

Markscheme

May 2026

Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 2

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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 students 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 4 for part A responses, and page 5 for part B responses.

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 students *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 students. 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.
- Students 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 students will use material effectively that is *not* mentioned in the markscheme
- Examiners should be aware of the command terms for Philosophy as published in the Philosophy subject guide when assessing responses
- In markschemes for Paper 2 there is a greater requirement for specific content as the Paper requires the study of a text by the students and the questions set will derive from that text. The markscheme will show what is relevant for both part A and part B answers. In part B responses, students may select other material they deem as relevant
- Responses for part A and part B should be assessed using the distinct assessment markbands.

Note to examiners

Students at both Higher Level and Standard Level answer **one** question on the prescribed texts. Each question consists of two parts, and students must answer both parts of the question (a and b).

Paper 2 part A markbands

This task requires students to answer a two-part question on the prescribed text that they have studied in-depth in class. Students are presented with a choice of two questions per text and must answer both part A and part B of their selected question. For this task, students are permitted to have access to a clean/non-annotated copy of the prescribed text throughout the examination. It is expected that students will make explicit references to this text in their responses.

Part A question requires students to explain a specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text. It is expected that students will include explicit references to the text to support their explanation.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–2	• Little understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is not used, or is consistently used inappropriately. • The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is minimal. Points made are superficial and frequently unclear. There are few, if any, references to the text.
3–4	• A basic understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, but often inappropriately. • The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is basic and underdeveloped. Points are often imprecise or vague, and it is often unclear what the response is trying to convey. There are occasional references to the text.
5–6	• Some understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. • There is a satisfactory explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text, although the explanation lacks clarity and development in places. Relevant points are made but lack accuracy and detail. Specific references to the text are made, although these are sometimes ineffective.
7–8	• Good understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. Philosophical vocabulary is used, mostly appropriately. • The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is clear, but is in need of further development. Points made are relevant and accurate but lack detail. There are specific references to the text.
9–10	• Very good understanding of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. There is accurate and precise use of philosophical vocabulary. • The explanation of the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is clear and well developed. Points are relevant, accurate and detailed. There are specific and effective references to the text.

Paper 2 part B markbands

Part B requires students to undertake a critical discussion of a specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text. As part A and part B of each question are based on the same specified concept, issue or argument from the prescribed text, students are not required to repeat explanatory material from their part A response.

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1–3	• Little understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated. • Philosophical vocabulary is not used or is consistently used inappropriately. Points are frequently inaccurate and unclear. There are few, if any, references to the text. • The response is descriptive. Any analysis present is superficial or incoherent. Examples are not included or are irrelevant. There is little or no discussion of different points of view. Where a conclusion is included, this is very superficial or is not consistent with the rest of the response.
4–6	• A basic understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, but often inappropriately. Points are frequently imprecise or vague, and it is often unclear what the response is trying to convey. There are occasional references to the text. • There is limited analysis present and overall the response is more descriptive than analytical. Examples are included but are ineffective. There is limited discussion of different points of view. A simplistic conclusion is included.
7–9	• Some understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the prescribed text is demonstrated. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, sometimes appropriately. Relevant points are made but lack accuracy and development. Specific references to the text are made, although these are sometimes ineffective. • The response contains analysis, although this analysis lacks development. Examples are included. There is some discussion of different points of view. A conclusion is included.
10–12	• Good understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. • Philosophical vocabulary is used, mostly appropriately. Points made are relevant and accurate but lack detail. There are specific references to the text. • The response contains critical analysis, although this analysis lacks development. Examples are used to support the discussion. There is discussion of different points of view. The response argues to a conclusion that is consistent with the arguments presented.
13–15	• Very good understanding of and critical engagement with the specified concept/issue/argument from the text is demonstrated. • There is accurate and precise use of philosophical vocabulary. Points are relevant, accurate and detailed. There are specific and effective references to the text. • The response contains well-developed critical analysis. Relevant examples are used to support the discussion. There is critical discussion of different points of view. The response argues to a reasoned and clearly stated conclusion that is consistent with the arguments presented.

Alfred Jules Ayer: *Language, Truth and Logic*

1. (a) **Explain Ayer's statement that "there is no logical ground for antagonism between religion and natural science".** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Ayer's statement that "there is no logical ground for antagonism between religion and natural science".** [15]

Ayer's statement is placed in the context of his critique of theology, as developed centrally in chapter 6, and provides an opportunity to explain and discuss both the specific content of the statement and central aspects of his analysis of natural science and religion. In essence, the argument is: "As far as the question of truth or falsehood is concerned, there is no opposition between the natural scientist and the theist who believes in a transcendent god. For since the religious utterances of the theist are not genuine propositions at all, they cannot stand in any logical relation to the propositions of science" (122). One position that has been taken as a counterargument is that religion and science, as worldviews that attempt to maintain a unified worldview, are logically opposed, since to affirm the truth of one would imply the falsity of the other.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The critique of metaphysics excludes the possibility of religious knowledge
- Criticism of metaphysics and the impossibility of proving the transcendence of God
- The proof of God's existence as a deductive argument
- Existence not being a predicate, as explored in Hume, Kant, Russell
- Comparisons between religion and morality: "We offer the theist the same comfort as we gave to the moralist. His assertions cannot possibly be valid, but they cannot be invalid either" (121)
- The "strong anthropic principle" as a hypothesis supporting the existence of a possible intelligent source for the universe
- The attitude of some physicists to be sympathetic to religion as a point in favour of Ayer's position, e.g. Newton

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Ayer seeks to answer only those questions that arise from discussing the possibility of religious knowledge
- If the existence of God were probable, then the proposition that he exists would be an empirical hypothesis
- The extent to which "all utterances about the nature of God are nonsensical" (121)
- The path taken by Kant in using moral arguments to establish the existence of a transcendent God
- The idea that God's existence means no more than a regularity of phenomena in nature
- Comparison of Ayer's view of religious claims with those of atheists or agnostics
- Traditional and contemporary characterizations of and conflicts between science and religion
- The 'strong anthropic principle' as a hypothesis that supports the existence of a possible intelligent source for the universe.

2. (a) Explain Ayer's view of monism. [10]

(b) Evaluate Ayer's view of monism. [15]

The core of Ayer's position in this dispute is "that the assertion that Reality is One, which it is characteristic of a monist to make and a pluralist to controvert, is nonsensical, since no empirical situation could have any bearing on its truth" (161). According to monism, everything in the world is related to everything else in some way. Furthermore, to state any fact about a thing is to state every fact about it, and that this is to state every fact about everything. This is identical to saying that any true proposition can be deduced from any other, from which it follows that any two true propositions are equivalent. This leads monists, who use the words "truth" and "reality" interchangeably, to make the metaphysical claim that reality is one. Since Ayer's analysis of this dispute consists mainly in identifying the logical flaws of monism, answers may then develop arguments in favour of Ayer's critique of monism or, against it, explore reasons or positions in favour of monism.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Monism holds that all the properties of a thing, including all its relational properties, are constitutive of its nature
- Monism as an illustration of the danger of expressing linguistic propositions in factual terminology
- The metaphysical claim that reality is one as a tautology, since monism regards otherness as a relation
- Monists accept that the sentences people use to express propositions they believe to be true are not all equivalent
- Causality as non-logical relation.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Monism may have logical flaws. But they do not fully explain this position
- Parmenides and his legacy
- There are many forms of monism. To what extent can Ayer's critique apply to all or most of them?
- The extent to which there is a direct language-world correspondence for monism
- "Truth" as an ontological predicate
- Scientific and religious theories in relation to monism, Eastern perspectives
- Justified references to methodological or moral issues
- Pluralisms and the variety of dimensions related to pluralism in the present reflection, including: logical, scientific, moral.

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

3. (a) **Explain Simone de Beauvoir’s description of the process of becoming a woman. [10]**
 (b) **Evaluate Simone de Beauvoir’s description of the process of becoming a woman. [15]**

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir famously declares, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman,” arguing that female identity is not biologically determined but is constructed through social and cultural forces. De Beauvoir critiques the ways that society shapes and conditions women into passive, subordinate roles, highlighting how education, social norms, and expectations confine women to a limited sphere. This process, she argues, strips women of their agency and reduces them to “the Other,” defined in relation to men. De Beauvoir’s existentialist philosophy emphasizes that women must transcend these societal limitations to achieve freedom and subjectivity.

However, feminist critics like Judith Butler and Luce Irigaray offer alternative views on gender, suggesting that De Beauvoir’s existentialist framework still operates within male-dominated discourse and overlooks the fluidity of gender and the complexities of sexual difference. An essentialist view on gender holds that biological and inherent characteristics determine one’s gender identity, with men and women possessing fixed, natural traits that define their roles and behaviours. This perspective asserts that gender differences are rooted in biology and are universal, unchanging across cultures and history.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- De Beauvoir’s assertion that gender is not a natural or biological fact but a social construct. From birth, society imposes expectations, roles, and behaviours on women, confining them to subordinate roles in both the private and public spheres.
- How women are positioned as “the Other” in relation to men, who are considered the universal subject. Women are seen as passive, secondary beings defined through their relation to men. This “othering” process denies women agency and individuality, reinforcing their subordination.
- De Beauvoir’s emphasis on the role of culture, family, and education in conditioning girls to become women who conform to traditional gender roles.
- How De Beauvoir borrows on the existentialist concepts of immanence and transcendence to explain the process of becoming a woman. Men are encouraged to transcend their circumstances and assert their freedom, while women are confined to immanence—remaining within the domestic sphere and existing for others rather than for themselves.
- De Beauvoir’s description of how societal roles and stereotypes about femininity (such as being nurturing, emotional, or weak) are imposed on women, shaping their identity.
- How despite the societal constraints placed on women, De Beauvoir argues that women can reclaim their subjectivity and transcend the roles imposed on them. Through existential freedom, women can challenge and reject the limitations of their socially constructed identity, asserting their agency in the process of self-definition.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Judith Butler critiques De Beauvoir’s idea of “becoming” a woman, arguing that De Beauvoir assumes an underlying subject that becomes gendered. Butler contends that gender is not something one ‘becomes’, but something one ‘performs’.
- Luce Irigaray critiques De Beauvoir for defining women in opposition to men, reinforcing binary gender structures. Irigaray argues that De Beauvoir’s framework fails to recognize women’s own unique subjectivity and instead relies on male norms.
- Crenshaw’s theory of intersectionality suggests that De Beauvoir’s analysis of the social construction of gender is incomplete because it does not account for race and class. She argues that gender identity cannot be understood in isolation, as women’s experiences are shaped by multiple, intersecting social categories.
- Foucault’s work on power and identity formation can be used to critique De Beauvoir’s understanding of the role of society. He argues that identity is produced through discourses of power, not just imposed by societal norms. In this view, gender identity is shaped by a complex network of social institutions, discourses, and practices, not simply through societal conditioning.

- Some critics argue that De Beauvoir's dismissal of biological differences as irrelevant to female identity overlooks the ways in which biological experiences (such as menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause) can shape women's lives. While rejecting biological determinism, feminist scholars like Elizabeth Grosz emphasize the importance of acknowledging embodied experiences without reinforcing essentialism.
- Postcolonial feminists critique De Beauvoir's Eurocentric view of gender, arguing that her analysis of the process of becoming a woman fails to account for the diverse experiences of women across different cultures.
- An essentialist view on gender holds that biological and inherent characteristics determine one's gender identity, with men and women possessing fixed, natural traits that define their roles and behaviours. This perspective asserts that gender differences are rooted in biology and are universal, unchanging across cultures and history.

4. (a) **Explain the significance of the concept of “immanence” in Simone de Beauvoir’s analysis of a woman’s development.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the significance of the concept of “immanence” in Simone de Beauvoir’s analysis of a woman’s development.** [15]

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir uses the concept of ‘immanence’ to describe the confined, passive existence imposed on women by patriarchal society. According to De Beauvoir, women are restricted to roles of domesticity and reproduction, trapped in an internal, static state of being, as opposed to men, who are encouraged to embrace ‘transcendence’, meaning active engagement in the world, creativity, and freedom. She says “when man makes of woman the *Other*, he may, then expect her to manifest deep-seated tendencies towards complicity. Thus, woman may fail to lay claim to the status of subject because she lacks definite resources, because she feels the necessary bond that ties her to man regardless of reciprocity” (p.20).

Immanence, for De Beauvoir, signifies the social structures and expectations that limit women’s potential for self-determination and autonomy, reducing them to mere objects in the male gaze. This concept is central to De Beauvoir’s existential feminist critique, as it reveals how patriarchal systems prevent women from achieving their full humanity.

However, some feminist thinkers, such as Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler, challenge or nuance De Beauvoir’s duality of immanence and transcendence, offering alternative views on women’s development and agency.

On the other hand, from an essentialist perspective, the traditional roles assigned to women—such as caregiving and motherhood—are seen as natural expressions of women’s biological and inherent traits. Essentialists argue that immanence reflects women’s “natural” inclinations, and that the traditional division of labour supports societal harmony by aligning gender roles with innate differences between men and women.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- De Beauvoir’s contrast between women’s immanence, a state of passivity and confinement, with men’s transcendence, which involves freedom, action, and self-determination. She argues that societal structures force women into immanence, preventing them from pursuing personal growth and autonomy.
- Patriarchal systems maintain women in a state of immanence by relegating them to domestic and reproductive roles. De Beauvoir explains that these roles are seen as natural for women, reinforcing their status as secondary to men and limiting their potential to transcend these imposed boundaries.
- De Beauvoir claims, drawing from existentialist philosophy, that women like men, are capable of transcendence. Or the ability to shape their own lives. However, social norms and expectations force women to internalize immanence, hindering their capacity for self-realization and freedom.
- How immanence is linked to De Beauvoir’s idea of woman as the “Other.” Women are defined in relation to men and are denied their own subjectivity.
- The concept of immanence which signifies the broader social denial of women’s agency. Women are reduced to objects and treated as instruments of male desire, trapped in repetitive and uncreative roles that prevent them from exercising autonomy and self-determination.
- De Beauvoir’s stance that social conditioning from birth trains women to accept and internalize immanence. Girls are taught to prioritize beauty, passivity, and dependency, confining them to roles that limit their ability to assert their freedom and individuality.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Irigaray argues that De Beauvoir’s emphasis on transcending immanence may still operate within a male-dominated framework. She suggests that De Beauvoir’s analysis is rooted in a male concept of freedom and overlooks the possibility of revaluing immanence as a source of feminine creativity and difference.

- How Butler critiques the existentialist framework underlying De Beauvoir's notion of immanence. She argues that gender is not something fixed but performative, constructed through repeated actions. Thus, the static binary between immanence and transcendence may oversimplify the fluidity of gender roles.
- Postmodern feminist thinkers challenge the idea that immanence is inherently oppressive. They argue that De Beauvoir's binary distinction between immanence and transcendence fails to account for diverse ways women can experience freedom within immanence, especially in non-Western cultures.
- Crenshaw's intersectional approach highlights that De Beauvoir's analysis does not account for how race and class shape women's experiences of immanence. This approach critiques the universal application of immanence to all women, arguing that women of colour and working-class women face different forms of oppression that intersect with gender.
- While De Beauvoir's analysis of immanence remains influential, some contemporary feminists argue that her framework needs to be expanded. For example, ecofeminists emphasize that immanence can be revalued positively, connecting women's roles in nature and the home with sustainability and care ethics.
- How Marxist feminists critique De Beauvoir's existentialist approach for ignoring the material conditions that underpin women's immanence.
- How De Beauvoir's analysis of immanence suggests that social institutions, such as the family, education, and religion, play a key role in reinforcing women's subordinate status.
- Essentialists arguments that immanence reflects women's "natural" inclinations, and that the traditional division of labour supports societal harmony by aligning gender roles with innate differences between men and women.

Confucius: *The Analects*

5. (a) Explain the importance that Confucius gives to learning. [10]

(b) Evaluate the importance that Confucius gives to learning. [15]

At the very beginning of the *Analects*, Confucius states that “to learn and (...) to repeat what has learnt, is that not a pleasure” (1 :1). Then, in chapter 17 section 1 (17:1) and chapter 2 section 11 (2:11). Here Confucius raises learning above wisdom, because wisdom can obscure the principle that guides action. Similarly, raising faithfulness above learning will cover over heartlessness. An awareness of the past and past actions gives creditability to the teacher. Therefore, learning and education is central to stability and harmony in society. Learning creates social mobility as society, for Confucius, is built on meritocracy. The pursuit of learning both formalized and informal, and the associated self-discipline increases inner and outer harmony. The acts of learning ought to be based upon discussion, reflection and imitation. Learning is not limited to a particular period of life but should be pursued throughout one’s life – a lifelong learner. To maximize learning the psychology of the student ought to be understood. The chief goal of life is to become educated and live a moral life.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Required attitudes for learning – persistence, modesty and honesty
- How education is organized to allow a broad access to learning
- Confucian learning methodology linked to teaching
- The role of teacher
- The need for enjoyment in and through learning
- The role of learning and education in general to achieve social mobility
- The role of education in achieving harmony

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The degree to which education and indoctrination can be distinguished
- The extent to which critical thinking and discussion can be achieved when filial piety applies – the definition and critical relationship between teacher and student
- Parallels between Socratic methodology and Plato’s organization for the education of the philosopher ruler, and Confucian educational philosophy
- Whether social mobility is achieved through a wide and accessible education system
- The relationship between social harmony and learning; Confucius believed that a good society would be achieved through education.
- The possibility that learning is understanding and applying past practice and not simply abstract contemplation (15;30)
- The significance of the claim that “Knowing you know nothing is the beginning of wisdom”
- Whether the Confucian approach to learning is reflective of modern western approaches to education, particularly constructionist approaches

6. (a) Explain the Confucian idea of serving others. [10]

(b) Evaluate the Confucian idea of serving others. [15]

Confucius argued that humans have a key duty, that is serve one's fellow humans. - "you devote yourself earnestly to one's duty to humanity" (6:20). This can first be achieved by self-knowledge, since self-understanding brings an appreciation of how to help others. The acts of serving have the objective of establishing harmonious relationships within society. By following the model of humaneness (*ren*), individuals live a self-less life and can stay within the mandate of heaven. This altruistic behaviour can be developed through education, self-effort and self-reflection. It is the practice of the Silver Rule (Do not do to others what you would not like them to do to you) within the structure created by ritual (*li*) therefore making goodness and benevolence, i.e., humaneness (*ren*).

Students might also discuss servitude as a hierarchical relationship, which implies the development of *ren* enacted by those in power and filial piety (*xiao*) enacted by those in subordinate roles.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The role of education in achieve self-knowledge which is essential to serve other
- Virtue (*de*) as a way of cultivating the goodness of human nature
- The Silver Rule and its social implications
- How the mandate of heaven is important for self-understanding
- The role of *ren* in relationships with others
- The role of *li* as an internal social moderator (*li* meaning ritual, as well as a moral code of behaviour)
- The role and nature of exemplary persons (*junzi*) as models for an altruistic person

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether service to others might be define as much as justice for others- caring in a very broad sense and fulfilling an aspect of *ren*
- Whether the Confucian view of human nature is too positive; all humans are basically good – a Hobbesian view of basic human behaviour might be used as a contrast
- Are there other routes to a harmonious society other than a duty to serve?
- Spiritual aspects to serving others-parallels to religious traditions like Christianity and Islam, both advocating self-less altruistic behaviour but in a spiritual context
- The degree to which morality can be based on interpersonal relationships
- Is the basic principle of Confucius's system utilitarian?
- Does the negation of the Golden Rule by Confucius "do not do unto other ..." allow for a lessening of active altruism – is impartial benevolence (*ren*) reduced to general indifference in moral behaviour.
- The effect of servitude on human relations: issues related to egalitarianism, equality and rights

René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

7. (a) Explain Descartes’s argument that a thinking thing is unextended. [10]

(b) Evaluate Descartes’s argument that a thinking thing is unextended. [15]

The distinction between the mind and the body is foundational to Descartes’s dualistic theory. Descartes argues that the essence of the mind is thought, whereas the essence of the body is extension. This leads him to the conclusion that the mind, as a thinking thing, is unextended. In the Third Meditation, Descartes states, “admittedly I conceive of myself as a thing that thinks and is not extended,” reinforcing the idea that thought is immaterial and does not occupy space, unlike physical objects. Descartes further contrasts the clarity of our understanding of the mind with that of corporeal things. In the Fourth Meditation, he asserts that the idea of the thinking self “is much more distinct than the idea of any corporeal thing”, suggesting that the mind is more clearly understood than material substances, whose existence can be doubted. Evaluating Descartes’s argument raises questions about how an unextended mind can interact with an extended body, often referred to as the mind-body interaction problem. Critics argue that Descartes’s dualism leaves unexplained how a non-physical mind could influence the physical world, a critique that remains central to discussions of his philosophy. Nonetheless, Descartes’s claim that the mind is unextended offers a distinct way to understand consciousness as separate from the material realm.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- How Descartes’s method of doubt leads to the conclusion that thought is the essence of the mind.
- Descartes’s argument that thought does not occupy physical space and is therefore unextended.
- The contrast between physical bodies which can be divided and the mind which cannot.
- Descartes’s argument that while we can doubt the existence of the body we cannot doubt the existence of the thinking self.
- The implications of Descartes’s claim that the mind is more easily known than the body and how this supports his argument for the mind as unextended.
- The relationship between thought and extension and how Descartes views these as mutually exclusive.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Critics such as Elisabeth of Bohemia who challenge Descartes on how the immaterial mind interacts with the physical body.
- The challenge from materialist philosophers who argue that thought may be a function of the brain which is extended.
- Spinoza’s monism which rejects the separation of mind and body and views them as two aspects of the same substance.
- The argument that Descartes’s claim of a non-extended mind lacks empirical evidence.
- The modern neuroscience perspective which suggests that mental processes are tied to physical brain activity.
- Hume’s scepticism about the nature of the self and whether we can even conceive of a non-extended thinking thing.
- The challenge of understanding emotions and bodily sensations within Descartes’s framework of a non-extended mind.
- The role of physical trauma and its effects on thought which seem to suggest that thought is linked to the extended brain

8. (a) **Explain Descartes’s argument that innate ideas allow us to comprehend the essence of matter without sensory perception.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Descartes’s argument that innate ideas allow us to comprehend the essence of matter without sensory perception.** [15]

Descartes argues that innate ideas allow us to comprehend the essence of matter without relying on sensory perception. In his *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Descartes introduces the concept of clear and distinct ideas as the foundation of knowledge, stating, “whatever I perceive very clearly and distinctly is true.” He contends that certain ideas, such as the essence of matter, are innate within the intellect and are not derived from sensory experience. For Descartes, the essence of matter is understood as extension, which is grasped through intellectual reasoning. He contrasts this with false or confused ideas derived from sensory perception, and emphasizes the distinction between them and innate ideas. Descartes asserts that “there is a great difference between this kind of false supposition and the true ideas which are innate in me, of which the first and most important is the idea of God.” In his view, these innate ideas, including the concept of extension, provide a more reliable understanding of reality than the deceptive information gathered through sensory experience. When assessing Descartes’s argument, critics frequently challenge whether innate ideas by themselves can fully explain the essence of matter. Many suggest that sensory experience is vital in forming our comprehension of the physical world, casting doubt on the adequacy of innate ideas alone for understanding material reality.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Descartes’s claim that innate ideas are fundamental to knowledge.
- The concept of clear and distinct ideas as a foundation for understanding reality.
- Descartes’s assertion that the essence of matter is understood as extension.
- The argument that innate ideas are not derived from sensory experience.
- Descartes’s use of intellectual reasoning to grasp the essence of matter.
- The contrast between the certainty of innate ideas and the doubt surrounding sensory perceptions.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Locke’s empiricist argument that all knowledge comes from sensory experience.
- Hume’s scepticism about the existence of innate ideas and their origins.
- The tension between Descartes’s rejection of sensory experience and the advancements in empirical science, which depend heavily on observation and experimentation, e.g. Francis Bacon.
- The idea that sensory input provides essential data about the physical properties of matter.
- The role of language and social conditioning in shaping our understanding of matter, questioning whether innate ideas are culturally universal or shaped by external factors, e.g. Wittgenstein.
- The critique from phenomenology regarding the embodied nature of experience, suggesting that our comprehension of matter is inherently tied to sensory engagement with the world, e.g. Merleau-Ponty.
- Kant’s critique of pure reason and his assertion that both senses and intellect are necessary.
- The influence of contemporary cognitive science, which suggests that perception and understanding of matter are largely dependent on sensory input and neural processes, e.g. Antonio Damasio.

Frantz Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks*

9. (a) **Explain Fanon's view that interracial sexual relations between a man of colour and a White woman lead to a form of destruction for the Black person.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Fanon's view that interracial sexual relations between a man of colour and a White woman lead to a form of destruction for the Black person.** [15]

In Chapter Three, *The Man of Color and the White Woman*, Fanon deals with interracial sexual activity and desire from the perspective of the man of colour in relations with a White woman. He looks at a novel by Maran, where the character Vaneuse enables Fanon to explore the position of the man of colour. Despite overt criticisms for the woman being with a Black man, it is Vaneuse who "is the man to be slaughtered". In order to gain permission for their love, Vaneuse has to be considered not authentically a representative of his race. Indeed, Vaneuse has to appeal to White traits in his life – a process of change within, claims Fanon. Achille states that for the person of colour, taking an interracial marriage means a wiping out of himself, even if the person of colour marries a White person of a lower social class. It is the person's colour that overrides other considerations. Guex looks at Freudian analysis and Fanon cites recrimination towards the past and a cultivating of a White purity through the relationship for a man of colour.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The critique of class and racial aspects in interracial relationships
- Achille's address which explores the reasons and effects for a Black man in a relationship with a White woman
- The Freudian analysis of Guex and the anxiety and 'aggressivity' of the 'abandonment-neurosis'
- The lack of self-esteem as an inevitable part of the relationship
- The inescapable conclusion that a man of colour loses his core self in the relationship with a White woman
- The neurotic structure of Vaneuse cannot be addressed through a change of 'scenery' it can only be done by 'restructuring the world'

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Fanon's critique convincing?
- Is the mix of existentialism and psychoanalysis convincing as an argument?
- Is it justified to describe aspects of multiracial relationships as neurotic in the way it is for Vaneuse?
- The rejection of notions of psychological 'constitution' in explaining interracial desires
- The view that in seeking relations with a White woman, the man of colour is aiming to gain some form of purity
- The Black person cannot escape the colonial project, and is thus incapable of an equal relationship and incapable of 'showing oneself as one actually is' – is this justifiable historically, philosophically or psychologically?

10. (a) Explain Fanon's account of the lived experience of the Black man. [10]

(b) Evaluate Fanon's account of the lived experience of the Black man. [15]

This question stems from chapter 5, where Fanon asks what it means to be Black, starting with an alarming account of a boy pointing to Fanon's colour in the street. This enables a discussion of the ontological experience of being a Black person which Fanon has told us in the introduction is because of sociological structures caused by colonialism. Thus, the chapter has a strong existential and phenomenological character. Here is a treatment of racism that today might be called the 'White gaze' and Fanon contrasts it with the kind of antisemitism suffered by Jewish people, whose superiority is feared, unlike with the people of colour. Being 'othered' in this way causes damage to the experience of the colonized people, who are locked into their colour in the same way as their colonizers. The answer to what the Black experience is given not by Black people, but by White people, with a Euro-centric outlook, as in the reaction of the mother to her frightened child. Fanon looks at Black people performing jobs that previously they did not do – like being a doctor, but he sees this as an excuse for further isolation, as it is a matter of surprise or closer judgement on the Black doctor. Fanon describes in poetry references how he as a man of colour had 'established the real world' as opposed to appropriating the world as the White man does. Fanon critiques Césaire's romantic expression of returning to his homeland, saying the reflections on Black achievements could too easily be stolen by a White person. Fanon ends with a critique of Sartre whom he accuses of 'othering' him by denying him the Black past and Black future, which Fanon says makes it impossible for him '...to live my blackness'.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Fanon's ontological and phenomenological account
- Fanon's critique of Césaire and stereotypes
- The notion of 'othering' or 'being othered'
- Fanon's account of science
- Sartre's account of antisemitism in comparison with anti-Black racism; there appears to be a hierarchy of racism when considering reflections about antisemitism
- Fanon says that for the Black man, expressing existence leads you to 'encounter nothing but the non-existent'

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Fanon's ontological account convincing?
- Is Fanon's phenomenological account convincing?
- Is it convincing or unfair to say that any Black achievements prior to colonization should be carefully stated due to being coopted by White people?
- Is it justifiable to claim that the ontology of the person of colour has been defined solely by White people?
- Is Fanon unfair about the essential racism of White words and acts of 'kindness'?
- Is Fanon fair in his assessment of science?

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty*

11. (a) **Explain Mill's claim that mediocrity is becoming the predominant characteristic of personal and public life.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Mill's claim that mediocrity is becoming the predominant characteristic of personal and public life.** [15]

Mill's views on mediocrity are specifically set out in Chapter 3 but are rooted in his positive estimation of the liberty of thought and discussion found in Chapter 2. Mill argues that mediocrity has become the emerging characteristic of personal and public life as well as the principal threat to original thought, critical thinking, initiative, creativity and individuality as necessary conditions for personal flourishing, happiness and the progress of society. Mill's position is that mediocrity empowers the opinions of the majority, leads to the creation of a government of mediocre individuals and marginalizes independent thinkers. Mill feels that the threat of mediocrity can be remedied, for example, by promoting and supporting the views of gifted individuals (geniuses), promoting general education, allowing for the free discussion and debate of the views of all individuals, inspiring experiments in innovative lifestyles and tolerating eccentricity. References can also be made to the relationship of mediocrity to 'the tyranny of the majority' and 'the despotism of custom'.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The importance Mill attributes to individuality, personal autonomy, innovative thinking, imagination, diversity of lifestyles, freedom of thought, discussion and action, personal achievement
- Mill's understanding of mediocrity: mediocrity as conformity to a single mode of living and thinking, mediocrity as personal, social, cultural, moral and intellectual decline, mediocrity as the stifling of an individual's potential, mediocrity as social and cultural conformity, mediocrity as personal and social complacency
- Reasons for Mill's fear of mediocrity: mediocrity leads to the emergence of a mediocre government composed of mediocre individuals; mediocrity influences personal taste, inclinations, intellectual achievement, moral progress; mediocrity and the suppression of the contributions of gifted individuals to personal and social life; mediocrity impedes the evolution of uncustomary behaviours and lifestyles into legitimate customs and traditions; mediocrity and the stagnation of society
- Government by the masses promoting the views, tendencies and prejudices of the masses in personal, social and public arenas; mediocre government legitimizing mediocre behaviour; personal vs collective mediocrity
- Ways in which Mill believed mediocrity could be remedied, for example, the promotion of education and critical thinking in service of open and free discussion and debate, guidance by the contributions of gifted individuals who have not succumbed to mediocrity; the importance of the genius allowing for eccentricity and innovation in thought and lifestyle

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The efficacy of Mill's views on mediocrity and on how to counter mediocrity as useful contributions to issues of personal, social and cultural diversity
- The views of Heidegger on the impersonal existence and 'massification of man'
- The views of Adorno on the production of mass culture and the promotion of mediocrity
- The contributions of gifted individuals countering mediocrity; Mill's positive estimation of the ability of individuals to hear, understand and follow the guidance of gifted individuals, for example, similarities to the views of Kant on genius and creativity as epistemic virtues
- Hero worship and blind commitment vs. simply pointing out a path to a resolution of problems. Are these views realistic?
- Negative vs positive aspects of mediocrity, for example, lessens the stress of competitive behaviour patterns, promotes a realistic estimation of one's abilities and talents, promotes greater cooperation amongst individuals, inspires a desire for improvement and development;

Mediocrity not always a threat to be feared, for example, John Locke's view of life being a constant state of mediocrity which encourages improvement

- Difficulties in identifying and defining mediocrity as personal and social phenomena; Criteria to distinguish mediocre from exceptional behaviour, for example, David Deutsch on the uniqueness of human life vs. Stephen Hawking on unimportance of human life
- Mediocrity and gender roles and related issues, for example the subjugation and exploitation of women and their potential contributions, for example, Ijeoma Oluo and the subjugation of the female via the promulgation of the status quo dominated by White, male supremacy
- The extent to which the absence of mediocrity might guarantee a positive personal and social environment, for example, De Tocqueville's fear that anarchic and repressive elements can always be found even in progressive democratic situations
- Mill's views on mediocrity in a contemporary context, for example, art (Paul Fleming on exemplarity and mediocrity in art), education (John Gibson on mediocrity in school administration and student achievement), politics (Ayn Rand on the American political culture becoming bland and ineffective), AI and social media (Jaron Lanier on the technological levelling out of creative individuality)

12. (a) Explain Mill's view(s) on education. [10]

(b) Evaluate Mill's view(s) on education. [15]

Mill's views on education are set out in Chapter 5 but rest on ideas developed in Chapter 2 'Liberty of Thought and Discussion' and Chapter 4 'Limits to the Authority of the State over the Individual'. Mill argues that bearing children is a matter of moral and civic responsibility and that parents have an obligation to educate their children so that they will become fully contributing citizens. Education is important for the development of the intellectual abilities of the individual, especially critical thinking skills, which prepares individuals to freely form opinions and engage in effective discussion and debate. Mill argues for state supervision of early education and limited state control of higher education in order to avoid conformity, indoctrination and a restriction of individual freedom. Diversity of approaches and of educational curriculums enhance the importance of individual character, create the possibility for a plurality of opinions along with variety in modes of behaviour and lifestyles. Mill insists on the universal education of all citizens, including women, since education is the pathway to personal, moral, professional and social improvement. Hence, neglecting education violates the rights of individuals and damages the interests of society.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Education enhancing freedom of thought, individual flourishing, the development of a progressive society; education as flexible imparting a diversity of perspectives; education as responsive to the varying interests and needs of individuals
- Compulsory, equitable education ought to be provided for and supported by the state but within limits to protect the freedom of individuals; state intervention in education only when deemed necessary and only if the state did not monopolize education.
- Parental responsibility to educate their children; state should interfere only in cases in which parents are delinquent
- Elementary education should be mandatory; children should be taught moral values, the importance of responsibility and accountability, respect for others, and the implications of the Harm Principle
- Higher education should be more liberally approached so as to avoid indoctrination and to prepare citizens for effective citizenship
- The state's obligation to provide a variety of educational institutions offering a variety of curriculums, set the basic standards, set examinations that determine that these basic standards are met, allow individual schools to develop their own standards in line with the interests of the state

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Education as a right; education as a duty; education as a responsibility; education as a privilege
- Freedom to choose the form, style and content of education versus state mandated education; parental responsibilities vs. interests of the state; education vs indoctrination and conformity
- State controlled education and examinations; criteria for setting basic standards; procedures for monitoring examination results; limits to state control of educational curriculums; implications for personal freedom, for example, similarities with B. F. Skinner on structured education reinforcing desired behaviour
- The extent to which any educational system can provide the tools for effective citizenship, for example, similarities with Rawls's view that education should promote participation in political activities; Plato's view on education of the citizenry
- Education enhancing individual character, diversity, innovation and creativity, for example, similarities with Wilhelm von Humboldt view that education promotes the vitality and creativity of the individual and Arendt's position that education must balance tradition with creative innovation
- Education as an effective pathway to personal happiness, freedom and societal progress, for example, the views of Paolo Freire on education as the promotion of critical thinking, freedom and the challenging of social inequalities

- Possibility of providing for universal, equitable education, for example, Mary Wollstonecraft on the education of women, Kant on the universal accessibility of education
- Comparisons with Non-Western philosophies of education: the Islamic view of education as a religious duty, the Shinto view of education to instill respect for ancestors, the Jain view of education as a path to non-violence.

Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals*

13. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s claim that ideals are fabricated. [10]

(b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s claim that ideals are fabricated. [15]

Nietzsche says that the central question of the *Genealogy of Morals* is “What signposts does linguistics, especially the study of etymology, give to the history of the evolution of moral concepts?” In tracing the linguistic and historical evolution of moral concepts, Nietzsche comes to claim that modern morality has been fabricated. He asks: “Would anyone like to have a little look down into the secret of how ideals are fabricated on this earth?” Nietzsche thinks that the fabrication of ideals is bad for humankind, limiting it and denying its full potential, “so that morality itself were to blame if man, as species, never reached his highest potential power and splendour”. Nietzsche points out that contemporary ideals have, in the past, been seen as bad, and what we currently consider evil has previously been considered good. He points to the Homeric hero, who acts passionately without consideration for those hurt by his power. Nietzsche thinks that the fabrication of ideals denies our natural human nature, and says that it “it seems to me just to stink of lies”.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Bad conscience and fabricated ideals
- Master morality and slave morality
- Examples such as the ideal of love which “grew out of hatred”
- Nietzsche’s claim that fabricated ideals lead to a sickness in people
- The idea that morality is holding mankind back from greatness
- The genealogy of how ideals are fabricated over time

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Subjectivism about morals and ideals and its dangers
- Moral relativism, its basis in observations of differences in ideals across the world
- Moral objectivism, e.g. Kantian ethics and the moral imperative, or natural moral law
- Critiques of genealogy as a methodology, e.g. Hume’s is-ought distinction: just because Nietzsche can trace a history of ideals, does not mean the ideals he traces are the true ideals
- Reasons to fabricate ideals, e.g. Hobbes’s view that without a social contract we would be in a war of all against all
- Religion and morality.

14. (a) Explain Nietzsche's claim that humans are the sick animal. [10]

(b) Evaluate Nietzsche's claim that humans are the sick animal. [15]

Nietzsche describes the European person as a sick animal, someone who suffers and who actively seeks out suffering through religion and the ascetic ideal. He views contemporary morality as part of the cause of this sickness because it denies true human nature which accords with master morality and celebrates power and strength. Instead, Christian morals embrace suffering, rationalizing this suffering with guilt. He says "Man, the bravest animal and most prone to suffer, does not deny suffering as such: he wills it, he even seeks it out, provided he is shown a meaning for it, a purpose of suffering... and the ascetic ideal offered man a meaning!... it brought all suffering within the perspective of guilt". Students might counter Nietzsche's perspective with reference to other accounts of guilt and suffering, e.g. Freud and Jung. They might refer to Buddhism and Nietzsche's references to Buddhism to consider Buddhist approaches to suffering.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The noble and master morality as a solution to human suffering and illness
- The ascetic ideal as a rationalization of suffering which Nietzsche thinks encourages and enhances illness
- Bad conscience and fabricated ideals
- Slave morality and the genealogy of ideals
- Judaeo- Christian ideals and suffering and illness.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Psychological explanations of suffering, e.g. Freud, Jung
- Existentialism as a response to the human condition, e.g. Sartre, Camus, De Beauvoir
- Bad faith and Taylor's account of an ethics of authenticity as an alternative to Nietzsche's master morality
- Religious alternatives to Christian suffering, e.g. Buddhism and the denial of desire
- Postmodernism as a response to Nietzsche's critiques of modernism, e.g. Foucault
- Positives of the ascetic ideal and modernism, e.g. health care, periods of peace, lower childhood mortality.

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

15. (a) **Explain Nussbaum’s claim that the Capabilities Approach has close links to deontology.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that the Capabilities Approach has close links to deontology.** [15]

The question stems from Chapter 4 of Nussbaum’s text. The question invites students to explore Nussbaum’s views on philosophical approaches in ethics and politics; she holds that they “are usually divided (sometimes overly simply) into two groups” (p. 93): consequentialism and deontology. Students might explain Nussbaum’s view on those approaches and whether she considers them as clearly distinguished as they are generally presented. Responses might discuss the reasons why Nussbaum considers her theory of the Capabilities Approach closely linked to deontology: particularly, students might explore Nussbaum’s reference to Kant. Also, students might explain the relationship between deontology and political liberalism in Nussbaum’s view and her criticism on consequentialism on this point. As Nussbaum states, “In another way, however, the Capabilities Approach can be seen as a cousin of consequentialism, or even as a form of political, non-welfarist consequentialism” (p. 95). Nussbaum thus draws comparisons between non-deontological approaches and the capabilities approach as well. Students might consider other views, e.g. Sen, Rawls, and discuss Nussbaum’s view on them.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Nussbaum’s views on consequentialism and deontology
- Consequentialism as a philosophical approach
- Deontology as a philosophical approach
- Nussbaum’s theory as linked to deontology
- The role that Kant plays in Nussbaum’s theory
- Nussbaum’s view on consequentialism.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether philosophical approaches to politics and ethics are truly and basically divided into consequentialism and deontology, e.g. Machiavelli, Nozick
- Whether consequentialism and deontology partially overlap
- Specific consequentialist views, e.g. utilitarianism
- Whether Nussbaum’s view on deontology is consistent with the Capabilities Approach
- Whether Nussbaum’s view on Kant is consistent with her criticism on social contract theories
- Whether Nussbaum’s criticism on consequentialism is consistent with her definition of “nonwelfarist consequentialism”
- Sen’s view as related to consequentialism
- Rawls’s theory of justice and Nussbaum’s criticism on it.

16. (a) Explain Nussbaum’s claim that the nation has moral importance. [10]

(b) Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that the nation has moral importance. [15]

The claim stems from Chapter 6 of Nussbaum’s text and invites students to explore the role of the nation within the Capabilities Approach. As Nussbaum states, the “initial use of the approach to construct a theory of social justice focused, once again, on the nation” (p. 113). Responses might discuss the relationship between the nation and the government and the role that governments play within the Capabilities Approach, since “the task of government, in each nation, is to provide support for the Central Capabilities of all” (p. 113). Responses might highlight the basic requirements that a nation must entitle according to Nussbaum: mainly, a democratic constitution, which often has “We, the people” as its opening. Students might explain the reasons why Nussbaum considers the European Union not having satisfactory constituents on this point. Responses might discuss the moral role of the nation in terms of securing the capabilities and how it relates to individual freedom. Also, students might refer to the concept of inequality and how it relates to social justice. Nussbaum’s view on redistributive action among nations as a remedy against colonial exploitation might be another point of discussion. Students might consider the role of richer nations in a global economy and how they relate to inequality and imbalance. Responses might refer to the argument of the “two-stage bargain”, supported by Kant and Rawls. Finally, students might consider other views on liberty and equality, e.g. Rousseau, Bobbio, Berlin, Nozick, on the role of nations and market, e.g. Smith’s concept of “invisible hand”, or on the theorems of welfare economics, e.g. Pareto.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The role of the nation in Nussbaum’s view
- The relationship between the nation and the government
- How the government supports the Capabilities Approach
- The basic requirements of a moral nation, e.g. democratic constitution
- The role of redistribution among nations
- Nussbaum’s view on supranational institutions, e.g. the EU.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether Nussbaum’s view on EU is supported by her arguments
- Whether the redistributive action is a valid remedy against colonial exploitation
- Whether Nussbaum’s view on global economy is supported by her arguments
- Whether global economy is driven by the richer nations only
- Whether inequality and imbalance, as linked to injustice, are caused by the richer nations
- The argument of the “two-stage bargain” as a guide for nations
- Other views on the concept of liberty, e.g. Constant, Bobbio, Berlin, Nozick, Sen
- Other views on the concept of equality, e.g. Rousseau, Bobbio, Rawls
- Other views on the role of nations and market, e.g. Smith, Pareto.

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

17. (a) **Explain the claim that “the really important increase of our world does not lie in its greater dimensions, but in its containing many more things”.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the claim that “the really important increase of our world does not lie in its greater dimensions, but in its containing many more things”.** [15]

The claim stems from Chapter 4 of Ortega y Gasset’s text and invites students to explore the conditions that have determined the coming of the masses, particularly the so-called “increase of life”. Responses might refer to what Ortega y Gasset defines “vital activities” and how they relate to the opportunities that modern society offers to the mass-man: “Imagine two men, one of the present day and one of the 18th century, possessed of equal fortunes relative to money-values in their respective periods, and compare the stock of purchasable things offered to each. The difference is almost fabulous” (pp. 39–40). Students might distinguish between necessity and possibility in relation to living as choosing. Consequently, responses might focus on the concept of “circumstance”: “We find ourselves in an atmosphere of definite possibilities. This atmosphere we generally call our ‘circumstances’” (pp. 40–41). Students might explore the increase of potentiality impacts diverse fields, since the world “now finds more ‘paths of ideation,’ more problems, more data, more sciences, more points of view” (p. 41). Furthermore, responses might consider how the increase of potency impacts work, offering deeper and wider specialization and a potential great variety of jobs. Finally, responses might consider whether such a potency turns into effective progress and creation, since “we live at a time when man believes himself fabulously capable of creation, but he does not know what to create” (p. 44). Students might refer to other views on the role of technology, e.g. Heidegger, Gehlen, or discuss the concept of will, e.g. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche (will to power), or focus on the outcomes of massification in terms of alienation and conformism, e.g. de Tocqueville, the Frankfurt School.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of the “increase of life”
- The concept of the “height of the times”
- The concept of the “rise of the historic level”
- The concept of “potency”
- The concept of “circumstance”
- Living as a process of choosing among possibilities.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether the increase of potentiality fosters creativity and creation
- The distinction between necessity and possibility, needs and desires
- The increase of potentiality and massification as compared to minorities and aristocracy
- The role of technology in fostering a sense of unlimited power, e.g. Heidegger, Gehlen
- Whether the increase of potentiality can promote a sense or fear of possible retrogression, barbarism, decadence, e.g. Camus, Sartre, Adorno, Cioran
- Whether the increase of purchasable goods sets life as living over the possibilities, both fostering consumerism and spreading awareness on sustainability, e.g., environmental ethics
- The idea of an unstoppable future and the central role of will, e.g. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche
- Whether the increase of potentiality supports conformism, homologation, alienation, e.g. de Tocqueville’s concept of the tyranny of the majority, Bauman’s view on liquid society, the Frankfurt School’s Critical Theory
- Whether globalization is in relation to the increase of space and time.

18. (a) **Explain the claim that it is possible to use the psychology of the spoilt child to observe the soul of the masses of today.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the claim that it is possible to use the psychology of the spoilt child to observe the soul of the masses of today.** [15]

The claim stems from Chapter 6 of Ortega y Gasset's text and invites students to explore one or more central concepts: the spoilt child, the self-satisfied man, and the mass-man. Particularly, students might explain the reasons why Ortega y Gasset relates the concept of the spoilt child to the concept of mass-man: "My thesis, therefore, is this: the very perfection with which the 19th century gave an organization to certain orders of existence has caused the masses benefited thereby to consider it, not as an organized, but as a natural system. Thus, is explained and defined the absurd state of mind revealed by these masses; they are only concerned with their own well-being, and at the same time they are- main alien to the cause of that well-being" (pp. 59–60). Responses might focus on Ortega y Gasset's analyses of the "increase of life", in terms of progress, wealth, abundance of material and immaterial things: "Never had the average man been able to solve his economic problem with greater facility. [...] Every day added a new luxury to their stand-ard of life. Every day their position was more secure and more independent of another's will" (p. 55). Students might discuss whether this increase of life has turned into a stronger social and political participation or fostered a certain degree of conformism and alienation. Responses might focus on the civil rights progress, since "as regards the forms of public life he no longer finds himself from birth confronted with obstacles and limitations. There is nothing to force him to limit his existence. [...] There are no civil privileges. The ordinary man learns that all men are equal before the law" (p. 56). Responses might explore the reasons that Ortega y Gasset identifies as supporting the new society: "Three principles have made possible this new world: liberal democracy, scientific ex-periment, and industrialism. The two latter may be summed up in one word: technicism" (p. 55). Finally, students might discuss diverse philosophical views on the role of technology, e.g. Heidegger, Gehlen; of democracy, e.g. de Tocqueville, Mill, Dewey, Nussbaum; of mass society, e.g. Bauman, the Frankfurt School, Byung-Chul Han.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of the "spoilt child" and the "self-satisfied man"
- The concept of "increase of life"
- The concept of the "height of the times"
- The concept of the "rise of the historic level"
- Mass society and abundance
- Possession of civil rights

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Life as an unlimited horizon of possibilities in relation to pressing and contemporary issues, e.g. climate change, sustainability, resources
- The abundance of goods in relation to needs and desires
- The possession of civil rights in relation to social and political apathy
- The increase of life in relation to democracy
- The risks of hyperdemocracy; democracy and conformism, e.g. de Tocqueville, Mill, Bauman
- The opportunities offered by democracy and mass society, e.g. Dewey, Nussbaum
- The role of technology and specialization, e.g. Heidegger, Gehlen
- Mass society and alienation, e.g. the Frankfurt School
- The masses in the age of the digital swarm, e.g. Byung-Chul Han

Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV – IX

19. (a) Explain Plato’s view that the human soul has three parts. [10]

(b) Evaluate Plato’s view that the human soul has three parts. [15]

Republic IV argues that a human soul has three parts or agencies: appetite (*epithumêtikon*), spirit (*thumoeides*), and reason (*logistikon*). How to understand ‘part’ is already a significant issue that could be analysed in the answers. The consideration of the tripartite composition of the soul comes from the general comparison between the city and the soul: “we would expect an individual to have these same kinds of things in his soul, and to be correctly called by the same names as the city because the same conditions are present in them both” (435b). How to understand the relationship between the “parts” is central. Socrates puts it this way: “Do we do each of them with the same thing or, since there are three, do we do one with one and another [...] Or do we do each of them with the whole of our soul, once we feel the impulse? *That* is what is difficult to determine” (436a). Answers may take one side of the argument presented. Is each part of the soul in Plato’s analysis a distinct psychic power with its own exclusive psychic activities, or is each psychic part a psychic agent capable of desire, anger and reason?

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The distinction of the parts according to their functions: reason calculates, appetite desires, spirit is animated
- The corresponding objects or goals as well as an activity: reason is concerned with the good (i.e. with the best course of action); appetite is concerned with pleasure; while spirit reacts to perceived slights or wrongs
- In Book IX appetite is described as the drive toward material satisfaction; spirit as the stimulus to win and to amount to something; reason as the impulse to discover truth
- The role of conflict in the soul as a way of analysing its parts
- Analogy or correspondence between the soul and the city.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Does the human psyche have different natural psychic parts, three in number and the same in kind as the three natural social parts of the city?
- Which psychic activity is the optimal function of which psychic part?
- Ways of understanding “part”: elements that must work together to make the greater unity work
- Assuming that we can divide the soul, how can we tell what each part is?
- The extent to which the Platonic notion of “soul” could be assimilated to or replaced by “personality” or “character”
- Does Plato see inner conflict as both the most important fact of human existence and the phenomenon that most reveals the structure of the soul?
- The comparison between the Platonic conception of the soul and Freud’s theory of personality
- Comparison with other philosophical views of the mind e.g. Cartesian dualism, physicalism.

20. (a) **Explain Socrates’s statement that true philosophers “are passionately devoted to and love the things with which knowledge deals”.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate Socrates’s statement that true philosophers “are passionately devoted to and love the things with which knowledge deals”.** [15]

Statement taken from 479e. Socrates’s statement is part of a complex argument designed to show that only philosophers have access to forms, and that without such access knowledge is impossible (474c4-480a13). The question then opens up a wide range of possibilities for explanation and evaluation in relation to the Platonic concepts of, for example, philosophy, philosophers and knowledge. The philosophers are “those who in each case look at the things themselves that are always the same in every respect? Won’t we say that they have knowledge, not mere belief?” (479e). Accordingly, Socrates proposes to call them “philosophers (lovers of wisdom or knowledge)” (480a), distinguishing them from the “philodoxers (lovers of belief)” (480a). Students might question Plato’s account of knowledge which favours the forms over the empirical world. Students might question the central role of mathematics in the Platonic conception of knowledge. Aristotle’s more grounded epistemology could be used as a counterexample.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Knowledge is the knowledge of that which is, while ignorance is the attachment to that which is not (476e-477a)
- Opinion lies between knowledge and ignorance (478c)
- Belief as a form of illusion
- Knowledge and belief in the Divided Line and the Allegory of the Cave
- Philosophers as lovers of knowledge versus lovers of opinion.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Dialectic as a way of progressing towards knowledge
- To what extent does access to knowledge and justice belong only to philosophers?
- The extent to which philosophers should rule
- The Socratic conception of philosophy as the reasoned examination of our own and others’ beliefs about how to live
- How the Platonic idea of philosophy became the model of philosophy in the Western tradition
- Developments and criticisms of the Platonic ideals of human knowledge, e.g. P. Feyerabend.

Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity*

21. (a) **Explain the claim that what gets lost in the critique to self-fulfilment is the moral force of the ideal of authenticity.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the claim that what gets lost in the critique to self-fulfilment is the moral force of the ideal of authenticity.** [15]

The claim stems from Chapter 2 of Taylor's text and invites students to explore the concept of authenticity and its difference to self-fulfilment as narcissism. Particularly, students might explain the reasons why Taylor suggests that a moral ideal is grounded in modern individualism and why we need a deeper understanding of it: "Once we try to explain this simply as a kind of egoism, or a species of moral laxism, a self-indulgence with re-gard to a tougher, more exigent earlier age, we are already off the track" (p. 16). Responses might mention Taylor's reference to Bloom and the criticism on modern individualism, in terms of relativism, permissiveness, self-indulgence, narcissism, hedonism. Students might explore what Taylor defines as a "slide to subjectivism" and the relationship with the malaises he outlines: individualism, instrumental reason, soft despotism. Students might consider the relationship between authenticity and liberalism, particularly the so-called "liberalism of neutrality": "One of its basic tenets is that a liberal society must be neutral on questions of what constitutes a good life" (p. 17). Finally, responses might discuss other views, e.g. Dworkin's and Kymlicka's standpoint on relativism, or views on individual liberty, e.g. Sen, Nussbaum, Nozick, or the differences between positive and negative liberty, e.g. Bobbio, Berlin.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of authenticity and its origin
- Bloom's view on modern individualism
- Individualism and moral relativism
- The slide to subjectivism
- Liberalism of neutrality
- Other malaises, e.g. instrumental reason, soft despotism.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether individualism calls for liberalism
- Hedonism and utilitarianism/consequentialism, e.g. Bentham, Singer
- Other views on subjectivism, e.g. Hare, Mackie
- Individualism, soft despotism and social apathy, e.g. de Tocqueville's view on the tyranny of the majority, Ortega y Gasset's view on the revolt of the masses
- Other views on individualism and individual liberty, e.g. Mill's Harm Principle, Nozick's minimal state, Sen and Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach
- Views on soft relativism, e.g. Dworkin, Kymlicka
- Other views on liberty, e.g. Bobbio, Berlin.

22. (a) **Explain the claim that “reasoning in moral matters is always reasoning with somebody”.** [10]
- (b) **Evaluate the claim that “reasoning in moral matters is always reasoning with somebody”.** [15]

The claim stems from Chapter 4 of Taylor’s text and invites students to explore the central concept of dialogue. Students might highlight the role that dialogue plays in Taylor’s view on morals: “The general feature of human life that I want to evoke is its fundamentally dialogical character” (pp. 32–33). Responses might take into account the role that language plays in any dialogical communication, intended “in a broad sense, covering not only the words we speak but also other modes of expression whereby we define ourselves, including the “languages” of art, of gesture, of love, and the like” (p. 33). Students might explain the reasons why Taylor highlights the fact the dialogue is not only something linked to the genesis of the mind, but it is a persistent element of culture. In this sense, responses might focus on Mead’s concept of “significant others”. Students might discuss the relationship between dialogue and the moral ideal of authenticity: “With important issues, such as the definition of our identity [...] we define this always in dialogue with, sometimes in struggle against, the identities our significant others” (p. 33). Students might explore the concept of “inescapable horizons”: “Things take on importance against a background of intelligibility. Let us call this a horizon” (p. 37). Finally, students might consider other philosophical views on the role of dialogue, e.g. Buber, Habermas, or the concept of otherness, e.g. Heidegger, Ortega y Gasset, De Beauvoir.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Taylor’s view on the role of dialogue
- Dialogue and language; dialogue versus monologue
- Origin of dialogue as genetic and cultural
- The concept of “significant others”
- The concept of “inescapable horizons”

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether certain kinds of language help dialogue, e.g. art, love
- Other views on the role of dialogue, e.g. Buber, Habermas
- Whether dialogue is directed to other humans only, or also nonhuman such as animals, deities, nature, e.g. Emerson, Buber
- Whether communication with others has an institutional ground, e.g. Ortega y Gasset, Searle
- The role of politically correct language in supporting dialogue
- The limits of language, e.g. Wittgenstein
- Other views on the role of the other and the concept of otherness, e.g. Heidegger, Ortega y Gasset, De Beauvoir
- The role of the hermit or solitary artist and their work .

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*

23. (a) Explain Lao Tzu's claim that the ruler rules without taking action. [10]

(b) Evaluate Lao Tzu's claim that the ruler rules without taking action. [15]

The ruler, the Sage, exercises rule according to the principle of the Tao, which means to succumb to the natural order without resorting to decisive actions. The ruler, thus acts without doing anything and teaches without saying anything, all according to the nature of the Tao. In being detached, the ruler is at one with her/his subjects. The ruler is at one with the Tao and seeks solitude. Questions arise as to how any claim in relation to the Tao can be known and from where this wisdom originates. In Chapter 66 the ruler is described as being "above the people." And in Chapter 49, it is claimed that the people don't understand the ruler. How does such an idealized, detached ruler effect rule meaningfully on subjects not existing like the ruler? Since the ruler becomes like the Tao, the ruler has less particularity and becomes less like an individual. The ruler has no desires and submits to the unfolding of the natural order. The ruler "... takes action by letting things take their course".

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Most references to the ruler, or Sage, involve paradoxes, relating to how active rule is done by the Sage through non-action
- The ruler desires non-desire
- The ruler and impartiality
- The ruler and fate
- The qualities of the ruler, e.g. wisdom, compassion, selflessness, not able to become disappointed
- The greatest ruler is the one whom the people do not realize exists

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is the notion of 'actionless activity' credible?
- Are other paradoxes, e.g. involved in teaching or detachment, convincing?
- Can political rule be achieved meaningfully with such little attachment and similarity between the ruler and the ruled?
- How can such statements about rule and the harmony with the natural order be justified?
- Is the ruler too passive to rule effectively?
- Other philosophical treatments of rule, e.g. Plato, Machiavelli, Locke, Mill, Rousseau
- The past rulers and the uncarved block symbol/metaphor.

24. (a) Explain Lao Tzu's claim that, "the Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao". [10]
- (b) Evaluate Lao Tzu's claim that, "the Tao that can be spoken is not the eternal Tao". [15]

A contrast appears in the work between the real Tao (*chang Tao*) and the Tao that can be spoken of. This is emphasized in the very first statement of the *Tao Te Ching*: "The way that can be spoken of is not the constant way". It is almost a dualism, but interpretations of this – the very first – claim in the work enable an exploration of how words, descriptions and names have a limiting effect, and only describe appearance rather than reality. It is not so much that there are two Taos, but there is one that can only be experienced directly without an ability to be described, and any attempted description would be 'about' the Tao, not 'of' the Tao itself directly. As soon as something is spoken of, its essence disappears and this echoes exploration of experience, sensation, perception and knowledge in the Western philosophical tradition. The very character of the Tao means that it cannot be reached for, heard or seen (Chapter 14). The Tao is the source of the whole system of reality and in this way cannot submit to description, akin to some approaches to the inability of capturing the divine in the philosophy of religion. The Tao is unanalysable and perfect unity, so indefinable, it cannot be broken into parts, and gives language no chance to grasp it.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The first statement in *Tao Te Ching*: "The way that can be spoken of is not the constant way"
- The descriptions of the Tao in the work and different interpretations
- The difference between knowing the Tao and knowing about the Tao
- The use of paradox, e.g. "The way is empty, yet use will not drain it" Chapter 4
- The comparison between the Tao and water in an attempt to describe the nature of the Tao

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Comparisons with other philosophical traditions in aiming to capture the essence of knowledge and experience (e.g. Berkeley, Russell)
 - Comparisons with the traditions of ineffability in other religions e.g. Aquinas; Or the Islamic tradition where Allah has no name, but ninety-nine epithets
 - Are paradoxes sustainable as philosophical claims?
 - The notion that there is a 'real' Tao and a non-real Tao of which is spoken
 - The role of language in understanding and experience
 - How naming something immediately sets a relation of possession and particularity – is this convincing?
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