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Philosophy
Higher level and standard level
Paper 2

11 May 2026

Zone A morning | **Zone B** morning | **Zone C** morning

1 hour

Instructions to students

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer both parts of one question.
- A clean copy of the prescribed text is required for this paper.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Answer **both** parts (a) and (b) of **one** question. Each question is worth [25 marks].

Alfred Jules Ayer: *Language, Truth and Logic*

1. (a) Explain Ayer's approach to the outstanding philosophical disputes. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer's approach to the outstanding philosophical disputes. [15]
2. (a) Explain Ayer's statement that "it is impossible to find a criterion for determining the validity of ethical judgements". [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer's statement that "it is impossible to find a criterion for determining the validity of ethical judgements". [15]

Simone de Beauvoir: *The Second Sex*, Vol. 1 part 1, Vol. 2 part 1 and Vol. 2 part 4

3. (a) Explain the implications of Simone de Beauvoir's conception of woman as the Other for the understanding of gender relations. [10]
(b) Evaluate the implications of Simone de Beauvoir's conception of woman as the Other for the understanding of gender relations. [15]
4. (a) Explain Simone de Beauvoir's critique of the biological, psychoanalytic and historical perspectives on women's inferiority. [10]
(b) Evaluate Simone de Beauvoir's critique of the biological, psychoanalytic and historical perspectives on women's inferiority. [15]

Confucius: *The Analects*

5. (a) Explain the importance of the observance of ritual propriety (*li*) for Confucian ethics. [10]
(b) Evaluate the importance of the observance of ritual propriety (*li*) for Confucian ethics. [15]
6. (a) Explain how a Confucian ruler should govern. [10]
(b) Evaluate how a Confucian ruler should govern. [15]

René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

7. (a) Explain Descartes's arguments for questioning the reliability of the senses. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes's arguments for questioning the reliability of the senses. [15]
8. (a) Explain Descartes's belief that any act of judgement involves both the intellect and the will. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes's belief that any act of judgement involves both the intellect and the will. [15]

Frantz Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks*

9. (a) Explain Fanon's view that assimilating the French language makes the Black Antillean closer to becoming a true human being. [10]
(b) Evaluate Fanon's view that assimilating the French language makes the Black Antillean closer to becoming a true human being. [15]
10. (a) Explain Fanon's treatment of the so-called dependency complex of the colonized. [10]
(b) Evaluate Fanon's treatment of the so-called dependency complex of the colonized. [15]

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty*

11. (a) Explain Mill's claim that the harm principle can function as the sole principle capable of protecting an individual's liberty in the face of any form of interference. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill's claim that the harm principle can function as the sole principle capable of protecting an individual's liberty in the face of any form of interference. [15]
12. (a) Explain Mill's view that one of the strongest arguments against the interference of the public in purely personal conduct is that the public can interfere wrongly. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill's view that one of the strongest arguments against the interference of the public in purely personal conduct is that the public can interfere wrongly. [15]

Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals*

13. (a) Explain Nietzsche's account of punishment. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nietzsche's account of punishment. [15]
14. (a) Explain Nietzsche's views about the scientific conscience. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nietzsche's views about the scientific conscience. [15]

Martha C. Nussbaum: *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*

15. (a) Explain Nussbaum's claim that Rawls's theory presents difficulties from the point of view of the Capabilities Approach. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nussbaum's claim that Rawls's theory presents difficulties from the point of view of the Capabilities Approach. [15]
16. (a) Explain Nussbaum's claim that "the 'imperialism' objection to human rights falls flat". [10]
(b) Evaluate Nussbaum's claim that "the 'imperialism' objection to human rights falls flat". [15]

José Ortega y Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses*

17. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset's claim that "the mass is the assemblage of persons not specially qualified". [10]
(b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset's claim that "the mass is the assemblage of persons not specially qualified". [15]
18. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset's claim that "human society is such in the measure that it is aristocratic and ceases to be such when it ceases to be aristocratic". [10]
(b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset's claim that "human society is such in the measure that it is aristocratic and ceases to be such when it ceases to be aristocratic". [15]

Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV–IX

19. (a) Explain Socrates’s claim that “in establishing our city, we are not looking to make any one group in it outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so, as far as possible”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Socrates’s claim that “in establishing our city, we are not looking to make any one group in it outstandingly happy, but to make the whole city so, as far as possible”. [15]
20. (a) Explain Socrates’s statement that “What gives truth to the things known and the power to know to the knower is the Form of the Good”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Socrates’s statement that “What gives truth to the things known and the power to know to the knower is the Form of the Good”. [15]

Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity*

21. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that “modern freedom was won by our breaking loose from older moral horizons”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that “modern freedom was won by our breaking loose from older moral horizons”. [15]
22. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that “the primacy of instrumental reason is also evident in the prestige and aura that surround technology”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that “the primacy of instrumental reason is also evident in the prestige and aura that surround technology”. [15]

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*

23. (a) Explain how the concept of non-action (*wu wei*) contributes to harmonious living. [10]
- (b) Evaluate how the concept of non-action (*wu wei*) contributes to harmonious living. [15]
24. (a) Explain the role of naming in the *Tao Te Ching*. [10]
- (b) Evaluate the role of naming in the *Tao Te Ching*. [15]
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