosophical equilibrium and advancing diverse ends. Answers are likely to engage with the argument that tolerance means we are expected to accept all views as equally valid along with counterclaims on the line that even the supporters of this view of tolerance posit a notion that is self-refuting. The fact is real differences and disagreements exist between people. Without this there would be no need for tolerance because tolerance presupposes disagreement. It is to be expected that answers will make reference to various lifestyles connected to, among others: the family, gender issues, sexual orientation, race, language, ethnicity, religion; and demonstrating ways in which specific lifestyles might be advanced as being superior. Expect tolerance to be examined not just as a case of rejecting the discrimination of those who believe things which one may claim as false, but also by allowing people to express their beliefs, by letting them live their lives undisturbed in agreement with what may be considered by some as outlandish standards, and by allowing them to convince, to convert others, even though one may think that their views and activities are wrong. Indeed to mandate tolerance is to request changes that affect behaviour and not mainly changes of belief.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- That tolerance is a typical ingredient of a contemporary liberal and pluralistic society
- That tolerance is a socio-political means of maximizing the interests of capitalism
- That tolerance by definition expects freedom from significant interference
- Whether tolerant societies are value-neutral
- Is positive discrimination possible in a value-neutral society?
- The idea that tolerance authorizes and encourages supporting specific lifestyles
- Whether value neutrality is possible within society in view of the link between morality and law
- Diversity in society may be considered to be inherently valued
- That tolerance has limits because some lifestyles will be ruled out whilst others are ruled in
- Mill's and Rawls's views on tolerance and justice.

10. **Evaluate the claim that in contemporary society we possess certain rights which cannot be taken from us.**   **[25]**

The question invites answers to appraise whether in contemporary society we have certain fundamental human or natural rights that are derived from our essential nature as human beings and cannot be denied or yielded. The basis of these rights is that they are moral rights and that they are inalienable and binding regardless of specific legislation, customs or societal institutions. They are rooted in natural law and are accessed through reason and linked to the thriving of individuals and communities. Such rights ought to be recognized and have the authority of morality or justice. It is likely that answers will explore the view that these rights are historically and socially specific. It is also likely that answers will indicate what might be included such as the right to life, liberty and property, the right to pursue happiness, the right to equality, various freedoms of thought and action (*eg* freedom of expression, of worship, *etc*). Answers might argue that moral rights include the moral rights of an individual and the moral rights of any individual in a particular circumstance or role as well as universal human rights. Legal rights might be identified to include the positive rights guaranteed to everyone as enshrined in law and the positive rights, liberties, privileges and immunities enjoyed by specific groups of people (or specific persons) and traditional rights.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Historical efforts to define and legally enshrine human rights such as the French Declaration of the Rights of Man in 1789
- Rights that everyone ought to have are right(s) to uphold human rights as moral rights. These moral rights ought to inform actual law
- The argument of morality involving the issue of whether rights always outweigh other potential goods such as the extent of social integration and moral regulation necessary for social harmony
- The rights that people ought to have and the rights that, as a matter of fact, are denied to some
- The problem of conflicting rights; the status of religious rights in secular societies; the point that we are not at liberty to give up our liberty
- The concept of "just" laws and that human rights ought to inform the creation of actual law
- The view of positive rights arising from positive law
- The concept of human or natural rights has informed the historical creation of actual law in certain nation states so consequently it is problematic to separate positive law from natural law and divine law.

Optional Theme 5: Philosophy of religion

11. **Evaluate the claim that we can only know about God through experience.** [25]

The argument from religious experience uses the existence of religious experience to argue for the existence of God. A religious experience could be taken as direct proof of God, as William James argues, the number and variety of religious experiences point to the conclusion that they should at least be taken seriously as phenomena. Different types of religious experience, such as corporate religious experiences or conversion experiences and their relative merits. The question is open to candidates discussing alternative arguments on the existence of God and evaluating them against arguments from experience. These might include the teleological, ontological or cosmological arguments. There may also be discussion on the relation between the teleological, cosmological arguments and experience because these rely on empirical claims. Alternatively, candidates might discuss whether knowledge of God is possible at all and provide counter-examples for taking religious experiences seriously. Reference might be made to the importance of emotion in the discovery of a supreme being. Also, the role of revelation as a non-empirical experience can be discussed.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Arguments for the existence of God based on religious experience
- Freud's view that religion is an obsessional neurosis
- The historical centrality of religious experience in the founding of religions, *eg* Muhammad's first revelation or the conversion of St Paul
- Luther's reform
- Accounts of religious experience, such as William James's description of religious experience as noetic and ineffable, passive and transient
- Other arguments for the existence of God, *eg* the teleological, cosmological and ontological arguments
- The extent to which other arguments for the existence of God are based on experience
- Whether God can be known through faith rather than experience or arguments
- What form a perceptual experience of God might take and, more generally, whether experience is a good source of knowledge
- Swinburne's distinction between the epistemic and comparative senses of words such as "seems" and "appears"
- Reasons for thinking that we cannot know about God.

12.   Evaluate the claim that religious language is unverifiable.   **[25]**

Verificationists, such as Ayer, claimed that religious language is unverifiable. Candidates might discuss whether this renders religious language meaningless. This view stems from logical positivism, which saw all meaningful statements as either tautologies or grounded in sense-data. Since claims about God such as "God is good" or even "God exists" are not based on sense-data, they are meaningless. The question allows for discussion of other theories about religious language, which render it meaningful. These include Wittgenstein's view that all language is meaningful when seen as a language game. Other counterarguments for example from Aquinas's view that it is analogical, showing that meaningfulness is not about verifiability. Religious language can also be seen as metaphorical or mythological.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- Ayer's claim that religious language is unverifiable and therefore meaningless
- An explanation of the epistemological roots of this claim as part of logical positivism
- How falsificationism can be used to try to solve problems with verificationism and whether it is successful
- Examples of religious language
- Hick's counterargument that some religious claims might be verifiable eschatologically and so are verifiable, *eg* his celestial city analogy
- Whether verifiability is a good measure of meaningfulness
- Problems with verification criteria *ie* whether anything is verifiable, or alternatively, whether religious language can be seen as verifiable
- An analysis of religious language using the terms realism and antirealism, or cognitivism and non-cognitivism.

Optional Theme 6: Philosophy of science

13.   **Evaluate the claim that the use of inductive reasoning in science is problematic.**   **[25]**

The question invites an evaluation of the use of inductive reasoning in science and whether it is problematic. Candidates might explain how inductive reasoning proceeds and present examples of induction. As it is known, induction moves from the particular to the general: as such, it relies upon observation and the role it plays in consolidating human knowledge. Candidates might consider how observation and experience support inductive reasoning and how they contribute to science. Candidates might also mention one or more philosophical views on the strengths and weaknesses of inductive reasoning, *eg* Hume, Popper, Russell. Although induction is not made by reason, Hume observes that we nonetheless perform it and improve from it. The main problem is how to support or justify them and it leads to a dilemma: the principle cannot be proved deductively, for it is contingent, and only necessary truths can be proved deductively. Nor can it be supported inductively–by arguing that it has always or usually been reliable in the past–for that would beg the question by assuming just what is to be proved. Candidates may reflect on the connection between the problems around induction in science as well as its impact on our daily lives.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- A contrast of induction with deduction
- An analysis of Sextus Empiricus's general idea of questioning the validity of any inductive reasoning, mentioning that a universal rule could not be established from an incomplete set of particular observations
- Hume's custom and habit argument and the problem of induction
- The possibility of adding a general statement to an inductive reasoning so as to make it stronger
- The problem of the number of particular observations needed to have a strong induction
- An analysis of Popper's position, *ie* that science does not use induction and that instead, knowledge is created by conjecture and criticism. The main role of observations and experiments in science, he argued, is in attempts to criticize and refute existing theories
- Possible examples like the one about a turkey, fed every morning without fail, who, following the laws of induction, concludes this will continue, but then his throat is cut on Thanksgiving Day
- Quine's proposal of a metaphysical claim that only predicates that identity of a "natural kind" (a real property of real things) can be legitimately used in a scientific hypothesis
- Similarly, Bhaskar's argument: we know that all emeralds are green, not because we have only ever seen green emeralds, but because the chemical make-up of emeralds insists that they must be green. If we were to change that structure, they would not be green.

14.   To what extent is an explanation a description of the world?   **[25]**

Within the philosophy of science there have been several ideas about what an explanation is. Traditionally, the concept of explanation in philosophy of science has often been related to the concept of causation: to explain scientifically a phenomenon means to identify the causes. Intended as a possible description of the world, candidates might evaluate whether a causal explanation implies a cognitive status or it is independent from human knowledge. Candidates might analyse whether explanations involve objectivity or whether they stem from a framework of beliefs. Candidates might take into account the weight of the theory-laden observation, *ie* the role that beliefs play in structuring scientific explanations. Also, candidates might focus on the role that observation itself plays in searching for a possible explanation. Some responses might also consider whether scientific explanations call for causal relations or other views are possible: is explanation opposite to understanding or is it possible to combine them? *Eg* Friedman's model tries to unify causal relation and deductive reasoning. Another possible path might pinpoint the meaning and role of scientific laws and whether they can be intended to be descriptions of the world or the understanding of certain processes; moreover, candidates might evaluate whether scientific laws are the attempt to grasp universal and immutable aspects of the world or are subject to change and relative to human and historical knowledge.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- An analysis of Hempel's epistemic theory of explanation that deals only in logical form, making no mention of any actual physical connection between the phenomenon to be explained and the facts purported to explain it
- An analysis of Salmon's realist account emphasizes that real processes and entities are conceptually necessary for understanding exactly why an explanation works
- An analysis of some philosophers or positions that have favoured a theory of explanation grounded in the way people actually perform explanation
- Theory data-ladenness as a possible issue in producing/elaborating on explanations
- A possible distinction between truth and explanatory power (or between the literal truth of a theory and its power to explain observable phenomena)
- An analysis of a realist interpretation, *ie* the truth and explanatory power of a theory are matters of the correspondence of language with an external reality
- An analysis of an epistemic interpretation, *ie* an explanation expresses only the power of a theory to order our experience
- Duhem's claim that "to explain is to strip the reality of the appearances covering it like a veil, in order to see the bare reality itself"
- Friedman's unifying theory, *ie* explanation as understanding
- Hempel's claim that there is a need to gain predictive control over future experiences, and that the value of a scientific theory is to be measured in terms of its capacity to produce this result.

Optional Theme 7: Political philosophy

15. **To what extent do our political obligations arise from a social contract?** [25]

The question invites answers that should clarify the notion of a social contract and also recognize that the question is plural and therefore might result in reference to different theories. It is expected that answers will focus on the philosophical concept employed to explain and justify the relationship between an individual's responsibilities and that of the state. It is likely that answers may attempt to ground the legitimacy of the state and the justness of its actions in the consent of the governed as reflected in the act of voting. Thus, attempting to demonstrate that the legitimate social and political obligations of individuals are rooted in a voluntary act of consent. Answers may explore the responsibilities rational individuals would consent to if they were to experience a "society" free from political and social obligation. Some answers may question the concept itself, *ie* all versions of contract theory. They may also question whether contracts are historical facts or philosophical fictions. The former is surely mythical and would scarcely be binding on those not involved. The latter may be a useful device for considering the nature and extent of political obligation, legitimacy and justice *etc*, as well as offering a rationale for rebellion, dissent and disobedience. Some alternatives to the origins of political obligations might be religion, human rights, morality, customs and the greater good.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The condition of mankind in a "state of nature" (Hobbes, Locke)
- The nature and extent of an individual's responsibilities following the contract
- The contract we make is with each other and requires us to accept the sovereign power chosen by the majority (Hobbes)
- The more positive view of humanity where man is essentially good but may have been corrupted by a corrupt society (Rousseau)
- A contract that is rooted in natural law (Locke)
- Modern social contracts tend to locate the recognition of obligation in tacit, rather than actual, consent
- The notion of tacit consent is not pragmatic and does not provide any moral basis for political obligation. However, it might be argued that the notion has been a useful philosophical fiction in determining the extent of obligation and grounding the right to dissent from authority
- The argument that we would prioritize personal and political liberty and seek to minimize socio-economic inequality (Rawls)
- Nozick's concept of free riders
- Weber's view on different sources of power
- The notion of obligations grounded in voting and a promise of obedience to whichever government is elected raises numerous issues such as whether such a weak act obliges us to obey or whether non-voters are similarly obligated.

16. Evaluate the view that the aim of distributive justice is compatible with defending individual freedoms and rights. **[25]**

The question invites answers that might address the notion of distributive justice necessitating a consideration of the ethical implications of the manner or way in which political goods or benefits are distributed. This might include the distribution of property but might also be taken to include the distribution of further desirable goods, for example, opportunity, security, *etc*. There are a range of various and contending views of what a just distribution of political goods might be grounded upon, for example, universal human rights, human wants, needs, determinations and/or merits. Answers might engage with the traditional liberal approach of including property within an individual's range of rights that are deemed protected. Thus accepting that the value of liberty provides us with a concept of distributive justice that might be considered compatible with capitalism and, as a consequence, inequality that could be thought of as being less egalitarian. It is also likely that answers might reference the alternative opinion that unchecked and growing levels of inequality are damaging to liberty because, for example, this could result in restricting opportunity and choice. Therefore, a just distribution of goods might imply an element of egalitarianism so needing involvement by the state to regulate markets and protect liberty and justice.

In addressing these philosophical issues candidates might explore:
- The view that our natural rights include property rights (Locke)
- Libertarianism may be defended along the line advocated by Nozick
- Various utilitarian arguments that range from supporting the free market as being the most efficient means of producing and distributing goods and thus maximizing happiness to utilitarian reasons for state intervention to diminish the impact of markets on inequality
- The free market is wasteful and damaging (socialism)
- The focus on welfare by liberals that argue for individual and political liberty along with the improvement of socio-economic inequality (Rawls)
- Sen's and Nussbaum's notion of individual freedom and rights
- Distributive justice based on "desert" and the effort of the industrious provides a moral basis for property rights and thus the argument that neither the "state" nor any "individual" has a right to hinder this
- Distributive justice requires some restrictions on individual freedoms because inequality has a negative impact on liberty in that it allows long-term advantages to some at the expense of others leading to a lack of opportunity and even discrimination
- The values of diverse political philosophies in relation to justice, rights and freedom.