

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 analysis of the controversy between realism and idealism. [10]

(b) Evaluate Ayer's analysis of the controversy between realism and idealism. [15]

Ayer rules out the metaphysical aspect of this controversy, claiming that the logical questions it involves are questions concerning the analysis of existential propositions. The dispute between idealists and realists "becomes a metaphysical dispute when it is assumed that the question whether an object is real or ideal is an empirical question which cannot be settled by any possible observation" (150). In the ordinary sense of the term "real", i.e. in the sense in which "being real" is opposed to "being illusory", there are definite empirical tests for determining whether an object is real or not. But to dispute whether an object has the undetectable property of being real, or the equally undetectable property of being ideal, is "an altogether fictitious question" (150). It is clear from this that answers may choose to explore arguments that support or, on the contrary, challenge this thesis.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The logical doctrines held by idealists and disputed by realists are all concerned with the question of what is implied by propositions of the form "x is real"
- Berkeley's thesis that that no material thing could exist unperceived: "Esse est percipi", is true regarding sense-contents
- To speak of the existence of sense-contents is a misleading way of speaking of their occurrence, and a sense-content cannot without self-contradiction be said to occur except as part of a sense experience
- Material things are constituted by sense-contents
- Statements about material objects are translatable into statements about actual and possible sense-contents
- Mill's conception of a material thing as a permanent possibility of sensation
- Other views, e.g. Moore's position.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The extent to which sensory content can be accurately translated into propositions
- To what extent is there no contradiction in the assertion of the existence of a material thing that is never actually perceived?
- The role of induction in shaping sensory experience
- The distinction between appearance and reality: a metaphysical theory or a fundamental human belief?
- The opposition between realism and idealism and the arguments about the existence of God
- The extent to which the belief that the immediate data of the senses are necessarily mental is an assumption that cannot be justified
- The role of Descartes in the idealist view that what is immediately given in sense experience must necessarily be mental
- Comparison and contrast with forms of realism and idealism, e.g. Aquinas and Hegel
- The nature and plausibility of realism in different areas, for example: ethics, aesthetics, causation, modality, science, mathematics, semantics, and the everyday world of macroscopic material objects and their properties.

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]

Explaining philosophy as an analysis of common-sense beliefs, Ayer argues that the philosopher can show us that the propositions we believe are far more complex than we think. And, from there, he specifies the activity of philosophy as follows: “if the philosopher is to uphold his claim to make a special contribution to the stock of our knowledge, he must not attempt to formulate speculative truths, or to look for first principles, or to make a priori judgements about the validity of our empirical beliefs. He must, in fact, confine himself to works of clarification and analysis” (36–37). Ayer’s position on philosophy can be supported or challenged by the responses. Given its centrality, it can also be directly linked to some of the central arguments of the text, such as the elimination of metaphysics, the principle of verification, or the nature of philosophical analysis.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- A great deal of what is commonly referred to as philosophy is not analytical, but metaphysical
- The characterisation of the function of philosophy should to some extent correspond with the practice of those who are commonly called philosophers, and at the same time with the common assumption that philosophy is a special branch of knowledge
- Metaphysics does not fulfil the condition of qualifying as knowledge
- The majority of those who are commonly regarded as great philosophers were primarily analysts, not metaphysicians
- Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* as an example of an essentially analytical work.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The variety of functions of the philosophy in the diverse traditions and schools: Typical examples of analytic propositions: “All bachelors are unmarried” and “A triangle has three sides”
- The extent to which it is fair to regard Berkeley as a metaphysician
- Why do metaphysical beliefs persist through time and cultures if they are fundamentally false?
- The extent to which Ayer’s analysis of the function of philosophy is normative or prescriptive
- Hume and his rejection of metaphysics
- The extent to which the propositions of philosophy are not factual, but linguistic
- The extent to which Ayer’s judgments about the history of philosophy and about individual philosophers are sufficiently detailed and justified.

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]

In *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir discusses the challenges faced by the “independent woman”, who seeks to transcend traditional gender roles and assert her autonomy in a patriarchal society. According to De Beauvoir, such women face tension between their desire for freedom and the societal expectations that continue to confine them to immanence—passive roles focused on reproduction and caregiving. The independent woman is often seen as a threat to the established social order, facing isolation, hostility, and scrutiny from both men and women. This reflects broader societal attitudes that resist female autonomy, rooted in a belief that women should conform to roles of dependency and service to others. She holds that “it is through gainful employment that woman has traversed most of the distance that separated her from the male; and nothing else can guarantee her liberty in practice” (641).

From an essentialist perspective, critics argue that these challenges arise because the pursuit of independence conflicts with women’s supposed “natural” tendencies toward nurturance and cooperation. However, De Beauvoir rejects this view, asserting that societal pressures, not biology, limit women’s capacity for freedom and equality.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- How De Beauvoir argues that independent women struggle to balance their desire for freedom with societal pressures to conform to traditional gender roles. Even when they pursue careers or assert their independence, they are expected to maintain conventional feminine traits.
- Independent women often viewed as a threat to the established social order, facing criticism or ostracism from both men and women. She notes that society tends to marginalize women who reject traditional roles, viewing them as unnatural or selfish for prioritizing their own ambitions over family life.
- How independent women face the “double burden” of professional and domestic responsibilities. Even when women succeed in achieving financial or professional independence, they are still expected to manage the home and fulfil caregiving duties, reflecting broader societal resistance to female autonomy.
- The extent of many women internalizes societal norms, which complicates their pursuit of independence. Women may feel guilt or conflict about breaking free from traditional roles, as they have been conditioned to prioritize others’ needs over their own desires.
- Financial independence is crucial for women’s autonomy, yet economic disparities between men and women often limit their opportunities. De Beauvoir emphasizes that women’s dependence on men for financial stability reflects broader structural inequalities that keep them from achieving independence.
- Independent women who seek sexual freedom are often judged harshly by society. She highlights how female sexuality is still policed by societal norms, with sexually autonomous women labelled as immoral.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- From an essentialist perspective, critics argue that the challenges independent women face stem from their rejection of ‘natural’ female roles. Essentialists believe that women are biologically predisposed to be nurturing and relational, and that societal resistance to female autonomy reflects an instinctive understanding of these natural roles.
- Judith Butler’s theory of gender performativity offers a critique of both societal attitudes and De Beauvoir’s approach. She argues that gender roles are not natural or fixed but are constructed through repeated performance.

- Irigaray critiques De Beauvoir's vision of autonomy for still being rooted in a male model of transcendence. Instead of imitating male freedom, women should embrace their own unique identity, rooted in sexual difference.
- Postcolonial feminists critique De Beauvoir for universalizing the experiences of Western, middle-class women. This complicates the analysis of the independent woman in broader social terms.
- Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality highlights how race and class intersect with gender in shaping societal attitudes toward female autonomy. Women of colour and working-class women often face compounded challenges in their pursuit of independence, as they are subject to multiple layers of discrimination.
- Foucault's work on power and social norms can be used to critique the societal attitudes De Beauvoir describes. Foucault argues that power operates through societal norms and discourses that control individuals' behaviour.
- De Beauvoir's existentialist framework argues that authenticity comes from transcending societal roles. However, some feminist thinkers critique this model, suggesting that societal expectations for women to choose between independence and conformity create an existential double bind, where neither option fully allows women to be authentic.
- Some feminist theorists argue that De Beauvoir's critique of traditional roles does not fully explore the ways in which these roles might be revalued rather than rejected. The social and communal aspects of traditional female roles could be redefined in ways that affirm women's agency and value within society.

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]

Simone de Beauvoir critiques the limitations of women’s emancipation within a patriarchal framework, arguing that true liberation cannot be achieved as long as societal structures continue to prioritize male dominance. She points out that “society, being codified by man, decrees that woman is inferior” (674). Although women may gain certain legal rights or economic independence, these advancements are often constrained by persistent gender norms that reinforce women’s secondary status. De Beauvoir contends that emancipation within a patriarchal system tends to reinforce existing power dynamics, as it leaves the underlying framework of male privilege intact. Even as women enter public life and the workforce, they are still expected to fulfil traditional roles, such as caretaking and maintaining femininity.

Thinkers such as Luce Irigaray, Judith Butler, and Marxist feminists have critiqued or expanded upon De Beauvoir’s analysis, suggesting that emancipation is limited not only by patriarchy but also by capitalism, race, and sexuality.

From a traditional point of view, women’s roles within the domestic sphere and their alignment with caregiving and nurturing are seen as natural and essential for the stability of family and society. Proponents of this view argue that the division of labour between men and women reflects inherent biological differences, with women being naturally suited to roles of immanence, such as child-rearing and maintaining the household. According to this perspective, efforts to emancipate women from these traditional roles are viewed as disruptive to social harmony and as denying women their true nature.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- How De Beauvoir acknowledges that women have achieved certain legal rights and financial independence but argues that these gains are superficial when the deeper social structures of patriarchy remain. Women may enter the workforce, but they continue to face expectations of femininity and subservience.
- How according to De Beauvoir, men are free to pursue careers, ambition, and personal goals without being judged for neglecting familial duties, while women are criticized if they do the same.
- De Beauvoir’s critiques the notion that women’s participation in politics or the workforce represents true emancipation. In patriarchal societies, even when women attain public positions, they are often tokenized or pressured to conform to masculine norms of power.
- De Beauvoir’s emphasis on women’s internalization of patriarchal values that perpetuates their oppression. And this mindset continues to limit their potential for freedom, even if external conditions change.
- De Beauvoir’s critiques of the cultural myth of the ‘eternal feminine’, which presents women as passive, nurturing, and dependent by nature. This essentialist idea serves to reinforce patriarchal control, preventing women from fully emancipating themselves by keeping them confined to defined roles.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Luce Irigaray’s critiques De Beauvoir for suggesting that women must adopt traditionally male paths to liberation (e.g. entering the workforce or politics). She argues that true emancipation for women requires rethinking freedom outside of male models of power and instead embracing feminine difference and subjectivity.
- Judith Butler builds on De Beauvoir’s notion that “one is not born, but becomes a woman,” by emphasizing the performative nature of gender. She argues that gender is a social construct, not a biological fact, and suggests that the limitations of women’s emancipation within patriarchy stem from rigid gender binaries that constrain both women and men.

- Marxist feminists critique De Beauvoir for focusing primarily on patriarchy without fully considering the role of capitalism in women's oppression. According to thinkers like Silvia Federici, capitalist exploitation reinforces both gender and class inequalities. Women's unpaid labour in the home is essential to the capitalist economy, meaning that true emancipation requires not only gender liberation but also economic transformation.
- Kimberlé Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality highlights that De Beauvoir's analysis of emancipation may overlook the compounded challenges faced by women of colour. She argues that emancipation is limited not only by patriarchy but also by intersecting structures of racism and classism, which create additional barriers to autonomy and freedom for non-White women.
- Foucault's work on power and normativity can deepen De Beauvoir's critique by showing how social norms are enforced through institutional practices and discourse. His ideas suggest that women's emancipation is constrained by the way power circulates through everyday social practices.
- Some strands of cultural feminism challenge De Beauvoir's rejection of traditionally feminine roles. These thinkers argue that rather than seeking to escape domesticity or motherhood, women should revalue these roles as sources of strength and empowerment, advocating for a feminist society that honours the roles historically associated with women.
- How De Beauvoir warns that women who achieve economic or political success within a patriarchal framework may experience a form of false consciousness, believing they have achieved freedom while still being subject to male-dominated structures of power. The limitations of emancipation arise from a failure to recognize how deeply ingrained patriarchy is in both public and private spheres.
- Third-wave feminists critique De Beauvoir's emphasis on individual autonomy and freedom, arguing that collective empowerment and solidarity are equally important for achieving true emancipation. They suggest that De Beauvoir's existentialist focus on individual liberation may overlook the value of community and relational forms of agency.

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]

This question invites a judgement as to the importance of destiny in the development and behaviour of the gentleman (*junzi*). For the *junzi* understanding destiny / the 'will of heaven' is essential (20;3) Also the *junzi* must know and practice rituals (*li*) as well considering his words carefully. The 'will of heaven' is in fact beyond the worry of humans and destiny, the 'will of heaven' is beyond human understanding. Consequently, humans cannot change it. One's status and wealth are within the 'will of heaven' and therefore cannot be interfered with by humans. Therefore, the question could be asked as to 'why worry'. The answer is that the practice of rituals (*li*) and virtue (*de*) are what should be worried about as they are the way of the 'will of heaven' (20' 3). By worrying and striving for better achievement of righteousness (*yi*). *Yi* goes beyond justice and fairness, it encompasses the notion of living in harmony with the 'will of heaven'. This harmonious relationship is fundamental to Confucian society. The human does not concern themselves with 'the will of heaven' but can concentrate on the living in a good way. This is seen as living a full life and not worrying about destiny.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Destiny as predetermined life without free will
- The difference between ought to do (*tian ming*) and doing (*ming*). The implication is that some human choices might interfere with the 'will of heaven'
- Whether the *junzi* should worry more about morality rather than daily life. Does the *junzi* become an ascetic?
- The interaction of ritual or habit (*li*) and righteousness (*yi*) enacting and changing behaviour
- The acceptance of one's destiny as a factor in producing a harmonious society
- How is meaning in life understood in Confucian society?
- The relationship of endowment (*qi*) and virtue (*de*) with one's destiny
- Different notions of heaven, firstly the sky (physical aspects of the natural world) or secondly a transcendental aspect of nature, beyond human comprehension
- The will of heaven, the latter implying high virtues (5:12) as the essence of human nature and the ways of heaven.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether the acceptance of one's destiny produces passivity
- Whether in investigating destiny Confucius takes human action to a transcendental level and into the area of the spiritual
- The degree to which Confucian destiny negates human choice and decision making. Contrasts might be made with Sartre's views and existentialist view in general
- Is a resignation to destiny compatible with a dynamic market driven society? Is a passive highly moral person able to be successful in a competitive environment?
- The impact of destiny on social justice
- The limitation imposed on self-improvement if the 'will of heaven' is in action. Contrasts might be made with Buddhism and spiritual enhancement
- Is a moribund society a consequence of the idea of destiny? Is it a reaction to radical rapid change rather than planned improvement?
- Contrasts and similarities with Hindu *karma* establishing eternal paths and development

6. (a) Explain Confucius's idea of harmony. [10]

(b) Evaluate Confucius's idea of harmony. [15]

The idea of harmony (*he*) is central to Confucius's idea of society, social relationships and government. For the Confucius the ideal way of living is in harmony. Within the 5 basic relationships, or bonds, harmony takes on different forms. For father-son, there is affection; for Ruler – minister, there is righteousness; for husband –wife, recognition of different functions; for old –young, there is respect; and between friends, fidelity. These complex interpretations of relationships centre upon the different understanding of *he*. Harmony can imply conformity and compliance, but it is possible to see *he* more as order and quietness. Harmony might be compared to the Taoist idea of *wu wei*, a non-disturbance of that which is. For Confucius the virtuous person, (*junzi*) pursues harmony rather than sameness. Therefore, there are diversity and variety in the harmonious state. This diversity produces an acceptable tension which is resolved through patience and compromise. The harmonious society is not necessarily static but a social order that works and strives together. It can be contrasted with western notions of individual competitiveness. Instead of tension whereas, for Confucius the tension can form community spirit. The strength and importance of family and virtue (*de*) centre upon this striving to achieve harmony. Filial piety (*xiao*) is not unquestioned acceptance but more a realisation that a better life is achieved through working together, i.e. with social harmony (*he*). *The Analects* states that “of the things brought about by the rites, harmony is the most valuable” [1:12].

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Non-confrontational approaches to conflict resolution
- The interrelationship between propriety and harmony
- The relationship of righteousness and society to prevent social chaos: righteous developing communication and cooperation along with a fair distribution of wealth
- Ways in which the little man (4:16) can strive to be a *junzi* through benevolence creating a route to social harmony
- The notion that love is an innate emotion, growing from kindness to one's fellow humans and is reached through benevolence which is a driver to harmony and social morality
- The expansion of the harmony beyond human relations to human interaction with nature

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Ideas of social justice and Confucian ideas of harmony
- The ways in which utilitarianism contradicts Confucian ideas of righteousness and harmony-
- If harmony is achieved through propriety can this result in static societies and eventual decadence
- The degree to which Confucius is naive in his understanding of human nature and his stance of love and benevolence as a selfless pursuit
- Contrasts between Hobbesian and Darwinian views of human nature and how stability in societies might be achieved
- The impact of Confucius's experience of 'warring states' upon his approach to harmony and his desire for humans to seek it
- Contrast might be made with Taoist ideas of harmony
- Personal moral cultivation – self-improvement – improvement implying selflessness

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]

Descartes’ philosophy of reality is grounded in his belief that there are three distinct substances: God, mind, and matter. Descartes explains that both material objects and the mind are substances, capable of existing independently. He states, “I think that a stone is a substance, or is a thing capable of existing independently, and I also think that I am a substance” (Meditation III). This highlights his dualistic view of reality, which separates the mind (*res cogitans*) as a thinking, immaterial substance from matter (*res extensa*), which is extended and occupies space. Descartes further elaborates on the third and most important substance—God. He describes God as the infinite, immutable, and independent being who created all things, including mind and matter. He writes, “By the word ‘God’ I understand a substance that is infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, supremely intelligent, supremely powerful, and which created both myself and everything else...that exists” (Meditation III). In Descartes’s view, God is the foundation of all existence, unifying mind and matter within the framework of divine creation. When evaluating Descartes’s three-substance view, critics question the interaction between mind and matter, particularly how an immaterial mind can affect the material body. Furthermore, some argue that Descartes’s reliance on God as the ultimate substance raises metaphysical difficulties. Nonetheless, Descartes’s framework provides a compelling account of the distinct nature of thought, materiality, and the divine in his understanding of reality.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Descartes’ definition of *res cogitans* as a thinking, non-material substance.
- The concept of *res extensa* as an extended, material substance that occupies space.
- Descartes’ claim that both mind and matter exist independently as substances.
- Descartes’ argument that God is an infinite, independent substance that created both mind and matter.
- The idea that God, mind, and matter are three distinct substances with different essences.
- The role of clear and distinct perceptions in affirming the existence of these three substances.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The mind-body interaction problem and how an immaterial mind can affect the physical body.
- Spinoza’s critique of Descartes’s substance dualism in favour of monism.
- The lack of explanation for how two distinct substances like mind and body interact.
- The metaphysical difficulty of relying on God as the ultimate cause of interaction between mind and matter.
- Hume’s scepticism about the existence of independent substances and his critique of innate ideas.
- The difficulty of explaining how innate ideas, such as the understanding of extension, are implanted by God and comprehended without sensory input.
- Kant’s critique of Descartes’s notion of substances and how the mind structures experience, especially questioning the role of innate ideas.
- Whether Descartes’ reliance on God to unify mind and matter adequately resolves the metaphysical issues raised by dualism, including the connection between God’s will and human understanding of reality.

8. (a) **Explain Descartes’s method of doubt.** [10]

(b) **Evaluate Descartes’s method of doubt.** [15]

René Descartes’ method of doubt, as outlined in the *Meditations on First Philosophy*, is a foundational aspect of his philosophy. In the First Meditation, Descartes seeks “to demolish everything completely and start again right from the foundations.” This radical and hyperbolic approach leads him to question the reliability of all his previous beliefs. Descartes introduces his method of doubt as a tool to eliminate uncertainty and build a solid foundation for knowledge, adopting a strategy to “consider everything as false” (First Meditation) unless it can be known with absolute certainty. This method is characterised by its universality; Descartes applies doubt to all beliefs, including those that are often considered indubitable, such as mathematical truths and the existence of the external world. His famous dream argument raises doubts about whether we can distinguish between dreaming and waking states. Additionally, he introduces the possibility of a malicious deceiver, capable of manipulating all perceptions, further casting doubt on the certainty of sensory experience. Evaluating Descartes’s method of doubt reveals its strengths and limitations. On one hand, it establishes a rigorous standard for knowledge, leading to the indubitable conclusion of *cogito, ergo sum* (“I think, therefore I am”). However, critics argue that Descartes’s scepticism may go too far, leading to unnecessary doubt about basic aspects of reality, such as the role of sensory experience and empirical knowledge. Moreover, the reliance on clear and distinct ideas as the sole criterion for truth leaves open questions about the completeness of Descartes’s method in addressing all aspects of knowledge.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Descartes’s assertion that the method of doubt aims to establish a firm foundation for knowledge
- The radical approach of seeking to demolish all previous beliefs for clarity
- The universality of doubt applied to all beliefs including mathematical truths
- The hyperbolic nature of his scepticism which questions even the most certain knowledge.
- The strategy to “consider everything as false” unless proven with absolute certainty
- The conclusion of *cogito, ergo sum* as a result of the method of doubt affirming the self as a thinking being

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The effectiveness of the method of doubt in establishing foundational knowledge
- Gassendi’s objections that question the practicality of radical doubt and assert that some beliefs must be accepted as a basis for further inquiry
- Critics like Hume who challenge the applicability of radical doubt to everyday beliefs.
- The potential overreach of scepticism that may lead to unwarranted doubt about reality.
- The argument that Descartes’s reliance on innate ideas complicates his method of doubt.
- How modern philosophy critiques the separation of mind and body in Descartes’s sceptical approach.
- The issue of whether all beliefs can truly be subjected to doubt without losing essential knowledge.
- The reliance on clear and distinct ideas as a potential limitation in Descartes’s epistemology.

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]

In Chapter One, Fanon underlines his thesis that Black people have been dehumanised by the process of colonisation. This experience is illustrated vividly through the experience of language use in different settings. These include the language used by the returning Antillean after spending time, and assimilating the French language, in France. They also include the use of language by White people towards those of colour, and the use of language between different groups of Black people – like those from the Antilles and different islands, and those from Africa (even if they serve in the Army together). Creole is discouraged by Black teachers of Black children in schools on the islands, in an attempt to enable the children to throw off the shackles of underdevelopment. And the islanders who travel to France demonstrate their belief in the superiority of the colonising French culture by only speaking Creole to their servants. In establishing a new identity through adopting the French language, the travelling Antilleans have denied their own culture, their past and their very being. In the attempted kindness of White people to speak pidgin with Black people, the colonising process of non-recognition of the Black people is reinforced. The use of language is extended to the general treatment of intellectual achievements by Black people who must prove themselves more than their White counterparts, due to the assumption of lesser intelligence and ability.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The language assimilation by the islander on spending time in France – including the imitation of diction and a particular way of speaking deployed by the White French
- The language of the returning islander
- The use of Creole and what it signifies
- The use of pidgin and what it signifies
- The example of the Black poet

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is Fanon's account of the use of language by both Black people and White people, as an essential element of colonisation, convincing?
- How does the use of language by the returning Antillean show the impact of colonisation of the returning person?
- Is the assimilation of French by visiting islanders to France a contributory factor to their inferiority complex and lack of self-esteem?
- Is Fanon's claims about stereotypes of Black people in White cultural products (e.g. writing, film and other linguistic representations) convincing?
- The example of Césaire – the surprise of the audience and Fanon's response
- Does this view of the use of language by the colonised, stand the test of time? Fanon writes in early 1950s, since when language and expression reflecting original – or distinctly Black modern – cultures has flourished in France (and other post-colonial settings).

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]

This question centres on Chapter 2, 'The Woman of Color and the White Man', where Fanon explores the question of the desire of Antillean women to have relationships with White men. He uses a novel (semi-autobiographical written under a pseudonym) to help his analysis and illustrate his thesis that the sub-conscious has a lot to do with the desire for, and the dynamics of, such a mixed-race relationship. The novel's character, Mayotte, knows that she will never quite be good enough (or 'respectable') for the White man, because she is not White enough. There is an implication of possessing dirtiness that seems to be assumed by the woman of colour. Mayotte is never accepted by White people, but she herself is at fault for loving the man's Whiteness, according to Fanon, and he believes the book, portraying the love Mayotte has acts as an encourager of bad decisions among Black women. "There is White potential in every one of us". Being "... unable to blacken... the world, she endeavours to whiten it in body and mind". Mayotte is glad to learn she has a White grandmother.

Fanon hints at Freud (and elsewhere mentions Anna Freud) with a distinction between White and Black associations: "I am white... I embody beauty and virtue", "I am Black ... in fusion with the world ...losing my id in the heart of the cosmos". For the woman of colour to have relations with the White man is to wish to be more White in a subconscious way. Even in a conscious way the preference for White relationships is made by "...a lot of girls from Martinique..." who regard being in France as an 'escape'.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Fanon's description of the unavoidable inferiority and lack of self-esteem of the Black islander on coming into contact with White people and culture
- Good faith and authenticity – Fanon's use of Sartre
- The account of the subconscious – Fanon's use of Freud
- The use of *I Am a Martinican Woman*
- Self-withdrawal and the ego – the quote from Anna Freud
- Fanon's treatment of the character, Nini

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Is the mix between philosophical and psychoanalytic thought accessible and convincing?
- Is Fanon fair to the author of *I Am a Martinican Woman*? Is there nothing commendable or progressive about interracial relationships?
- Is Fanon's fears for women returning from France to the Antilles justified?
- Is Fanon fair or convincing about Nini's desire to be White, and is his portrayal of Dédé persuasive?
- See the testimony of the challenges bi-racial people face, who fit in neither, White nor Black groups entirely – whereas Fanon suggests Mayotte's husband believes the son to be superior because he is less Black
- Is the use of Anna Freud on self-loathing convincing?
- See Fanon's basis in psychiatry and his subsequent conclusions about the neuroses of both Black and White people – is this convincing, scientifically and philosophically?
- Is the behaviour he is describing in his account of inter-racial relationships really explained by historically imposed social structures or by contemporary individual choice?

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]

This question focuses on views directly expressed in Chapters 1 and 5. Mill argues that children below the age of maturity do not possess the reflective, rational and moral capacities of adults. Hence, they are excluded from the exercise of freedom, need to be protected from external harm, cared for by others and protected against doing harm to themselves or others. Adults, as autonomous individuals, possess their own character free from external constraints and can exercise their freedom to cultivate personal interests, act independently and cooperate freely within the bounds of the harm principle'. Children must undergo a lengthy programme of education, first by their parents and then by the state, so that they can achieve adult status and acquire the right to the meaningful and legitimate exercise of freedom in an autonomous, intelligent and independent manner. Mill argues that the state has the right to restrict the freedom of children and mandate their education due to the state's interests in promoting the development of contributing citizens. Counter views such as Dewey's claim that children should not be seen as deficient adults, or Piaget's more nuanced account of child development could be used as critiques of Mill.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Mill's view that the independence and freedom of the individual is of supreme importance and can only be limited by 'the harm principle'
- Justification of the exclusion of children from the exercise of freedom on issues of personal, intellectual and moral development and maturity; definition of childhood and issues of determining the age of maturity
- Mill's paternalism in his views of children; the parents' responsibility to protect children; the state's obligation to protect children
- Education as the means of promoting children to the full exercise of freedom, autonomy and the enjoyment of the rights and status of adults; equal access vs equal right to education
- Utilitarian concerns in Mill's view of children; children deserving of benevolent concern and justified protective measures as a guarantee of maximum happiness and safety
- Alternative views on the status of children in society, for example, Plato, Bertrand Russell, Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Difficulties and ambiguities in the definition of childhood; chronological age, psychological development, physical characteristics, intellectual achievement, for example, Freud's use of psychosexual and psychological stages for the development of children; Derrida's view of the development of language and the exercise of power as the dividing line between childhood and adulthood
- Protection versus emancipation of children, for example, Judith Butler on protecting children from prevailing cultural and generational norms; Paolo Freire on protecting children from negative educational practices
- Exclusion of children from the exercise of freedom; right to freedom versus right to protection; interests of the child, interests of the parents and interests of the state, for example, similarities Locke's view that children are not autonomous individuals; Janusz Korczak on prohibiting the exclusion of children from the exercise of human rights
- Efficacy of education regarding the development of children to adulthood; number of children benefiting; success and failure in education; state mandated vs state directed educational programmes, for example, Montessori on the protection of a child's potential; Rousseau on respect for developmental stages of childhood
- Parental versus state rights regarding children, for example, custody, education, religious practices, medical practices, gender issues

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]**

Mill argues for the primacy of the principle of utility in Chapter 1, demonstrates its efficacy in Chapters 3 and demonstrates its application in Chapter 5. He says: "I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being" (p.20). Mill argues that utility can function as the ultimate appeal since it provides a clear, objective, measurable and universal standard for assessing the morality of all actions with the Harm Principle serving as a controlling guide for the application of the principle of utility. Mill believes that the principle of utility promotes the maximisation of happiness and the identification of preferable actions which lead to happiness, supports the pursuit of truth and the growth of knowledge, protects an individual's rights and liberties, engages an individual's higher intellectual and moral capacities. Finally, Mill argues that the principle of utility aligns perfectly with the general welfare, development and happiness of individuals who consequently contribute to the happiness and welfare of the state. Counterarguments include those levelled by deontologists who believe that consequences, and therefore utility, cannot be accurately predicted and so should not form the basis of moral reasoning.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The nature, scope and application of the principle of utility, for example, direct and indirect utilitarianism, act, rule and preference utilitarianism; utility as a measurable, reliable standard relating the assessment of behaviour to the interests of the individual
- The principle of utility and the pursuit of happiness; quantitative and qualitative happiness; happiness and personal development and flourishing; happiness of the individual promotes happiness in the state
- Utility grounded in the interests of the individual as a progressive being; utility as supportive of freedom of thought and action; utility as a counter to 'the tyranny of the majority' and the 'despotism of custom'; utility as a means of preserving personal and civic rights and liberties
- The principle of utility as an inspiration and motivation for the reform of the legal system and liberalisation of the educational system; The principle of utility in the various utilitarian philosophical traditions, for example, act, rule, preference and ideal utilitarianism

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The advisability and efficacy of selecting a single principle as the final appeal of ethical issues, moral absolutism, for example, Kant and Aquinas vs. moral relativism, for example, Richard Rorty and J L Mackie
- Positive aspects of the principle of utility as a means of deciding ethical and moral issues, for example, Jeremy Bentham's hedonic calculus as a measurable method; Peter Singer and his application of utilitarian principles to a variety of global issues
- Limitations of utilitarianism and the principle of utility as effective means of deciding ethical and moral issues, for example, Elizabeth Anscombe on the difficulties in identifying and assessing consequences; G E Moore's rejection of the reduction of ethical terms to natural, measurable properties
- Problems in defining happiness as the goal of human endeavours in personal and social contexts, for example, Kant's view that happiness cannot be an end in itself; Sartre and Kierkegaard on happiness as living an authentic life; Stoicism and happiness as living in harmony with the natural order
- The efficacy of the principle of utility as the reliable guarantee of complete liberty of thought, the free development of individuality and the maximisation of personal and societal happiness; Inner freedom as a precondition for the determination of all values
- The efficacy of the proof that the utility principle demonstrates that happiness is the goal of all human endeavour because people do, in fact, desire it either in whole or in part; happiness as an intrinsic good; individuals do desire happiness vs. people ought to desire happiness
- Comparisons of Mill's understanding of the principle of utility and the views of non-Western philosophical traditions, for example, the principle of Istislah in Islamic philosophy, the principle of Ubuntu in South African philosophy and the principle of dukkha in Buddhist philosophy.

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]

Nietzsche traces the genealogy of guilt to its relationship with debt. He draws on similarities between the German word for debt and the German word for guilt to suggest that the two are closely related: "the main moral concept 'Schuld' ('guilt') descends from the very material concept of 'Schulden' ('debts')?". The history of debt is described as part of the "most primitive personal relationship there is" - the relationship between buyer and seller. Nietzsche also links debt and guilt closely to the Christian God, who makes the ultimate sacrifice to save people from engendering an irredeemable level of debt and guilt. Nietzsche sees guilt as part of the will to nothingness, a form of self-denial that guides modern values. Guilt stands in contrast to the ideals of the nobles whose actions and ideals are life affirming, but also dangerous and harmful to others. Students might respond to Nietzsche's nihilism with reference to the value of religions, ethical theories, and social harmony, and the role that guilt plays in these.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Nietzsche's genealogical methodology
- The link between etymology and the origin of ideals
- Master morality which rejects the value of guilt
- Slave morality, its history, and the centrality of guilt
- The relationship between guilt and the ascetic ideal
- Christianity and guilt.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether the link between the German words for debts (*Schulden*) and guilt (*Schuld*) translates into other languages
- Critics of genealogy as a means of reaching conclusions about ethics, e.g. in contrast to Kantian ethics which relies on rationalism
- The social value of guilt
- The importance of values as a basis for social harmony, e.g. Plato's just state in his *Republic*
- Nietzsche's moral scepticism, as contrasted with objectivist accounts of morality, e.g. utilitarianism
- Whether religion is necessarily negative, and its positive aspects
- The relationship between authenticity and guilt, and links between Nietzsche's views and later existentialist thought, e.g. Sartre, Camus, De Beauvoir.

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]

Nietzsche’s critique of morality considers the use of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ and the idea of a good man. He holds that the term good as changed over time. First, it referred to strength and power. The good man was the noble, master, or warrior. Today, this has inverted, and goodness refers to what Nietzsche calls a slave morality. Here, being meek, causing no harm and self-denial are idealised. Nietzsche thinks that this account of goodness is creating a ‘sick animal’. He thinks that this history of morality is to blame for the descent of man: “up till now, nobody has had the remotest doubt or hesitation in placing higher value on ‘the good man’ than on ‘the evil’... What if the opposite were true? What if a regressive trait lurked in ‘the good man’, likewise a danger, an enticement, a poison, a narcotic. . . So that morality itself were to blame if man, as species, never reached his highest potential power and splendour?” In evaluating Nietzsche’s views, students may refer to ethical theories that argue for the importance of contemporary notions of goodness, e.g. utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, virtue ethics, care ethics.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- Nietzsche’s account of the noble
- Master morality, its dangers, and its affirmation of life, i.e. the analogy with the predatory animal and its prey
- Slave morality as a form of denial of life
- The will to nothingness and the ascetic ideal
- The history of ideals and morality and the genealogical methodology
- The inversion of good as powerful and strong to weak and submissive.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Other accounts of the good, e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Ayer
- Ethical theories with contrasting accounts of the good to Nietzsche, e.g. Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, virtue ethics
- Feminism and Nietzschean ideals, e.g. Gilligan’s ethics of care and the importance of relationships in ethics
- Historical accounts of Nietzsche’s master morality in action e.g. Machiavelli’s Italy, Europe during the Second World War
- The relationship between religion and the good, e.g. Marx’s claim that religion is the opium of the masses
- Alternative accounts of the idea that our current ideals have caused humans to be the sick animal, e.g. Taylor and authenticity, Sartre’s existentialism.

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]

This question addresses Nussbaum's view that her Capabilities Approach is a contemporary perspective resting upon a rich tradition of philosophical ideas with their origins in ancient Greco-Roman philosophical traditions. While the question focuses primarily on the first section of Chapter 7, responses can also refer to the details of the Capabilities Approach found in Chapter 2 and to an exploration of fundamental entitlements found in Chapter 4. Nussbaum identifies Socrates, Aristotle and some of the Stoic philosophers (Epictetus, Seneca, Cicero) as contributors to foundational ideas characteristic of her Capabilities Approach. She goes on to identify several philosophical themes including, but not limited to, notions of human flourishing, the development of moral and intellectual character, freedom of choice, personal dignity, the development of talents and abilities, the need for education, and political support for a quality lifestyle. Nussbaum expands her exploration of Greco-Roman traditions by considering other philosophical traditions as sources for her Capabilities Approach (Indian traditions, other Western traditions from the 17th to the 20th centuries).

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The Capabilities Approach and its roots in the history of philosophical ideas
- Socrates's belief in the importance of dialogue, critical thinking and a virtuous, balanced lifestyle as early sources for ideas characteristic of the capabilities approach
- Aristotle's view that a flourishing life of virtue (eudaimonia) is required for the realisation of a person's potential, the development of that person's capabilities and the nurturing of moral and intellectual character in the context of a common, universal human nature as foundational themes for the development of the Capabilities Approach
- Aristotle's belief that, given each person's political nature, the state is responsible for promoting all elements contributing to a good life in which each person can make ethical decisions and take personal responsibility for them
- The Stoic perspective, clearly in line with the Capabilities Approach, that all people, by virtue of their common human nature, are deserving of dignity, reverence, integrity and equal respect and have within themselves the capacity to make ethical decisions
- The Stoic perspective that the worth of a person is not measured by material norms nor by the satisfaction of physical desires and pleasures but by a virtuous life lived to the fullest

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The efficacy of the correlation of ancient Greco-Roman philosophical ideas with contemporary life experiences and situations, for example, Alasdair MacIntyre's application of Aristotelian philosophy to issues of contemporary virtue ethics and communitarian political theory
- Greco-Roman philosophical views for a flourishing, virtuous life as means of countering contemporary materialistic, instrumental and occasionally hedonistic approaches to leading one's life
- The possibility that Nussbaum interprets unrealistically and overly optimistically Aristotle's beliefs in equal opportunity, a universal human nature, the nurturing of capabilities and the responsibilities of the state regarding the common good
- Balancing the positive features of ancient philosophical perspectives with the complexities of modern-day life in contemporary societies, for example, Viktor Frankl's incorporation of Stoic ideas into Logotherapy; Henry B. Veatch's modern interpretation of Aristotelian ethics
- Looking beyond ancient Greece and Rome to other contemporary civilisations and cultures for additional sources for the themes of the capabilities approach, for example, the views of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi; Maori and Ubuntu philosophies
- Stoicism as a source of alienation, isolation, apathy and a disregard for the condition of others rather than an inspiration for a sense of solidarity and community

- The extent to which Aristotelian and Stoic philosophical perspectives act as convincing foundational principles for Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach
- Modern philosophical views that develop and improve the application of the Greco-Roman philosophical ideas, for example, Adam Smith's reliance on Stoic values; the natural law theories of Aquinas, Locke, Hobbes, Rousseau; the Utilitarian theories of Bentham, Mill and T. H. Green

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]

This question focuses on views put forth in Chapter 6 that the nation plays a fundamental moral role in implementing policies and establishing institutions which create an environment in which individuals can exercise freedom, establish self-definition, attain well-being and achieve the central capabilities. Nussbaum considers how the state supports the principles of the Capabilities Approach in Chapters 2 and 4. She then explores a nation's duty to serve the interests of social justice in the equitable provision of education, healthcare, employment and personal security with special attention to the situation of marginalised groups in Chapter 8. Finally, she examines the impact of global inequality, and the obligations affluent nations have towards poorer nations in Chapter 6. Notions of international cooperation and a commitment to the promotion of universal human rights provide a wider context for Nussbaum's assessment of the obligations of a state. Nussbaum argues that the achievement of central capabilities is not a matter of simple utilitarian calculation nor is it dependent solely on the philanthropic contributions of wealthy individuals. Rather, Nussbaum concludes that global problems require effective institutional solutions which securely place individuals above the threshold of the central capabilities.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The state as a responsible and accountable moral agent acting in the interests of its citizens, for example, Alasdair MacIntyre's view of a nation's political and social structure as frameworks for moral agency
- The ten central capabilities and the role of the state in insuring that all citizens have access to them to achieve a life of dignity
- Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach as a theory of personal and social justice which includes respect for practical reason, political empowerment, the right to autonomy, freedom and self-definition
- The responsibilities of more affluent nations to assist poorer nations in the effort to get their citizens over the minimum threshold of the central capabilities, for example, Peter Singer and 'Effective Altruism'
- The solution to inequalities and disadvantages involves a nation's political structure, its institutions and its distribution of rights and responsibilities, e.g. formulating just laws, ensuring equal opportunities, creating effective and equitable public services, providing financial support when legitimately required, dealing with poverty
- The extent to which national and global justice can be accomplished by utilitarian methods of calculation or by philanthropy, for example, Richard Brandt's global utilitarian ethics
- The efficacy of dominant economic and financial theories of development in addressing human needs and resolving issues of equality and justice, for example, Keynesian economic theory

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The effectiveness of the Capabilities Approach in dealing with seemingly arbitrary inequalities, e.g. basic life chances, race, gender, class, place of birth, education and employment opportunities, access to healthcare, for example, the European Union's 'Charter of Fundamental Rights' promotion of respect for human dignity, personal freedom, equality and the rule of law
- Threats to personal freedom and access to central capabilities in the current world order
- The redistribution of global wealth so that marginalized groups can achieve a reasonable lifestyle, for example, similarities with John Rawls's theory of social justice which sees all individuals as equals living in a cooperative political system
- The balance required between a state's moral obligations to its own citizens and its responsibilities to poorer, disadvantaged nations and their citizens, for example, current contemporary debates on carrying for refugees and migrants

- The possibility and/or necessity of enforcing a state's moral obligations embodied in the Capabilities Approach, for example, intervention in a nation that fails to do justice to the implementation of the central capabilities; similarities with Michael Walzer's views on the right to intervene and the duty to protect
- Beyond promoting the well-being of its citizens, the extent to which a nation has a responsibility to help the citizens of a less-fortunate nation
- The extent to which national and global justice can be accomplished by utilitarian methods of calculation or by philanthropy

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]

The claim stems from Chapter 7 of Ortega y Gasset's text and invites students to explore a central concept in his book: nobility. Responses might explain the reasons why Ortega y Gasset states that "the privileges of nobility are not in their origin concessions or favours; on the contrary, they are conquests" (p. 63) – *noblesse oblige*. Students might highlight the difference between private and common rights: "Private rights or privileges are not, then, passive possession and mere enjoyment, but they represent the standard attained by personal effort. On the other hand, common rights, [...] are passive property" (p. 64). Students might explore the relationship between nobility and aristocracy and discuss the distinction between genuine and debased aristocracy. Students might consider an etymological analysis of the terms "noble" and "nobility", which refer to "well know". Responses might explain the connection between noble, select and excellent, and why Ortega y Gasset mentions ascetics. Students might discuss other philosophical views on the dialectic of master-slave or noble-slave, e.g. those of Hegel, Nietzsche, or in relation to democracy and aristocracy, e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, de Tocqueville, Mill, Dewey.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concepts of "noble" and "nobility"
- The etymological meaning of "noble"
- Private and common rights
- The distinction between genuine and debased aristocracy
- The historical process that led from the noble to the mass-man

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether the noble is linked to competency
- The issue of common rights as passive property instead of being seen as the outcomes of political participation and social struggle, e.g. Taylor's view on soft despotism
- Aristocracy and political government, e.g. Plato, Aristotle
- Nobility and the risk of democracy, e.g. de Tocqueville's concept of the tyranny of majority, Mill
- Democracy as setting opportunities and freedom for the individuals, e.g. Dewey, Sen, Nussbaum
- The dialectic of the master-slave, e.g. Hegel
- The dialectic of the noble-slave, e.g. Nietzsche.

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]

The claim stems from Chapter 8 of Ortega y Gasset's text and invites students to explore the central concept of the mass-man and, particularly, one of its essential characteristics: vulgarity. Students might explain what Ortega y Gasset means for vulgarity of the mass-man: "Once for all, he accepts the stock of commonplaces, prejudices, fag-ends of ideas or simply empty words [...] and [...] is prepared to impose them everywhere" (p. 70). Responses might highlight the incapacity of the mass-man to listen and the fact that "there is no question concerning public life, in which he does not intervene, blind and deaf as he is, imposing his 'opinions'" (p. 71). Responses might consider the diverse fields in which the mass-man intervenes, from politics to art. Furthermore, students might emphasize Ortega y Gasset's view on culture as intellectual activity grounded in the respect of higher rules and common standards to which have recourse: "When all these things are lacking there is no culture; there is in the strictest sense of the word, barbarism" (p. 72). Students might focus on Ortega y Gasset's view on Syndicalism and Fascism, which present "a type of man who does not want to give reasons or to be right, but simply shows himself resolved to impose his opinions. This is the new thing: the right not to be reasonable, the 'reason of unreason'" (p. 73). Responses might refer to violence as *prima* or *unica ratio*, instead of being *ultima ratio*. Finally, students might explore the concept of liberalism and liberal democracy, as opposed to barbarism, which is intended as the tendency to disassociation. Students might take into account other philosophical views on mass society, e.g. Bauman, the Frankfurt School; on liberalism and democracy, e.g. Dewey, Nussbaum, Nozick; or discuss authoritarianism.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of vulgarity
- The concept of the mass-man
- Culture as linked to common, higher standards
- Syndicalism and Fascism as expression of the mass-man
- Barbarism as the tendency to disassociation
- Violence as *prima* or *unica ratio*

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Whether culture intended as specialization fosters vulgarity or apathy, e.g. Gehlen
- Culture as communication: the role of dialogue, e.g. Buber, Habermas, Taylor
- Vulgarity as incapacity to listen to others
- Whether technological progress fosters vulgarity or intellectual activity; the role of the internet and social media
- Whether the increase of life in terms of wealth fosters vulgarity, e.g. Bauman's view of liquid society
- Whether consumerism fosters vulgarity, since it spreads commonplaces and common habits or needs, e.g. the Frankfurt School
- Other views on liberalism and liberal democracy, e.g. Dewey, Nussbaum, Nozick
- Other views on democracy, e.g. de Tocqueville's concept of the tyranny of the majority
- Whether conformism fosters vulgarity, apathy and, in the end, authoritarianism, e.g. Foucault.

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]

Statement taken from 484b–484c. Just as a city will function more efficiently if the cobbler and the merchant do their jobs and no one else, so it will function better if its warfare is conducted by specialists, a standing army, or an army of guardians (374). But this brings with it the fear that a permanent class of warriors could impose a self-serving dictatorship on the defenceless citizenry. In such a city there could be no justice. Therefore, Socrates’s statement places the analysis of the function of the guardians in the light of the observance of the laws of the city. In doing so, he opens up a multifaceted discussion about power and its exercise in the city, and calls for the qualities of the philosopher for the city’s leaders: “Since the philosophers are the ones who are able to grasp what is always the same in all respects, while those who cannot [...] are not philosophers, which of the two should be the leaders of a city?” (484b). Accordingly, responses may explore and evaluate arguments and counterarguments related to some of the aspects present in the discussion, such as the importance of knowledge in guiding political life or the rule of law as the best possible political order

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The guardians should have central characteristics of the philosopher, as they bring knowledge to political life
- The radical political idea of the *Republic* that either philosophers will become kings or kings will learn philosophy
- Understanding the justice of laws in our world presupposes clear theoretical knowledge of justice
- The education of the guardians, including their moral training
- Justice between might and right, i.e. between power and morality; individual convenience and common interest
- To what extent could a permanent warrior class could impose a selfish dictatorship on citizens?

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- How should the rule of law be understood?
- The conflict between understanding the material realities of politics and ideal or utopian goals in Plato’s political philosophy
- How important is knowledge in guiding political life?
- Is the *Republic*’s political philosophy paternalistic?
- Is Plato a theorist of totalitarian government?
- What can be learned or applied from Plato’s idea of the rule of law as the key to political order in relation to contemporary political life?
- Does the idea that philosophers should rule make sense today?

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]

The question focuses on this central idea, which can be developed in different ways according to its reflection in the *Republic*. Explanations may refer to a nuclear point of origin: if perceptible things and characteristics are always in flux, always becoming, how can anything be something definite or determinate? How can one know or say what anything is? The Forms offer a possible permanent structure of the world beyond what appears and changes in what is perceived: "We also say there is a beautiful itself and a good itself. And so, in the case of all the things that we then posited as many, we reverse ourselves and posit a single form belonging to each, since we suppose there is a single one, and call it what each is." (507b). Counter-arguments can be developed regarding the evaluation of some of the hard questions involved, such as: the nature of Forms themselves, the relations between the abstract and the concrete, or the way of knowing Forms as such.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The activity of knowing as consisting in trying to comprehend the nature of what truly is beyond appearances and changes of perception
- What the Forms are (507b)
- The Form of Good is like the sun (507c–509c)
- The relationships between the Forms and the objects of the visible world can be identified along a divided line (509d–511e)
- The relationship of human beings to the Forms is like the relationship of prisoners in a cave to the light (514a–517c)
- Universals vs. particulars.

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The extent to which it is possible to gain knowledge of the very abstract nature of the Forms
- The problems that are involved in the articulation of the Forms with the world of perception, e.g. one and many
- Mathematics as a model of knowledge through Forms
- Plato's Theory of Forms and the *a priori* - *a posteriori* debate in epistemology
- The metaphysics of the Forms: the extent to which they constitute the world given by perception, Aristotle's position
- Plato's theory of Forms and contemporary debates in epistemology and ethics, e.g. criticisms by Feyerabend and Nietzsche
- Plato's theory of Forms impact on shaping the European philosophical tradition: Whitehead's characterization of it as consisting of a series of footnotes to Plato.

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]

The claim stems from Chapter 3 of Taylor’s text and invites students to explore the source of authenticity in modern culture. In earlier moral views, “being in touch with some source – God, say, or the Idea of the Good – was considered essential to full being. Only now the source we have to connect with is deep in us” (p. 26). Responses might explore the concept of authenticity and moral ideal and its relationship with individualism. Also, students might discuss the role that liberalism plays in modern authenticity. Responses might highlight the risks of authenticity as a debased moral ideal: the “slide to subjectivism”. Responses might explain the reasons why Taylor refers to Rousseau and his concept of *amour propre*: “Rousseau presents the issue of morality as that of our following a voice of nature within us” (p. 27). Students might also mention another concept expressed by Rousseau: That of self-determining freedom, and the other philosophical views linked to it, e.g. Kant, Hegel, Marx. Responses might compare Rousseau’s view to Herder’s standpoint: “Each person has his or her own “measure” is his way of putting it” (p. 28). Finally, students might consider counterarguments, e.g. Plato’s view on the role of the individual, or the role that religion plays in determining the good for individuals, e.g. Augustine, Aquinas, Pascal, Kierkegaard.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to

- The concept of authenticity and its origin
- The source of authenticity in past and modern times
- The idea of disenchantment of the world
- The importance of Rousseau for modern culture according to Taylor
- The concept of self-determining freedom

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Rousseau’s concept of *amour propre*
- Other views on self-determining freedom, e.g. Kant, Hegel, Marx
- Other views on freedom, e.g. Hobbes, Locke, Bobbio, Berlin
- Herder’s view in relation to modern authenticity
- The risks that authenticity fosters a slide to subjectivism, e.g. Hare, Mackie
- Authenticity, individualism and moral hedonism, e.g. Bentham, Singer
- Authenticity as fostering moral intuitionism, e.g. Sidgwick, Scheler
- Alternative points of view on the role of the self-determining individual in other views, e.g. Plato, Locke
- The role of religion in shaping individual authenticity, e.g. Augustine, Aquinas, Pascal, Kierkegaard.

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]

The claim stems from Chapter 8 of Taylor’s text and invites students to explore the role that art can play in a proper understanding of the moral ideal of authenticity. Students might explain the distinction between two kinds of self-referentiality, of *manner* and of *matter*. “Self-referentiality of manner is unavoidable in our culture. To confuse the two is to create the illusion that self-referentiality of matter is equally inescapable. The confusion lends legitimacy to the worst forms of subjectivism” (p. 82). Responses might mention the change in modern art marked by the shift from art as imitation (*mimesis*) to art as creation (*poiesis*). “We could describe the change in this way: where formerly poetic language could rely on certain publicly available orders of meaning, it now has to consist in a language of articulated sensibility” (p. 84). Students might explore the symbolic use of language and views on its possible limits, e.g. Wittgenstein, Dewey. Responses might mention the change from a view on nature as source for imitation to nature as inspiring creation or cooperation, e.g. Emerson’s view on artistic creation. Beyond poetry and its symbolic language, e.g. Rilke, students might refer to painting, e.g. Friedrich. Finally, students might discuss the role of art in society and whether it can have a social or political function, e.g. Croce, Dewey.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The concept of authenticity and its debased interpretations as self-fulfillment, self-determining freedom, narcissism, hedonism
- Authenticity as self-referential
- Distinction between self-referentiality of manner and of matter
- Distinction between art as imitation and as creation
- The role of language in art, e.g. subtler languages
- The relationship between art and nature

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- Other views on art as *mimesis* and *poiesis*, e.g. Aristotle, Frankfurt School
- Art and its language, e.g. Croce
- Whether language can have a symbolic function, e.g. Wittgenstein, Schutz
- Whether art can have a social function, e.g. Croce, Dewey
- Other views on the relationship between art and nature, e.g. Emerson
- The role of ecology and the risks of anthropocentrism
- Whether the change in modern art fosters subjectivism
- Whether technology supports or limits creation in art

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]

Metaphors with water appear often. This reflects water's importance and prevalence in the natural world, as well as its behaviour in various forms. The work speaks often of the 'flow' of things as a universal natural principle and refers to water specifically. In Chapter 8 the closest identity with the Tao can be seen where water is described as the 'highest good', benefiting creatures rather than contending with them. In Chapter 66 there is a metaphor of the rivers and the sea being the 'king' of the hundred valleys, because they adopt a lower position, illustrating the paradox of the ruler not being 'over' the people but 'humble before them'. Water is soft and yielding, but it has strength despite its impermanence and lack of substance. In Chapter 78 the text says: "In the world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing can surpass it." This paradox, which can be seen in nature, provides a metaphor for the best way to rule and for personal behaviour. Students may contrast these ideas with other views of human nature, personal behaviour and governance e.g. Hobbes' state of nature and sovereign power.

Part A: When explaining, students may refer to:

- The place of water in the world of nature which forms the key backdrop in descriptions of the Tao
- How the behaviour of water provides a metaphor for important themes in the text
- The metaphor of water and non-action
- The metaphor of water and rule - water is the best at benefiting creatures without contending with them, e.g. the Sage going around people in ruling them rather than confronting them
- Water illustrates non-permanence

Part B: When evaluating, students may refer to:

- The use of nature as the underlying principle of the Tao – how convincing is this?
- The use of nature as a metaphor for human character and action – are there issues with this?
- The use of nature as a principle for government – is this credible?
- The use of paradox in communicating the nature of the Tao
- How convincing philosophically is the use of natural metaphors for human experience and behaviour?
- See treatment of nature by other philosophers, e.g. Aristotle, Aquinas, Hume, Kierkegaard
- Possible exploration of problems if there is an over-abundance of water
- The different imagery and implications of still and moving waters

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]

The principles that lie behind the harmony of nature should be applied to guarantee good government. These principles are implemented by the ruler, or Sage, but they reflect the nature of the natural order. Order and acceptance of the flow of the Tao guarantee good government ("In government it is order that matters", Chapter. 8). Government ensures harmony in society, just as the Tao brings it to the universe. The work describes the futility of governing by cleverness, because it is detrimental to the people who then become too difficult to rule (Chapter 65). Chapter 75 states the importance of governing according to the principle of non-action, *wu wei*, is stated: "It is because those in authority are too fond of action That the people are difficult to govern." And in Chapter 57 the Sage avers: "I take no action and the people are transformed of themselves". This involves a lack of desire, as would be the case living in accordance with the Tao: "I am free from desire and the people of themselves become simple like the uncarved block." Chapter 3 states that the Sage: "empties their minds but fills their bellies, weakens their wills but strengthens their bones. He always keeps them innocent of knowledge and free from desire, and ensures that the clever never dare to act."

Students might explore (part A):

- The key parts of the Tao as applied to good government: e.g. non-action, freedom from desire, lack of striving
- Non-action at the heart of good governing by the Sage
- The emphasis on removing the mind of the people so they can live in accordance with the Tao, unaffected by consciousness and deliberation
- The relation of the past to the present
- The paradoxes of governing in accordance with the Tao, e.g. In Chapter 36: "The submissive and weak will overcome the hard and strong"
- The metaphor of the uncarved block

Possible discussion points include (part B):

- The assumptions of the relation of harmony in nature to good government – is this persuasive?
 - Is it politically acceptable to seek to remove "the innocent from knowledge"? See the comparison with the monotheistic myth of the Garden of Eden
 - The place of learning and how it hinders good government – is this persuasive?
 - Is government too passive to be aware of the needs of the people and, so, unable to be responsive to those needs?
 - Is this a prescription for good government that would only apply in a pre-industrial or pre-technological society?
 - Is the notion of minimal government as good government credible or desirable? See modern parallels with rejections of the 'big state', e.g. QAnon and conspiracy theories
 - Are there contrary messages about the mind of the Sage and the people, e.g. in Chapter 49?
 - Are there contrary indications of the Sage's relation to the people, standing over yet also being representative?
-