

© International Baccalaureate Organization 2026

All rights reserved. No part of this product may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without the prior written permission from the IB. Additionally, the license tied with this product prohibits use of any selected files or extracts from this product. Use by third parties, including but not limited to publishers, private teachers, tutoring or study services, preparatory schools, vendors operating curriculum mapping services or teacher resource digital platforms and app developers, whether fee-covered or not, is prohibited and is a criminal offense.

More information on how to request written permission in the form of a license can be obtained from <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organisation du Baccalauréat International 2026

Tous droits réservés. Aucune partie de ce produit ne peut être reproduite sous quelque forme ni par quelque moyen que ce soit, électronique ou mécanique, y compris des systèmes de stockage et de récupération d'informations, sans l'autorisation écrite préalable de l'IB. De plus, la licence associée à ce produit interdit toute utilisation de tout fichier ou extrait sélectionné dans ce produit. L'utilisation par des tiers, y compris, sans toutefois s'y limiter, des éditeurs, des professeurs particuliers, des services de tutorat ou d'aide aux études, des établissements de préparation à l'enseignement supérieur, des fournisseurs de services de planification des programmes d'études, des gestionnaires de plateformes pédagogiques en ligne, et des développeurs d'applications, moyennant paiement ou non, est interdite et constitue une infraction pénale.

Pour plus d'informations sur la procédure à suivre pour obtenir une autorisation écrite sous la forme d'une licence, rendez-vous à l'adresse <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

© Organización del Bachillerato Internacional, 2026

Todos los derechos reservados. No se podrá reproducir ninguna parte de este producto de ninguna forma ni por ningún medio electrónico o mecánico, incluidos los sistemas de almacenamiento y recuperación de información, sin la previa autorización por escrito del IB. Además, la licencia vinculada a este producto prohíbe el uso de todo archivo o fragmento seleccionado de este producto. El uso por parte de terceros —lo que incluye, a título enunciativo, editoriales, profesores particulares, servicios de apoyo académico o ayuda para el estudio, colegios preparatorios, desarrolladores de aplicaciones y entidades que presten servicios de planificación curricular u ofrezcan recursos para docentes mediante plataformas digitales—, ya sea incluido en tasas o no, está prohibido y constituye un delito.

En este enlace encontrará más información sobre cómo solicitar una autorización por escrito en forma de licencia: <https://ibo.org/become-an-ib-school/ib-publishing/licensing/applying-for-a-license/>.

Philosophy

Higher level

Paper 3

11 May 2026

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

1 hour 15 minutes

Instructions to students

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the text and write a response.
- Answer both parts of the question.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Unseen text – philosophy and contemporary issues

Read the following extract and answer **both** parts (a) and (b) of the question.

Robots perform clearly defined tasks like playing chess, assembling a car, classifying images, or vacuuming your floor. Increasingly, robots are being assigned more general tasks which require more than one skill. A driverless car, for example is supposed to get you from A to B following the rules of the road and reacting to unforeseen situations. To execute their functions, robots require algorithms. These algorithms are becoming increasingly autonomous and often require artificial intelligence (AI). As autonomy in robots and AI increases, so does the likelihood that they encounter situations which are morally salient. Robots in the hospital lifting and/or bathing patients, robots in the military assisting with bomb disposal, or intelligence-gathering robots all need to be morally salient. Such robots are often referred to as “Artificial Moral Agents” (AMAs). Questions arise about what counts as an AMA, whether robots are deserving of citizenship, and/or whether they are morally responsible for their behaviour or not. A machine with moral-reasoning capabilities might be thought to deserve moral consideration in the form of rights and/or protections.

What a robot would act like if it were to think in an ethical way is a central feature in the works of science fiction writer Isaac Asimov. He put forward three laws that were kinds of principles to embed ethics into machines. These are:

1. a robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm
2. a robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law
3. a robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.

The difficulty and nuances of robots acting in an ethical manner arises because each ethical principle conflicts with another to such a degree that experience, wisdom, and intuition are required to come to a solution or resolution of the conflict.

Experts in ethics and technology and/or robot ethics have argued against the development of AMAs, insisting that the technology ought to be designed so that responsibility remains tied to humans. Robots ought to be in the service of humans, as slaves, meeting the needs of their human users and intentionally designed not to be moral agents. This claim is predicated on the assumption that humans will own robots and as such will be responsible for their existence and capacities.

In contrast machine ethicists have offered reasons in favour of the development of moral machines, as robots with moral decision-making abilities will become a technological necessity. Artificial Moral Agents (AMAs) are necessary, as any ordinary decision-making situation can be turned into a morally charged decision-making situation, where the artificial agent finds itself presented with a moral dilemma, where any choice of action (or inaction) can potentially cause harm to other agents. Any autonomous robot interacting with a human user that has the potential to harm its user should be endowed with moral-reasoning capabilities.

One further consideration is about the harm that can come from the misappropriation of one’s data. If harm is to be extended beyond the risk to one’s digital information, then any machine might cause harm. This would mean every device that one interacts with ought to have such capabilities. This leads to the conclusion that any technology that one interacts with and for which there is a potential for harm (physical or otherwise) must be developed as an AMA.

45 The assumption here is that, instead of a human, a robot could be better at moral decision making than a human, given that it would be impartial, unemotional, consistent, and rational every time it decided. The robot would have the energy to be consistent in decision-making. Finally, machine ethicists sometimes argue that developing robots with moral-reasoning capabilities will ultimately lead to a better understanding of human morality.

- (a) With reference to the text and your own knowledge, explain the advantages and disadvantages of creating Artificial Moral Agents (AMAs). [10]
 - (b) With reference to the text and your own experience of doing philosophy, discuss the claim that philosophy raises issues and can investigate the unique problems and consequences of creating machines that can make moral decisions (AMAs). [15]
-

Disclaimer:

Content used in IB assessments is often taken from authentic, third-party sources. The views expressed within them belong to their individual authors and/or publishers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the IB. Sometimes fictitious companies, products or individuals are included in assessments; any similarities with actual entities are purely coincidental. Any trademarks™ or registered® trademarks included are used for illustrative purposes only, and use does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement by the International Baccalaureate.

References:

Van Wynsberghe, A. and Robbins, S., 2018. Critiquing the reasons for making artificial moral agents. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, [e-journal] Vol. 25, pp.1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-018-0030-8>. Licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. Source adapted.