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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 analysis of the controversy between realism and idealism. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer's analysis of the controversy between realism and idealism. [15]
2. (a) Explain Ayer's statement that "the activity of philosophising is essentially analytic". [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer's statement that "the activity of philosophising is essentially analytic". [15]

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

3. (a) Explain the challenges that the "independent woman" faces according to Simone de Beauvoir. [10]
(b) Evaluate the challenges that the "independent woman" faces according to Simone de Beauvoir. [15]
4. (a) Explain Simone de Beauvoir's critique of the limitations of women's emancipation within a patriarchal framework. [10]
(b) Evaluate Simone de Beauvoir's critique of the limitations of women's emancipation within a patriarchal framework. [15]

Confucius: *The Analects*

5. (a) Explain the importance of destiny/the will of Heaven (*ming*). [10]
(b) Evaluate the importance of destiny/the will of Heaven (*ming*). [15]
6. (a) Explain Confucius's idea of harmony. [10]
(b) Evaluate Confucius's idea of harmony. [15]

René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

7. (a) Explain Descartes's view of reality as consisting of three distinct substances. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes's view of reality as consisting of three distinct substances. [15]
8. (a) Explain Descartes's method of doubt. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes's method of doubt. [15]

Frantz Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks*

9. (a) Explain what Fanon believes to be the impact of colonialism on the use of language. [10]
(b) Evaluate what Fanon believes to be the impact of colonialism on the use of language. [15]
10. (a) Explain Fanon's claim that the women of colour who have relationships with White men "need [...] whiteness at any cost". [10]
(b) Evaluate Fanon's claim that the women of colour who have relationships with White men "need [...] whiteness at any cost". [15]

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty*

11. (a) Explain Mill's view(s) on the status of children. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill's view(s) on the status of children. [15]
12. (a) Explain Mill's claim that the principle of utility is the final appeal on ethical issues. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill's claim that the principle of utility is the final appeal on ethical issues. [15]

Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals*

13. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s views on the relationship between guilt and debt. [10]
 (b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s views on the relationship between guilt and debt. [15]
14. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s claim that “up till now, nobody has had the remotest doubt or hesitation in placing higher value on ‘the good man’ than on ‘the evil’”. [10]
 (b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s claim that “up till now, nobody has had the remotest doubt or hesitation in placing higher value on ‘the good man’ than on ‘the evil’”. [15]

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

15. (a) Explain the role of ancient Greco-Roman philosophical traditions as sources for Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach. [10]
 (b) Evaluate the role of ancient Greco-Roman philosophical traditions as sources for Nussbaum’s Capabilities Approach. [15]
16. (a) Explain Nussbaum’s claim that the nation has a moral obligation, grounded in the principles of the Capabilities Approach, to ensure its citizens’ freedom and opportunity to achieve well-being. [10]
 (b) Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that the nation has a moral obligation, grounded in the principles of the Capabilities Approach, to ensure its citizens’ freedom and opportunity to achieve well-being. [15]

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

17. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset’s claim that nobility is defined by obligations, not by rights. [10]
 (b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s claim that nobility is defined by obligations, not by rights. [15]
18. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset’s claim that the vulgar does not believe itself super-excellent, but proclaims and imposes the rights of vulgarity. [10]
 (b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s claim that the vulgar does not believe itself super-excellent, but proclaims and imposes the rights of vulgarity. [15]

Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV–IX

19. (a) Explain Socrates’s statement that the leaders of the city should be those who are “capable of guarding the city’s laws and practices”. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Socrates’s statement that the leaders of the city should be those who are “capable of guarding the city’s laws and practices”. [15]
20. (a) Explain the role of the Forms in Plato’s theory of knowledge. [10]
- (b) Evaluate the role of the Forms in Plato’s theory of knowledge. [15]

Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity*

21. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that in modern culture the source of authenticity is deeply grounded in ourselves. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that in modern culture the source of authenticity is deeply grounded in ourselves. [15]
22. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that art is a crucial terrain for the ideal of authenticity. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that art is a crucial terrain for the ideal of authenticity. [15]

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*

23. (a) Explain how water is used as a metaphor in the *Tao Te Ching*. [10]
- (b) Evaluate how water is used as a metaphor in the *Tao Te Ching*. [15]
24. (a) Explain Lao Tzu’s view of the role of the Tao in good government. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Lao Tzu’s view of the role of the Tao in good government. [15]
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