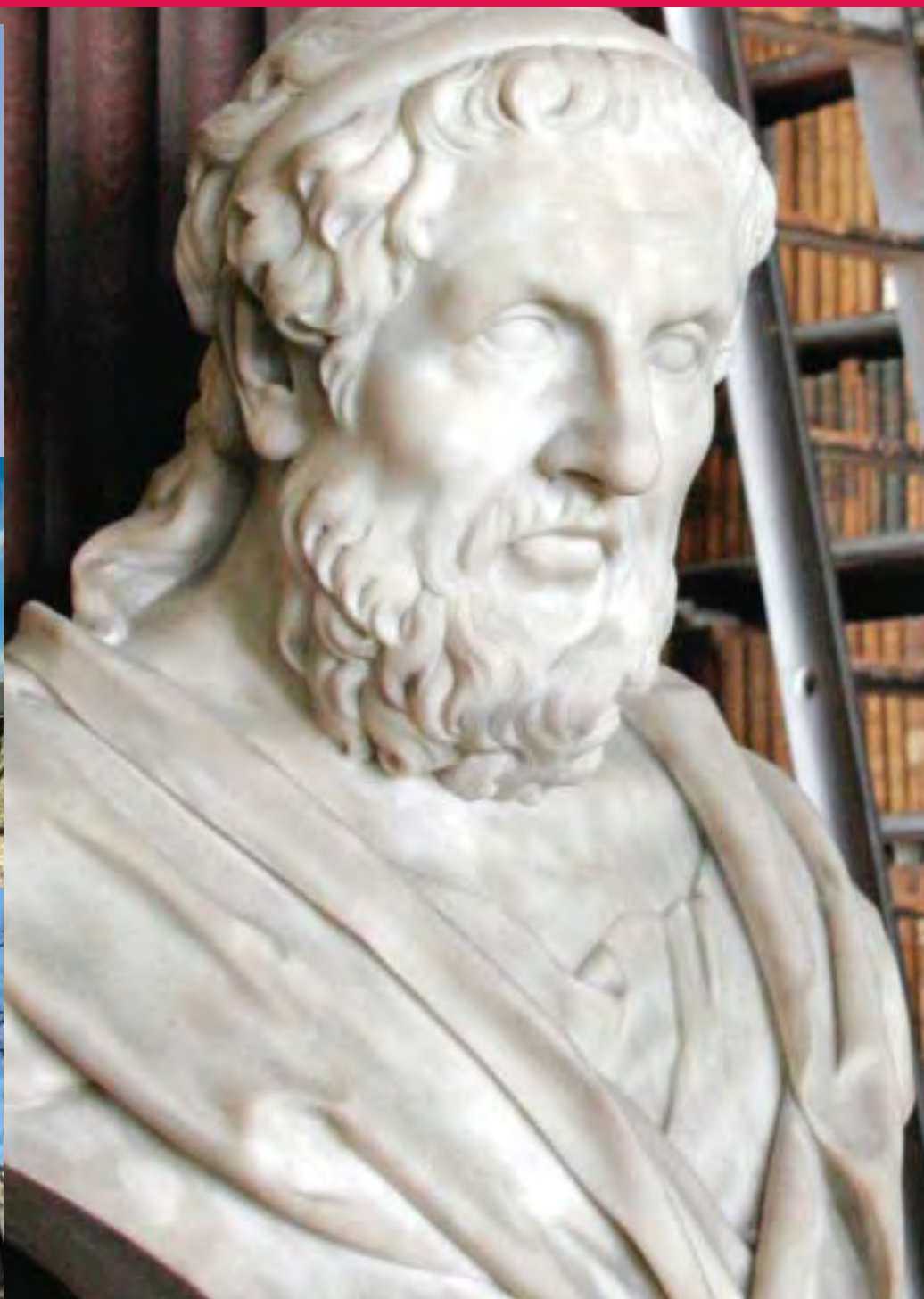
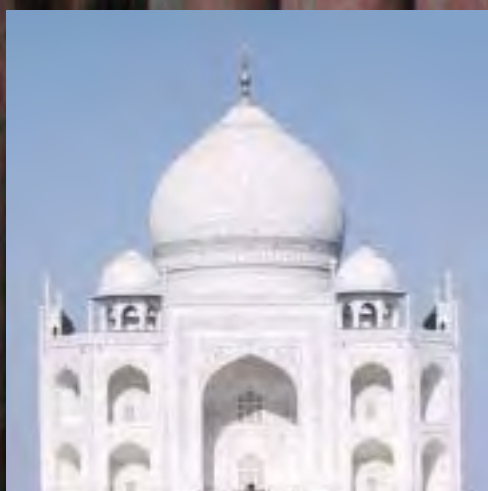


# Example Candidate Responses

Cambridge  
**Pre-U**

Cambridge International Level 3  
Pre-U Certificate in  
**Philosophy and Theology (9774)**



UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE  
International Examinations

# Example Candidate Responses

## Philosophy and Theology (9774)

Cambridge International Level 3  
Pre-U Certificate in Philosophy and Theology (Principal)

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## Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate

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# Philosophy and Theology

## 9774

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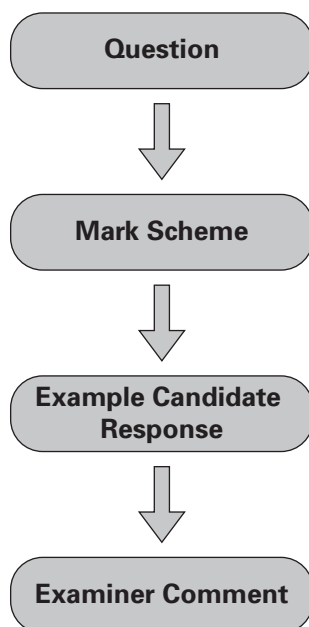


## Introduction

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The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for schools and teachers interested in Pre-U and show how different levels of candidates' performance relate to the subject's assessment objectives.

For ease of reference the following format for each paper of the subject has been adopted:



Each question is followed by an extract of the mark scheme used by Examiners. This, in turn, is followed by examples of candidate responses, each with an examiner comment on performance. Comments are given to indicate which level of the mark scheme was awarded, and why.

Teachers are reminded that a full syllabus and other teacher support materials are available on [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk). For past papers and Principal Examiner Reports please contact University of Cambridge International Examinations on [international@cie.org.uk](mailto:international@cie.org.uk)

## Components at a Glance

Component	Component Name	Duration	Weighting (%)	Type of Assessment
<b>Paper 1</b>	Introduction to Philosophy and Theology	2 hours 15 minutes	30	Written examination, externally set and marked
<b>Paper 2</b>	Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology	2 hours	35	Written examination, externally set and marked
<b>Paper 3</b>	Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology	2 hours	35	Written examination, externally set and marked

## Paper 1 Introduction to Philosophy and Theology

### Generic Mark Scheme for 25 mark questions

<p>Level 6</p> <p>21–25 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues</li> <li>• Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question</li> <li>• Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>• Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained</li> <li>• Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 5</p> <p>16–20 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered</li> <li>• Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question</li> <li>• Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>• Argument has structure and development and is sustained</li> <li>• Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 4</p> <p>12–15 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered</li> <li>• Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question</li> <li>• Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>• Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained</li> <li>• Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument</li> <li>• May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
<p>Level 3</p> <p>8–11 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon</li> <li>• Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>• Attempts to evaluate though with partial success</li> <li>• Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>• Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence</li> <li>• Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>

Level 2  1–7 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short</li> <li>• Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>• Argument is limited or confused</li> <li>• Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>
Level 1  0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>

## Question 1

**Critically examine the view that all knowledge starts with the senses.**

**[25]**

## Mark Scheme

The empirical view of epistemology is generally associated with Aristotle's inductive approach to knowledge. Candidates might illustrate empirical philosophy through the work of philosophers such as Bacon, Locke, Berkeley and Hume, or else through a general statement of empirical philosophy, e.g. that all knowledge is *a posteriori*, so knowledge comes inductively, through linked sense-perceptions. We experience the effects of something and then reason out the causes. The opposing approach is the rationalist claim that knowledge is *a priori*, prior to sense experience and innate. We know innately that events have causes (denied of course by Hume), that objects have extension in space, that we exist in time, and so on. Rationalist approaches to knowledge might be illustrated by Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, *et al.* The view that all knowledge starts with the senses can be assessed in any way the candidate chooses, although in practice many will start with Locke's assertion that the mind is devoid of all knowledge or ideas at birth. The range of the discussion is within the discretion of the candidate, so long as what is given answers the question.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

- ① Critically examine the view that all knowledge starts with the senses.

The mind-set of the modern man is pushed more towards an empirical understanding of the universe rather than a rationalist one. The enlightenment's emphasis on finding one ~~and~~ universalising answer which connects all we can sense, and our emphasis on the scientifically verifiable has led us to favour the 'a posteriori' strain of knowledge rather than an 'a priori' approach.

Aristotle is perhaps the patriarch of the empirical approach to knowledge. He saw all knowledge as being contained within the universe, and by a careful cataloguing of phenomena we could learn this knowledge. Aristotle, a mortal, viewed the soul as a mortal thing and thus if knowledge is to be found it must be found in this life. The result is ~~the~~ ~~that~~ a way of learning which values the synthetic statement – one which is verifiable by sense perception.

By contrast Plato, Aristotle's teacher, had an entirely different world view. He maintained belief in a Realm of the Forms which was accessible only to the thinker. His dualist understanding of the body and soul in which he concludes that the soul is immortal leads him state that all learning is not the empirical discovery of new knowledge but is in fact a ~~reflection~~ process of ~~our~~ recollection [anamnesis] to the time when our soul was without a



body and ~~dwell~~<sup>dwell</sup> in the Realm of the Forms. We can see therefore an extremely rational approach. Just as Plato hated our earthly body, he also ~~had~~ had no respect for that which we sense ~~to~~ empirically and he did not assign earthly sensations truth [episteme] but instead classified them as merely opinion [doxa].

Later, Descartes was to continue the rationalist tradition. He aimed to find absolute certainty of knowledge around which to build a world view. Descartes disregarded sense perception as he felt it could be deceiving. His three waves of doubt highlighted phenomena such as optical illusions. As Thomas Nagel writes about illusions 'There is no looking from nowhere'. Descartes felt that our senses could not be trusted. His piece of certain knowledge is summarized by his words 'cogito ergo sum' (I think therefore I am). This shows his rationalist emphasis on man as a thinking being.

John Locke saw this as being a far too limited world view. By limiting themselves to 'a priori' statements the rationalists cannot find knowledge as readily as the empiricists. Locke therefore concludes that "there is nothing in the ~~idea~~ intellect that was not first in the senses". Locke responds to Descartes' analogy of a wax candle using his theory of abstraction. ~~but~~ Descartes insists that we recognise melted wax as being the same thing as solid wax because, while its accidents

have changed, its substance remains the same. Its substance is known through reason and the mind whereas its changed accidents are misleading to the senses. Locke responds by arguing that we can build up complex ideas from simple objects by abstracting common properties. For example we need not ~~we~~ have seen a <sup>specific</sup> chair before to know that it too is a chair.

Berkeley takes the empirical position further and claims that 'to exist is to be perceived'. Yet, ~~the~~ just as Descartes could be accused of slipping into solipsism, so too could the ~~rationalist~~ empiricist. How can we go from our sense data to knowledge of an object as it is in itself?

Hume ~~responds~~ offers a form of response with the words 'A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence'. We have more reason to trust our senses than to distrust them it would seem — optical illusions are not commonplace. Hume also uses his theory of causality to attack the rationalist position. He states that the rationalist construction of knowledge is based on A causing B which causes a conclusion C. However ~~however~~ Hume argues that causality cannot be proven, rather it is a postulate of our mind based on experience. Therefore ~~the~~ the rationalist approach is flawed.

~~It~~ It therefore seems rash to



award either rationalism or empiricism with a correct answer. In fact ~~it is~~ Kant smashes the aforementioned dichotomy with his theory of transcendental idealism. He manages to merge rational and empiricist approaches by distinguishing between the noumenal realm (the world as it is in itself) and the phenomenal realm (the world as we experience it). We receive sense data from the noumenal realm however then our mind asserts the three categories of space, time, and causality to make sense of the data. Therefore to ~~award~~ all knowledge to the senses seems rash and the rationalist can criticise how we can have knowledge of 'types' of objects as well as the reliability. Equally the rationalist approach is limited by its reliance on only 'a priori' truths and Hume also criticises its foundation (although we may view his theory of causation as overly sceptical). It seems natural to conclude in a similar way to Kant that in fact it is only when combining reason and sense perception that all knowledge can be discovered.

L6 -

(2.5)

L6 - 25

## Examiner Comment

This is an excellent response. The introduction gives a mature statement concerning the (general) empirical mindset of the 21st century. This is followed by a contrast between the approaches of Aristotle and Plato: the former being the "patriarch" of the empirical approach to knowledge, and the latter taking a rationalist/dualist approach to knowledge and to human nature. The rationalist approach is illustrated further by Descartes' *cogito*, and the empiricist approach by Locke's critique of Descartes and Berkeley's claim that to exist is to be perceived. This is followed by a reference to Hume's theory of causality and Hume's admission that causality cannot simply be assumed. The essay concludes with an acknowledgement of

Kant's contribution to the debate by merging rationalist and empirical approaches, followed by an appropriate conclusion that common sense requires that we consider both rationalist and empiricist approaches to knowledge. The argument is structured and sustained, uses excellent philosophical concepts and vocabulary, and is insightful. It merits a very high Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

1. This view, that all knowledge starts with the senses, is the empirical view of knowledge. It deals with a posteriori truths, truths that are found to be revealed after experience, such as the fact that 'all bachelors tend to be less happy'. The opposite viewpoint is the rationalist doctrine, which entails that all knowledge starts with the mind, and this is largely what I will be comparing empiricism to in this piece, with regard to their success in terms of defining knowledge. The rationalist, oppositely once more, deals with a priori truths, which are truths gained prior to experience, such as the mathematical truth ' $2+2=4$ '. Rationalism deals largely with the view that we have innate ideas, whereas, empiricism states that our mind should be viewed as 'a tabula rasa' - blank slate, a view put forward by John Locke.

As I mentioned, an example of an empiricist scholar is John Locke, and his empiricist views, clearly based on a posteriori knowledge, is visible in his cosmological argument for God's existence. This goes - ① I exist ② I cannot exist 'ex nihilo' ③ Therefore something must have brought me into existence which is a) eternal b) self-caused - and the latter is absurd, so we must be caused & created by an eternal God. The empirical evidence suggests that we can instantly know 'we exist' (p①), to Locke and this is an example of how one may argue that



an empiricist can jump to unjustified conclusions, based on our unreliable senses. A rationalist would take a much longer, intricate, a priori approach to this argument form, and see a need to rationally explain premise ① - 'I exist'. René Descartes, a rationalist scholar, does just this when he uses a priori reasoning to deduce (unfolding new form of knowledge from old knowledge, made up of analytic (abound in logic) truths eg. All men are mortal, Socrates is a man... Socrates is mortal) proof that we exist. He takes us thinking (cogito) as proof - 'cogito ergo sum' - 'I think therefore I am' - and his logic is that stating 'I think but I don't exist' is a logical contradiction, as you are thinking in stating that, therefore, you exist.

I believe this is an example of how rationalism can weaken the empirical view as I believe it has a number of strengths that empiricism lacks. Firstly, not only does it give reliability but it also gives certainty - for example, we can know for certain, if  $J=K$ , and  $K=L$ , that  $J=L$ . Empiricism does not provide this and one may say that, like Locke's cosmological argument, it jumps out several necessary logical steps needed for proof. Secondly, another strength of rationalism is that it takes into account the true scale of human knowledge, that seems apparent. An empiricist would counter this saying that empiricism does allow for this, and that rational thoughts can tell us nothing about the world. However, a rationalist may counter this further by stating that neither does empiricism tell us much about the

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world. This counter is based on the idea that we can be deceived by our senses. For example, optical illusions prove just this, such as at sunset, humans believe (and see) the sun going down, whereas actually, it is the earth rising. Furthermore, the fact that we can be deceived when on hallucinogenic drugs such as ~~add~~ LSD also weakens the view of empiricism.

However, the main weaknesses are <sup>firstly, the</sup> problem of induction: how can we make ~~the~~ general conclusions from limited data? For example take the logic - ① every time temp. drops below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ , water freezes ② the natural world will act in the same way it has in past & future (principle of uniformity of nature) ③ therefore, today, if temp. drops below  $0^{\circ}\text{C}$ , water will freeze. However, we cannot prove premise ②, as we have not experienced past and future, as finite beings.

Furthermore, the problem of perception entails can we actually believe the world is as we perceive it? The naive realist will say yes, whereas the indirect realist will say that there is a material world, but it is not as we perceive it (similar to Plato's view). The idealist, on the other hand, will say that reality is in the mind, and there is no material world. The fact that there are so many different views weakens empiricism, as like I said, it does not give us certainty we need in knowledge, one may argue.

However, despite these several weaknesses, empiricism does have several strengths over

Use

rationalism. For example, our senses do seem reliable if you see an orange, providing you have prior experience of an orange, you feel sure that you are seeing an orange. Furthermore, empiricism does seem directly linked to the way in which most people view the world. And finally, one of the strongest points for empiricism is that science, based on empirical views and knowledge, fights a good cause for the success of it in our modern world.

As I have mentioned, there are many strengths and weaknesses for empiricism and I believe that the way one views knowledge is completely subjective and there cannot be one correct way to do so.

LS (18) ✓

### Examiner Comment

This is a systematic and sustained response to the question. It is accurate, and shows competent understanding of the rationalist/empiricist debate. The introduction deals with the differences between rationalism and empiricism. Locke's argument for the existence of God is not perhaps the most pointed example of how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of empiricism, although the exposition of Descartes is good, with its demonstration of the rationalist claim to certainty. The strengths of empiricism are not demonstrated so well as those of rationalism; nevertheless the candidate has a very good knowledge of the subject area, and uses ideas well. Given the coherence of the essay, the conclusion is rather weak; nevertheless this is a good Level 5 response.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

1.

**Empiricism**  
~~Knowledge dependent on experience a posteriori~~  
~~Aristotle / Locke~~  
~~real/ideal truths~~

**Rationalism**  
~~a priori~~  
~~Independent of experience~~  
~~eg. Plato~~  
~~Descartes 'I think therefore I am'~~

**Innate truths**  
~~concepts → truths~~  
~~probable not always truth~~

**Skepticism**

**Experiences can deceive**  
~~problem of induction~~

**Knowledge**

Empiricism is the view that all knowledge is dependent on experience. It therefore ~~take~~ has an a posteriori outlook on knowledge. Aristotle was an Empiricist, and maintained the importance of experience and the role of the senses in gaining knowledge. In comparison, Rationalism is the view that knowledge is gained independent from experience, therefore taking an a priori view of knowledge. Both Plato and Descartes were supporters of Rationalism. Empiricism has weaknesses, ~~in that~~ <sup>such as</sup> experiences can deceive and the problem of induction, and rationalism also has weaknesses, such as the problem of innate ideas. Empiricism is weakened by ~~the view~~ rationalism as an epistemological argument, however both views maintain humans do have

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some knowledge of the world. Empiricism is therefore a valid theory, but is weakened by rationalism.

Empiricism believes knowledge is gained through sensical experience. John Locke created the ~~analogy~~ of real and ~~apparent~~ <sup>ideal</sup> truths. Ideal truths are those that exist solely in the mind, whereas real truths are those that can be proven. Aristotle based his theory of good on empiricism, maintaining goodness has no pure form, and isn't infinite regress, so therefore experience and practice is the only way for humans to learn what good and bad actions are.

However, critics have identified problems with empiricism. The role of sensical experience is widely criticised by rationalists, who maintain that experiences can deceive. It is therefore hard to understand the nature of experiences and their legitimacy in proving knowledge. Additionally, the problem of induction is highlighted by critics, as they maintain the difficulty of objectively observing and understanding experiences. They believe experiences should be observed universally in order to identify the truth, but critics highlight how this is not possible, and empiricists will always observe their experiences subjectively. Therefore, critics highlight how ~~that~~ a posteriori truths are weak and deceiving. Hume, an empiricist, also highlighted how some knowledge could be innate, showing the weakness of empiricism, in that one of its supporters favoured the logic of rationalism. Empiricism's weaknesses highlight its flaws and the problems of gaining truth from experience.

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Rationalism is the view that all knowledge is gained independent of experience. It is an a priori view, and its supporters include Plato and Descartes. Both maintained the importance of the mind in gaining knowledge. Descartes stated, 'I think, therefore I am', showing the strength of deduction in understanding truths about the world. It would be a logical contradiction to state 'I think, therefore I am not alive', so Descartes demonstrates the importance of the mind in understanding rational truths. Plato had a view of the Good, and in contrast to Aristotle, maintained the importance of the mind in understanding goodness. Plato stated that it is possible to understand goodness through the mind, and used the divided line to illustrate the gap between the sensory world, the senses, and the intelligible world, the mind, such as maths. Plato used the metaphor of the sun to show how the eye is capable of seeing, and as the sun is the largest illuminator of light, without the sun, the eyes would be blind. Similarly, the mind is capable of judgement of knowledge, but without the form of the Good, it would not be able to judge. Plato's metaphor of the Cave also highlights the importance of the mind, as prisoners in the cave attribute forms to the puppet's shadows, and when they leave the cave, they understand reality's true forms, demonstrating the difference between opinion, inside the cave, and knowledge, upon leaving the cave.

Nonetheless, rationalism has weaknesses, including



those from empiricists. Critics highlight the problem of innate ideas, which are ideas of the mind. They maintain the problems of concepts becoming truths, due to the need for reason, and the leap of logic this sometimes involves. Critics also highlight how rationalism can mostly lead to probable not absolute truths, due to the use of reason to justify the truths. Empiricists highlight how rationalism is just mental concepts, and therefore attack their basis of knowledge by highlighting the limitations of rational knowledge.

However, rationalists counter-attack their criticisms, by stating that empiricism is weakened entirely due to Hume's support of rationalism. Hume highlighted the possibility of some innate knowledge in humans, therefore discarding the importance of sensical experience in gaining knowledge. Rationalism is therefore a stronger argument than Empiricism, due to its weakening of empiricism through criticism, and also its ability to counter-attack Empiricism's criticisms of its theory. Although rationalism and empiricism attack each other as a means of ~~gaining~~ becoming stronger and more compelling as an epistemological argument, they both agree that humans do have some knowledge. They therefore discredit the sceptic's view that humans know nothing about the world.

In conclusion, empiricism, the view that all knowledge is dependent on the senses and experience has a valid basis for an argument, and both Locke



and Aristotle credit it with their analogies for the importance of experience in gaining knowledge. However, the criticisms it acquires, including those from rationalists weaken its argument, making it less convincing than rationalism as an epistemological argument. Rationalism takes the view that knowledge is gained independent of experience, and its a priori view is supported by both Plato and Descartes, who use analogies to demonstrate the importance of the mind in deducing truths about the world. Although rationalism has criticisms, their ability to weaken empiricism's credibility through Hume's support of rationalism means that rationalism is a strong and compelling epistemological argument. Therefore, although empiricism has a good basis for knowledge, the strength of rationalism's argument and ability to reply convincingly to criticisms weakens empiricism further, and makes rationalism a credible and compelling approach to epistemology.

Hume

Incoherent.

L3

11

## Examiner Comment

This essay does show some accuracy in its knowledge, although its attempts to evaluate meet with only partial success. There is some attempt at argument, but without real development, and sometimes the argument is incoherent, or simply does not make the expected point. The best section of the essay is its beginning: it gives a reasonable account of empiricism and rationalism, followed, in the third paragraph, by some criticisms of both. The exposition of Plato, e.g. the metaphor of the sun, is fair enough, but no analysis is offered of it; and the analysis that does follow, in particular the paragraph about the rationalists' counter-attack to empiricism, starts to lose coherence. It refers, for example to Hume's support for rationalism and the idea of innate knowledge in humans. The end of that paragraph states that both rationalism and empiricism both discredit the sceptic's view that humans know nothing about the world, but this contributes little to the essay. The concluding paragraph amounts to a repetitive summary which relies on little more than assertions that rationalists reply convincingly to criticisms. This merits the top of Level 3.

## Question 2

**'It is obvious that morality is relative.' Critically assess this claim.****[25]**

## Mark Scheme

The arguments for relativism might include descriptive/cultural relativism, i.e. the view that cultural diversity is 'obvious', which implies that morality is conceptually relative as the basis of what we observe. Some cultures practise infanticide, cannibalism, polygamy, child marriages, ritual slaughter and so on, whereas the condemnation of such practices in other cultures suggests that there is no absolute basis for these or any other form of moral judgement. In other words, the diversity thesis leads many to assume a dependency thesis, that right and wrong depend on the concepts and values of a society, and since these vary widely, then all moral judgements are obviously relative. The suggestion that morality is relative can also be argued on the basis of meta-ethics, where the conflicting claims of naturalism, non-naturalism and non-cognitivism imply that if it is impossible to agree about the meaning of moral language, and there is no objective way of justifying the meaning of 'good', 'bad', etc., then there can be no universal notion of good, and 'good' and 'bad' are relative terms. Moral relativism is also assumed by a variety of normative ethical theories such as utilitarianism, virtue ethics and situation ethics, where the variety of interpretation again suggests no objective basis for moral laws. The weakness of the relativist view is that it implies that there can be no real evaluation of objectionable practices such as cliterodectomy or burning witches, whereas such practices often stop when challenged. Relativism seems to slide into subjectivism, where there can be no good grounds for requiring moral behaviour, because only the individual can define what is good for himself/herself. Some might argue that it is obvious that absolutism is right, perhaps on Kantian or intuitionist grounds; or else that we can make a good case for moral objectivism as opposed to absolutism, e.g. neo-naturalism, where 'good' is what improves the human condition. Candidates are at liberty to include or emphasise any aspect of the debate, including, for example, the post-modern agenda.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

2. Due to a rise in secular thought, individualism, and ~~an~~ rejection of ethnocentrism (the prejudicial view that interprets everyone else's cultures through the eyes of one's own) there has been an increasing acceptance over the last few centuries that morality is indeed relative. But is this ~~an~~ acceptance legitimate?

Ethical relativism is the doctrine which states that the rightness and wrongness of moral acts varies from society to society and that there are no absolute moral rules

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binding on all men at all times. Herodotus remarked in 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. that 'custom is the king o'er all' and J.L. Mackie remarks that society ~~shapes~~ shapes morality, not vice versa. In his virtue ethics Aristotle stressed that the virtuous act is dependent on the circumstances and the nature of the agent. We can split relativism into two options: either subjectivism, which states that morality is 'in the eye of the beholder' and conventionalism, which states that society is the moral judge. Subjectivism leads us to a position in which morality is meaningless as any moral act is justifiable. Thus morality has failed in its goal of benefitting humanity, and so this is clearly an untenable position.

So we are led to conventionalism. But this encounters similar problems: any act is justifiable simply by creating a 'society' which approves of it. Hitler's acts of genocide were as 'right' as Gandhi's acts of compassion if they were both held acceptable by their respective societies. With the position of conventionalism, the reformer is always wrong as he contradicts what society dictates - Ultimately you cannot halt the slide back to subjectivism as the justifiability of acts is solely dependent on the aggregation of individual choice.

So clearly there are morally better and worse ways of living. Moral Absolutism states that there are non-overridable ~~and~~ absolute, moral universals which are necessarily exceptionless. When we have moral debate we are grappling with absolute truths, and there is an independent moral criteria against which we can and must judge acts. Neither culture, religion nor circumstance are mitigating factors for these principles. For the Judeo-Christian doctrine, these principles are based on the Pentateuch, but for Plato, they were to be found in the world of universal ideals called



the 'Realm of the Forms'. Moral statements are cognitive and the absolute, highest good against which we judge acts is ~~the~~ the 'Form of the Good'.

A common form of absolutism is natural law thinking which states that there are certain natural laws discoverable through reason and observation. God gave us a rational nature as humans so that we may live in certain ascribed ways and achieve our 'telos' (goal). The father of natural law thinking, put forward five primary precepts, or 'ordinances for the common good' which we should abide by absolutely: to learn, to live, to procreate, to worship God and to live harmoniously in society. From these precepts can the lesser laws be found.

Kantian ethics also holds that the most important emphasis in ethics is the intrinsic value of acts; not how society sees them or what consequences they bring. We must act on duty for duty's sake. However, are there any absolute moral principles that could be deemed completely exceptionless? It seems there are a number of complex moral dilemmas conceivable when what would surely be considered a moral axiom is justifiably violated: do not lie. If a murderer knocks at your door, asking for the whereabouts of Mr. & Mrs. Jones in order to kill them, should not lie in order to save them? For if you tell the murderer they are hiding in your basement, your truthfulness will directly cause their deaths. The Doctrine of Double Effect was put forward as an algorithm so that absolutism solves these dilemmas: it is morally justifiable to do a good act even if bad consequences come about, but it is never acceptable to do a bad act to bring about good consequences. However, again this seems too



naive; & in the murderer scenario, most would agree to do a bad act (lie) to bring about good consequences (saved lives).

Moreover, absolute moral principles don't aid the development of a wise, experienced, intelligent moral being. If we blindly obey principles we don't develop into the above character but stay naive. Moral acts should be attainable by a neat algorithm which A level students can work out; in live situations of increasing complexity where, for instance, a young woman has to decide whether to have an abortion or not, moral principles don't have any ~~application~~ usefulness in application. Indeed, why should we need moral principles to tell us something is wrong? Sartre argued we have no human nature and thus morality is simply what we create.

A middle way is objectivism; the view that moral principles have universal, objective validity, but are not necessarily exceptionless. We must weigh each principles up against each other in making our decisions. W.D. Ross put forward 'prima facie' principles to which one should generally adhere but are not all binding. J.L. Mackie believes that an objective morality is incoherent because it relies on a divine basis for morality which is untenable. However, in finding an object morality, we need not necessarily take up a position of realism: that there is some Platonic higher good to which everyone should aim. For as Hume pointed out, humans are basically similar in terms of desires and needs across the ages and thus this can be the basis for an objective morality. This is backed up by the work of historians and anthropologists who point to similar patterns of desires behind the diverse principles.

There are clearly problems with both taking morality as

<p>relative and absolute, in a world of such diverse cultures and complex situations. While we must guard against ethnocentrism, it does not mean there are not objectively better and worse ways of living ethically and objectivism points us towards finding out what the better ways are.</p>	<p>Use</p> <p>L6— (25)</p>
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### Examiner Comment

This script demonstrates a superb knowledge of the views of scholars/schools of thought, and shows a confident and precise knowledge of the use of philosophical and theological vocabulary. Most of this is self-evident – not least the introduction to relativism in the remark of Herodotus that ‘custom is the king o’er all’, and in that of John Mackie, that society shapes morality not vice versa. Relativism is split into two versions – subjectivism and conventionalism, and both views are exposed as unsatisfactory, as a springboard to a consideration of the contrasting claims of moral absolutism, ranging from the Platonic forms, to Kant and Natural Law. Absolutism is criticised for not aiding the development of wise, experienced, intelligent moral beings, so the essay arrives finally at objectivism, where principles are not necessarily exceptionless. This is maximum Level 6.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

It is easy to see why one would conclude that all morality is relevant. Different moral values can be seen to be held by different people. However, one must question if it is necessarily the case that morality is relevant just because different people think different things. It can also be argued that some people's moral values are wrong. This view, however, gets one into a tricky situation, as seemingly nobody has the authority to say that their moral values are correct over somebody else's.

One can find evidence for the argument that morality is relative by looking at people from different generations, or from different cultures. Many things that we, in twenty-first century British society, see as perfectly acceptable would have been violently condemned in the past. An example of this is homosexuality, which we now see as a perfectly valid way to live one's life. Homosexual people have equal rights and society on the whole is respectful towards those who identify in this way. However, in the past in England, one could have been put in jail for being homosexual, and in many places across the world, this is still the case, with some punishments in some places being even more extreme, such as the death penalty. We would see this attitude as disgraceful, but somebody from one of these cultures would no doubt look upon us as morally depraved for thinking that people should be allowed to live in this way. While this is appalling to us, it is a moral value that these individuals would feel very strongly about. There can be seen to be other divides in attitudes across cultures, an example of which is female circumcision, something which people in certain areas of Africa have practiced in a dedicated fashion for an extremely long time. A Western society would find forcing a woman to go through this brutal and emotionally and physically damaging process a terrible, shocking and misogynistic thing to do; however, societies which performed female circumcision take the attitude that a female is not clean unless she has been circumcised and would be against the thought of a woman not undergoing this process. A further example is that in some less developed cultures, the elderly people will simply be left out in the



open to die. One would never consider doing this to an old person in our society, but another culture would see it as the expected thing to do.

The fact that we have such differing opinions creates an issue. Person A could be appalled that Person B thought it was morally acceptable for her to perform a certain action or have a certain attitude, but in turn Person B would be shocked that Person A did not agree with her. What seems shocking is a very personal thing to an individual, and is the result of upbringing, personal experience and a great many other things. When there are such differing opinions on what is right and what is wrong, it seems that the only conclusion can be that morality is relative.

This conclusion further seems to be like the most credible option as it is extremely difficult for one person to say that they hold the correct moral values while another person's are wrong, as that is arguably simply a matter of personal opinion. Nobody has authority over other people, and it seems unfair that one group of people should try to change another – for example, if Western people were to insist on an African community stopping female circumcision. While to us it would seem morally inept to allow it to continue, it would no doubt make people who felt passionately about it very uncomfortable if they were not allowed to do it anymore, and one is forced to question whether, at the end of the day, one really has the right to say that they are correct and somebody else is wrong. How can we know if our conscience is correct? It could just as easily be that we are wrong and the people who we see as being wrong are right.

A solution that has been given to the problem of there being no real authority over conscience is that conscience is given to us by God. God would therefore be the ultimate authority over conscience. This view, however, does not solve that much, because it does not avoid the problem that God has then given us different moral values throughout history and has given people different moral values to people across cultures. If God does indeed give us our consciences, why does He not give us all the same conscience? It makes very little sense that He would want to start conflicts and disputes between people from different cultures. It also makes little sense that God has given us different values in different times. If somebody from today's British society were to meet a person from Victorian society, for example, the



Victorian person would think they were depraved, but in today's society they would be seen as a completely normal person. One is forced to wonder whether God's attitude has changed over time, but this does not seem to be the kind of thing that one would expect from God, who is generally seen to be consistent and unchanging. It could also be argued that God gave us the right moral values at each point in time in order to allow us to develop as a society. However, every society thinks that their moral values are the correct ones. If this were the case, then everybody would simply be in a transitional stage, leading on to the next generation who would be more enlightened, and it rather undermines the passion that one feels about one's own moral values at the time. It seems unfair that God would deprive us of the correct knowledge of what is right and what is wrong just because of the time that we are born at. It also seems unfair that people should suffer as a result of the moral values God has given people at the time – for example, it seems cruel of God to make people at a certain time think that slavery is correct, as it causes a great many people to suffer and have their lives ruined as a result of this attitude.

This argument also offers no solution to the hugely differing attitudes there are across cultures, which people have all at the same time. It has been argued that conscience is the voice of God but some people are not developed sufficiently to listen to and follow God's voice correctly. This argument could also be applied to differing attitudes across time, and seems quite a good and plausible argument. However, it still leaves the problem that it means some people's moral values are correct while others are wrong. God would have the authority to say who was wrong and who was right, but we can never know what He would say is correct. The people who are in fact listening to the voice of God correctly could be people who follow moral values completely the opposite of the ones we value in our society.

Morality, however, may not be quite so mysterious as this, and could instead be more a result of necessity. There are many attitudes which we can have in twenty-first century Britain which other cultures would simply not find practicable. An example of this is less developed cultures leaving their elderly people out to die. It is easy for us to find this shocking, as we have healthcare and sheltered housing and other such things to care for people when they cannot care for themselves. However, in a society

where one has very little food and one has to be able to fend for themselves in order to survive, having to support elderly people would be a huge and potentially life-threatening burden on the rest of the community. Therefore, leaving the elderly people out to die is simply an act of necessity and not one of callousness. When looked at from this angle, it seems less brutal.

It should also not be ignored that there are some things which people across cultures and times consider to be intrinsically wrong. There are no cultures which advocate the murder of the completely innocent. They may advocate the murder of those who have done something which to us does not seem like a crime, and they may conclude that killing is a necessity in certain situations, but nobody ever thinks people should simply murder people for the sake of it. Despite all the differing attitudes which can be seen, there are some things such as this which all people from all times appear to agree on.

After considering all these points, one can conclude that the claim, "It is obvious that morality is relative", is not entirely accurate. It is far from obvious, as can be seen from the great many points and arguments that can be considered. It would not be unreasonable to conclude from this examination that morality is relative, as there is so much variety in the way that people see things that this, arguably, seems to be the only solution. However, it is equally plausible to advocate that morality is not relative, and to agree with an argument such as the one that states that some people are not able to listen to their God-given conscience properly. This argument almost seems like the only conclusion one can come to, as it sits so uncomfortably to say that it is morally acceptable to perform some of the actions that some cultures advocate.

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### Examiner Comment

The knowledge displayed in this essay is generally accurate. The candidate considers a fair range of issues to do with moral relativism, and the response is largely relevant. What confines this essay to Level 4 is its weak treatment of opposing ideas, and the corresponding fact that it does not, perforce, show a sustained critical engagement. There is a sustained discussion of the case for moral relativism based on the different moral practices found throughout societies, and some of the points are made well. There is no clear treatment, however, of moral absolutism, although the candidate does consider the view that conscience might be God-given, primarily to conclude that it would be an odd kind of God who would provide humans with a



relativistic conscience. The essay also considers the suggestion that morality might be what is practical in a particular society, although the idea is not developed. This is followed by a statement that “there are some things ... which all people from all times appear to agree on”, but only one example is given – that there are no cultures which advocate the murder of the completely innocent – a statement that is arguably untrue: for example, there have been many cultures which practised ritual infanticide as an offering to the gods. The conclusion to the essay is simplistic, and contrasts the ‘not unreasonable’ claim that relativism is true with the oddly-phrased argument that some people don’t listen to their God-given consciences. The essay merits a top-end Level 4.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

2) To say that morality is relative is to say that morality is dependant on the circumstances, rather than there being absolute set moral laws. There is also a question of what morality actually is, although this can also be relative and dependant on the situation.

For Aristotle, morality was not set on certain rules. Instead he talked about eudaimonia, or human flourishing. Whether an action was right or wrong depended on whether or not it promoted human flourishing.

Aristotle's relative way of thinking can be contrasted against Plato's absolutist ideas. Plato believed that everything had a perfect form, and everything else was a mere imitation. Because of this Plato can be said to be an absolutist. The idea of God is absolutist because he has laid down specific laws, such as the ten commandments.

One of the main issues with 'relativism' is where to stop. It is easy to make an exception, but that can then lead to another exception, and then another. This could lead to there being no moral laws whatsoever, and people simply doing as they wished. Sartre said that we could do as we wished, so long as it did not affect the freedom of others, so this could be a possible solution.

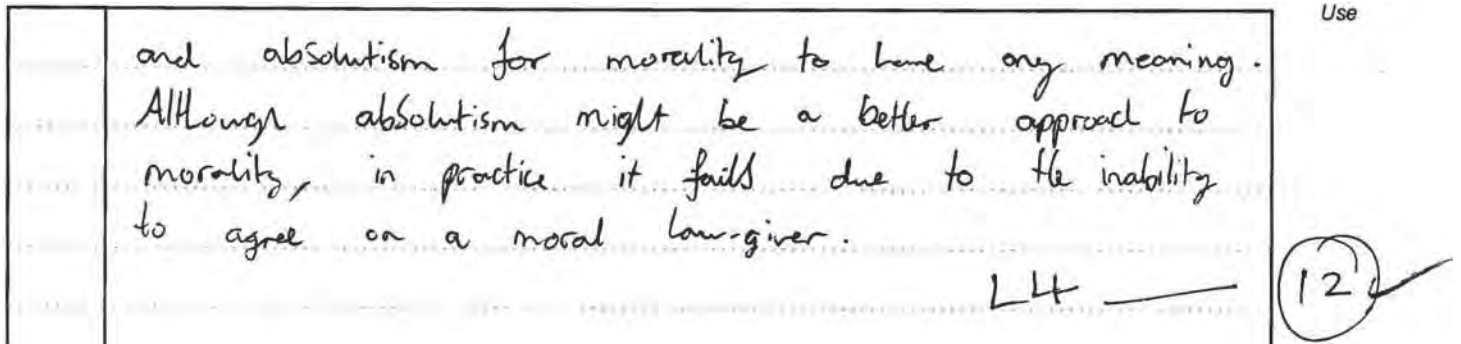
There are also many arguments against

absolutism. ~~The~~ One of the main problems is simply that we can see that morality is not absolute. Different cultures have totally different moral laws which they sincerely believe to be right. However, it has been pointed out that all cultures have the same basic ideas, such as the protection of women and the idea that murder is wrong. For example, many cultures may see it as wrong to have more than one wife, even though the notion of protecting women is the basis for marriage in both cultures.

If moral laws are God given, then it may raise problems with societies which have not even heard of God. It also brings problems such as the euthyphro dilemma and arguments for the existence of God. Furthermore, different cultures have different Gods with different teachings, and we have no way of knowing which we should follow. The teachings of God are not always clear and a relative view on ideas such as women priests has led to splits in the church. Even absolute ideas can end up relativist.

Because it is not possible to find a law-giver, absolutism cannot work, because someone independent and unbiased must set out the laws. However, a relativist view on morality can very quickly lead to there being no moral laws whatsoever. There must be the correct balance of relativism





### Examiner Comment

The knowledge displayed in this essay is generally accurate, and the response is generally relevant. The argument has some structure, although is limited in its extent and perception. The candidate begins with a contrast between Aristotle's concept of *eudaimonia* and Plato's moral absolutism. Relativism is criticised as having no place to stop, leading to the possibility of there being no moral order at all (unless we adopt Sartre's liberty of doing what we wish so long as it does not affect the freedom of others). Absolute morality is also judged not to work, for example, because of the Euthyphro dilemma (although this is unexplained) and because of the problem of basing absolute morality on a being who cannot be shown to exist. The conclusion states quite baldly that there needs to be a balance between relativism and absolutism, but how this is to be obtained is not shown. The lack of detail suggests that this essay is towards the lower end of Level 4.

### Question 3

**Critically assess the claim that without evidence, religious belief is worthless.**

**[25]**

### Mark Scheme

This question invites candidates to consider on what basis belief in God might be considered properly basic. Candidates are likely to discuss the demarcation between rationalist and fideist approaches to belief. Evidentialism holds that beliefs must be supported by reasonable evidence. At one extreme of this, strong foundationalists hold that beliefs should be held only when they are self-evident or incorrigible. An obvious rejoinder to this is that if religious beliefs are self-evident, then there should be no atheists and no plurality of religious beliefs. The view that religious beliefs are incorrigible has no obvious answer to the counter that people are frequently mistaken in what they believe. Reformed epistemologists (such as Alvin Plantinga and W. Alston) take the fideistic stance that belief in God can be properly basic without evidence to support it beyond that of personal experience, generally on the grounds that if we are justified in accepting ordinary beliefs such as, 'I had eggs for breakfast', then we are equally justified in accepting extraordinary beliefs such as, 'God exists'. The debate can be illustrated by a wide range of material.

Critical assessment might suggest that evidentialism begs the question when it comes to belief in God, since by definition belief is not knowledge. Equally, fideist approaches to faith run the risk of justifying any kind of irrational thinking merely on the grounds of personal conviction. Some might suggest that critical rationalism follows a more acceptable middle path in requiring beliefs not to contradict scientific knowledge. Others might suggest that until our epistemology is complete then any form of belief in God is a matter of personal preference. To access the higher levels, candidates must address the suggestion that belief in God might be 'worthless'.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

Use

③ Critically assess the claim that without evidence, religious belief is worthless.

The fideist approach can be summarized by Kierkegaard's claim that 'precisely because we cannot know God objectively, we must believe'. This seems on the face of it to be absurd yet with further explanation it gains meaning. Kierkegaard was ~~also~~ heavily influenced by Lutheran ideas of 'sola fides' and his book Fear and Trembling can be seen as a homage to Abraham for his intensely faithful actions. The fideist argues that a belief in God cannot be based on evidence otherwise it would become meaningless as no faith would be involved. This is supported by the Bible where Jesus' miracles show that through faith the miraculous can occur. There is both great respect and great reward for faithful men and women in the Bible.

R.M. Hare states the fideist case slightly differently with reference to his idea of a 'blik'. He defines a 'blik' as a set of 'profoundly unfalsifiable assumptions' we have when viewing the world. Religion, he maintains, has its own 'blik' and as such cannot be subjected to the evidentialist way of thinking.

Anthony Flew sees this as further reducing God and uses his ~~analog~~ metaphor of the Divine Gardener to show how fideists shift the goal posts of God. By saying

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that God cannot be found through reason they ~~do~~ make God die a 'death of a thousand qualifications'. Instead the critic would insist that, if God made us, he gave us reason and therefore we should use that reason to attempt to discover God. This stance of the evidentialist can be summarised by Hume's maxim that 'A wise man proportions his belief to the evidence'.

Pascal offers us an argument for God based on reason with Pascal's Wager. He argues that by believing in God we lose nothing if we are wrong yet stand to gain enormously if we are right, similarly by choosing not to believe in God we risk an eternity in Hell.

This can be heavily criticised. Firstly we can consider that God may be juggling. John Hick, a universalist believes no one is in hell. Secondly we can ask which God should we choose to believe in, for to choose the wrong one would also have negative consequences. Finally however is the criticism Kierkegaard would emphasise most strongly. To believe in God based on reasoning such as Pascal's is to choose God for selfish motives. Instead the fideist maintains proof cannot be found because God requires us to freely choose faith.

William Clifford attacks the fideist from a different angle. He says it is a moral requirement to have evidence and that acting on mere faith is not sufficient. He gives the example of the boat owner who



has faith that his boat will not break and thus does not replace it, yet it does sink. Clifford highlights the man's guilt for not finding sufficient evidence. The evidentialist emphasises the danger ~~of making~~ of faith of passiona motives as they are not reason-based informed decisions.

However this stance can be criticised. Many decisions are passiona. All relationships, tastes and instincts on a deeply personal level are passiona. Perhaps we could even go so far as to say that evidentialism itself is based on a fear - the fear of being wrong. A slightly toned down version of the fideist position which can be called 'critical fideism' is best summarised by Anselm's phrase 'faith seeking understanding'. In a sense it emphasises that only through commitment by faith can we then find reason. Augustine writes of this when he writes ~~that~~ that 'understanding is the reward of faith'. It is only with a fideist commitment to God that rational theories such as the teleological argument for God and moral argument make sense, but it is also only through faith that God himself can be understood.

L6-

220

L6- 22

## Examiner Comment

The candidate begins with an excellent quotation, showing precisely the kind of context in which a quotation can be used to maximum effect, i.e. Kierkegaard's claim that 'precisely because we cannot know God objectively, we must believe' – a claim based on the Lutheran '*sola fide*' (by faith alone) approach. This is backed up by a reference to Hare's fideist-type view of non-cognitive *bliks* as the basis of religious belief, and to Flew's rejection of the fideistic non-falsifiable basis of religious belief. The candidate then rejects Pascal-type fideism on the grounds that it is based on selfish motives, and goes on to refer to Clifford's critique of passional motives as being in need of support from reason-based informed decisions. This in turn is evaluated as a potentially passional response in itself, since the whole of life is personal and passional, so evidentialism might be said to be based on fear – that of being wrong. The candidate concludes nicely with an appeal to critical fideism as a middle-of-the-road response, although some might use 'critical rationalism' as a more appropriate term. The essay is at the bottom end of Level 6, since it gives no overt attention to the question of the potential 'worthlessness' of belief without evidence.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

The claim that without evidence religious belief is worthless is a claim which entirely misses the point of religious belief. Religious belief is meaningful because there is, on the whole, no proof whatsoever for it being true. If one is a religious believer, one needs to have faith, and believe in their religion without having any evidence. The fact that one follows one's religion with no proof whatsoever is what shows that they are completely devoted to what they believe in. If religious belief was backed up by evidence, it would defeat the point of religious belief, as it is easy to believe in something when one has evidence. Religious belief with evidence would not demonstrate any faith, it would simply show knowledge, and would take away the complete dedication to something that one knows very little about which gives religious belief its value.

The view that religious belief goes beyond knowledge is called fideism. Kierkegaard was a fideist and said that when possessing religious belief, one must take a "leap of faith". By this, he meant that one must be prepared to put one's trust in something blindly, and worship without evidence. If one is prepared to take this leap of faith, then it shows that one is truly committed to one's religious beliefs. If one does not trust them enough, and says that they need proof that what they are believing in is true, then they clearly do not believe very fervently in their religion.

Kant argued the opposite of what Kierkegaard said, saying that evidence was integral to having religious belief. He advocated that one could not be a religious believer without evidence, as one had no idea what one was believing in, or if what one was believing was true. Kant and Kierkegaard's opposing attitudes can be seen in the different ways that they look at the story of Abraham and Isaac. Kierkegaard takes the opinion that Abraham did the correct thing in willingly going to sacrifice his son, as God had told him to. The fact that Abraham was so willing to do this, despite the fact that he loved his son desperately and did not want to have to perform this act, shows, in Kierkegaard's opinion, Abraham's complete dedication to his God. He did not question what had been asked of him but simply went ahead, completely prepared



to do as had been asked of him. Abraham followed in the tradition of Kierkegaard's argument – by going willingly to sacrifice Isaac, he was taking a leap of faith, something which he was ultimately rewarded for, as God did not in the end allow Abraham to sacrifice his son and blessed Abraham with having a great many descendents.

Kant takes the opposing opinion on the Abraham and Isaac story and says that it was very foolish of Abraham to just blindly go ahead, fully prepared to do what he thought he had been told to do by God. In Kant's opinion, Abraham should have questioned what he had been asked to do. Kant argues that while Abraham could have been being told to sacrifice his son by God, he could also have been being deceived by some other evil entity, which was not actually God. If this had been so, whatever told Abraham to kill Isaac would have succeeded in forcing Abraham to kill his son, as Abraham obediently jumped up and went to perform the sacrifice, without venturing to get any evidence that what had told him to do this was actually God himself.

Kierkegaard argues back that the fact that there was the risk that Abraham could be being led astray was what gave validation to Abraham's religious beliefs. Abraham had so much trust in God that he just immediately believed that if God asked him to sacrifice his son, it must be the right thing to do. If he had asked for evidence, or in some way attempted to question this request, it would have shown Abraham to not have complete faith in God. This was, after all, the point of God's test – He was attempting to see if Abraham would question him or if he would simply do whatever God commanded of him, and by doing what God requested, Abraham showed his faith and was ultimately not forced to commit the horrible act of killing his son. The Abraham and Isaac story utterly validates Kierkegaard's point, showing that one cannot have proof and should not want proof of their God's existence. Rather, if their religious belief is of any value, they will take the leap of faith and follow God without knowing for sure that what they are doing is right.

Kant's argument is one which completely misses the point of religion. He cannot see that it makes sense to follow a religion without having evidence, but this is the point of religious belief. If there was proof of God's existence, then undoubtably a



lot more people would follow God than people currently do, but one is forced to question if they would be doing it for the right reason. It is very simple to follow somebody when one can see it with one's own eyes and there are no doubts that they might be wrong, but it doesn't give their religious belief value. Religious belief should be something that one does without proof as this is what shows that they truly believe in what they follow. Religious belief should not be something which is followed in order to ensure favour for oneself, as Pascal advocated. Pascal had a "gamble" theory, that as one could never know whether or not God existed, one might as well follow God. Then if one did this and if God did exist, one would be in God's favour and would get into Heaven and would not have lost out on anything, but if God did not exist one had also not lost out on anything really. Pascal therefore concluded that one might as well believe in God. Pascal's argument is sensical, but whether or not one believes in God themselves, it is obvious that Pascal is not approaching religion with the right attitude. Pascal's argument shows him to be completely out for self-gain – all he is worried about is confirming his place in Heaven if there is such a thing. Religious belief should not be something that one has in order to make everything easier for themselves, it should be something that one follows as a result of a fervant personal belief.

Therefore to conclude, the claim that without evidence religious belief is worthless is a claim which misses the point of religion. If one takes this attitude, then one clearly does not have religious belief. If there was proof for religion, then religious belief would be a completely different thing from what it currently is. It would effectively not even be religious belief, as religious belief is built on the principle which Kierkegaard calls the leap of faith. Religious belief with evidence would not incorporate the same level of commitment to something which one has no proof for, which is what shows the level of one's religious belief. If one concludes that religion belief without evidence is worthless, then they clearly are simply not inclined towards religious belief, and are failing to see the point, as both Kant and Pascal do, that religious belief is based on spiritual and not factual premises.

LS — (16) ✓



### Examiner Comment

This essay begins well with a powerful evaluative statement that is completely relevant to the question: “The claim that without evidence religious belief is worthless is a claim which entirely misses the point of religious belief” – this must be so because there is no proof whatever that religious belief is true. The candidate does not consider, however, whether demonstrating faith without evidence is actually worth anything other than to the believer, who might be entirely deluded, since it is clear that holding delusional beliefs is a common practice amongst all sorts of people. A large part of the essay is taken up with Kant’s indictment of Abraham for intending to slay an innocent person, in which the candidate judges that Kant misses the point of religion. That conclusion may be dubious, but the candidate does follow a reasonable process of evaluation. The conclusion is in line with the candidate’s evaluation, and the fact that it is centred on the question, and addresses the key word, “worthless”, just raises this essay into Level 5.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

3) This is the view which a rationalist atheist might take. It suggests that we should not believe anything unless we can prove it.

The main distinction between scientific ideas and religious ideas is the concept of falsifiability. There must be a test which would show that something is not the case. For example, water boils at  $100^{\circ}\text{C}$ , if it boils at  $60^{\circ}\text{C}$ , it is not water.

A fideist view of God is that he does not require any evidence and only needs 'faith alone', or 'sola fides'. Pascal's wager was the idea that we should believe in God because if he does not exist then we do not lose anything either way, but if he does exist, it is actively bad to have not believed, whereas it is good to have believed.

People often accuse fideists of filling in the gaps where science cannot explain something. Furthermore, they are often accused of 'shifting the goal posts' in order to make something suit them. R.M. Hare created the analogy of the paranoid student. In this, a student is convinced that his teachers are trying to kill him. His friends introduce him to the friendliest teachers to persuade him otherwise, but after each one he says it is merely a ploy to make them appear friendly.



Another analogy is that of two ~~garden~~ explorers who find a garden in the jungle. They are convinced there is a gardener, but he does not show up. However, the garden remains well kept, so they decide that ~~the~~ the gardener is still visiting when they are asleep. They put up a fence, but the garden remains kept, so they say the gardener must be able to pass through obstacles. Next they get ~~some~~ some dogs, but they do not catch him, so they say he has no scent. This goes on, and rather than accept that there is no gardener, they keep on attributing different qualities to him.  $\Lambda\Lambda$

Many people point out that science is often fallible. Many major theories which were taken as fact have now been disproved. There is also the idea of coincidence, just because the sun has risen everyday previously, how do we know it will rise tomorrow.

People might argue that there is evidence for religious belief. Religious experiences such as miracles have been verified by doctors with their reputation ~~to~~ to lose. Some would say that the bible is evidence of God.

Fideists might say that faith requires that there is no proof. If we have evidence of God and we believe in him, it will be through knowledge, not faith. It could be argued that the lack of evidence brings people closer to God.

Some people have said that faith can be actively damaging. The analogy of the Ship ~~owner~~<sup>owner</sup> says that a man rents his ship to someone for a voyage. He knows that the ship is in very poor condition, but it has made many voyages without problems. He truly believes that the ship will complete the voyage. However, the ship sinks with everyone on board. It could be said that although his actions were immoral, his beliefs were moral. Therefore it brings the problem of whether or not he is accountable for the deaths. Faith could be said to cause people to make poor or rash decisions.

It has been suggested that God is outside reason. He is quite simply incomparable to science and cannot be treated as a scientific theory. God is not simply an actor in a play, he is the director.

In conclusion, religious belief is not worthless without evidence. Due to the nature of faith, evidence would not be compatible. Furthermore, ideas such as Pascal's wager imply that it is not necessarily a bad idea. Finally, it can be argued that God is outside reason and should not be subjected to scientific method.

14—

(13)



## Examiner Comment

The candidate begins by suggesting that a rationalist atheist might demand proof before believing anything, and then introduces the scientific notion of falsifiability, although this uses an example which, as it appears, is not correct, and the reference goes nowhere. The contrasting assessment of fideism is reasonable, along with its example from Pascal's Wager. Less reasonable is the use of Hare's concept of *bliks* and the paranoid student: how this fits into the argument is not made clear at all. Equally the Wisdom/Flew Parable of the Gardener is thrown into the mix, but it is not clear what we are meant to do with it, or with the following point about whether or not the sun will rise tomorrow. The candidate goes on to contrast the evidence of miracle-claims and the Bible with the fideistic requirement that there be no evidence for faith, since faith (alone) brings people closer to God. There is a useful critique of this in the analogy of the ship. The conclusion amounts to a general reiteration of some of the essay's points. The argument has some structure, but the structure is weak, and its points are not well supported. This essay is at the lower end of Level 4.

## Question 4

**'Conscience cannot be defined.' Discuss.**

**[25]**

## Mark Scheme

Candidates might define the conscience in religious terms – e.g. Augustine's view that conscience is the innate knowledge of God's moral laws, or Aquinas' view that what is innate is the God-given ability to reason. Some will use Kant's moral theory of the categorical imperative, which in effect identifies the conscience as a moral 'faculty', linked ultimately to God through Kant's over-arching justification of the summum bonum. Psychological views include those of Freud, that the conscience is the super-ego, the unconscious repository of childhood/parental influences, or of Bishop Butler, that the conscience is that part of the hierarchy of the self which arbitrates between contrasting principles of prudence and benevolence. Sociological views generally explain the conscience as the social conditioning the group brings to bear on the individual. In evolutionary terms, the conscience might be seen as a mechanism that makes the group stronger through individual loyalty to it. The main point of the question is for candidates to assess whether one or some of these definitions can be seen as accurate, and by what criteria they can be judged to be so, or whether the conscience is some intuitive faculty that is beyond definition. Some might consider the meta-ethical view that 'good' is cognitive but non-natural, so conscience might be seen as a faculty of the mind that gives factual information by some intuitive faculty. Judge by quality of argument.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

4. The idea of conscience was first considered in the Old Testament as 'the divine law on one's heart'. St Paul took this further describing it as 'God's law on one's heart' which we don't always follow, as we are sinful. Catholicism still views ~~religion~~ conscience as this innate, God-given law but in an increasingly secular society, there are many views on conscience and one may even go as far to say that there are so many that it cannot be defined. In this piece, I will consider all of the proposed definitions of conscience and discuss whether any can be seen as coherent definitions in relation to modern society and what we feel.

The main issue with conscience is where does it come from? There are several views proposing that it is innate, and this view ties in largely with it also.

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being God given. The first view of this kind is Aquinas who believed conscience was our God given ability to reason - our 'dictate of reason'. He talked of 'synderesis' being the main part of conscience as our God given awareness to always seek good and avoid evil. 'Conscientia' was us applying 'synderesis' to dilemmas and 'prudence' was the third key part to Aquinas' conscience view as the balancing of our needs with the needs of others. Aquinas believed we should always follow our conscience even though sometimes it will be wrong, as it develops towards God given perfection of reason, though throughout life. This ties in with Aquinas' fondness of Aristotelian views and the idea of working towards perfecting your conscience seems similar to the idea of Aristotle's 'final cause and eudaimonia' - the extent of human flourishing.

Butler shared similar views to Aquinas as a God given ability to reason, and had a teleological view on conscience i.e. we have an ear to hear, an eye to see, and conscience to reason with. He also believed that our conscience is mainly used to balance self-love and benevolence - again touching on Aquinas' fondness of Aristotle, similar to Aristotle's teachings on finding a 'golden mean' to virtues. Although Butler felt conscience was ultimate authority, he did not see it to be the voice of God.

This is a view put forward by St. Augustine. He believed human will was corrupted by the original sin and so God laid down his law for us to allow us to become closer to him. We are 'witness to God,'



in hearing his voice within ourselves, which we seek, and it rises and apply to moral decisions. Newman shared the same view as Augustine as conscience being the voice of God and famously said, 'first, I will drink to conscience, then I will drink to the Pope.'

These innate views seem strong as we do, in fact, feel an innate '6th sense', as it were, with our consciences. It also keeps God as omnipotent and is attractive as we know the source of our morality. However, it can be seen as weak as it paints human as amoral as God is our conscience. Furthermore, surely if it was innate, we would all have the same consciences, but this is not the case. And why do babies not have consciences? Conscience seems to be inconsistent as people put things (bad acts) down to their consciences, and if conscience is innate, that God gives, then this questions God's goodness. Sartre would be against the innate views as they point toward a human nature. Sartre, however, believes we have purely as human condition, of ~~freedom~~ <sup>freedom</sup> ~~existence~~ <sup>existence</sup> ~~experience~~ <sup>experience</sup> abandonment, anguish and despair but it is not a nature, as it is not given to us by some supernatural artist.

However, not all view conscience as innate. Kierkegaard, the Christian Existentialist believed that conscience was engaging in an absolute relationship with God and doing what he wants (acting as he desires) and



that it was the ultimate authority, second only to faith. Kierkegaard, as a fideist, believed that one should always override their conscience with faith and saw Abraham as doing 100% the right thing in following God's commands to sacrifice his son. Buber, however, disagrees with this view, seeing us to always <sup>need to</sup> question our consciences as they could be the devil giving us orders and not God.

Psychological views are also key to defining conscience as Freud believes that Christian conscience is bad as it is based on guilt which makes the tripartite mind unbalanced. He saw conscience as based on growing up and how we responded to authority figures when we were children - it is our 'moral policeman' from our childhood phallic stage. This seems a convincing view as our consciences do seem to be a product of our childhood, making Freud's view convincing. Piaget had another psychological view as seeing conscience as acquired. He, after doing experiments of moral dilemmas on children, found a fully developed conscience to be developed by the age of 10 when you are fully autonomous, whereas before this, you are heteronomous. This too can be seen as convincing, as babies don't seem to have consciences and people do seem to develop them as they grow. However, one problem is what if one were to acquire a conscience badly?



I believe the most convincing view though is that of McNamara who believed that 'we don't have a conscience, we are a conscience'. I believe that this modern, holistic view is good as it puts conscience at the centre of our being (realistic) makes us autonomous and gives us reason to be moral. However, one may argue that putting it as our essence makes it natural to always follow it but what is natural is not always moral, for example sexual urges are not always moral. However, I believe it is strong as it explains human inconsistencies in conscious morality largely.

As a conclusion, I have shown that there are so many ~~various~~ different views with regard to conscience. The problem of it not being definable, I feel, lies with the being so many problems within the issue of conscience. For example, can it ever be defined? Is it culturally defined? If it is the voice of God, must we follow it? And what about other religions, if it is the voice of God? I agree with Pojman that conscience must be God related otherwise there is no reason to be moral. However, I seem to have a problem, as Kant would, with the lack of free will this entails on us. Therefore, I believe that conscience largely cannot be defined as there are simply so many problems with each view although I see McNamara's view as most compelling.

L6-

23 ✓



### Examiner Comment

This is a wide-ranging essay. The candidate begins by suggesting that there is so much to say about the conscience that it cannot be defined, since the variety defies definition. Aquinas and Butler are used as examples of definitions of conscience based on the idea that conscience is the God-given ability to use reason. This is followed by the Augustinian view that conscience is, literally, the voice of God. Such ideas are reasonable in so far as they give an authority to the conscience, yet they are weak in that a God-given conscience in fact amounts to amorality in humans – moral choices are not, in effect, their own. The candidate looks at Kierkegaard, Buber, Freud, Piaget, and others, before reiterating the conclusion that the variety of definition precludes our giving one definition. The candidate ends with a preference for McNamara's view that we don't *have* a conscience, we *are* a conscience. The scope of the essay means that it reaches Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

4. Conscience is a moral faculty, which tells us right from wrong - which everyone has - but the question conscience starts with is where is it from, is it inside or acquired, who gives it to us? There are all questions which I will explore later on. This

This statement 'Conscience cannot be defined' leaves us open to the interpretation of it - because I agree it cannot be defined.

Thomas Somersay that it is the voice of God - God gives guide to tell us right from wrong. Aquinas agrees with him and believes that our conscience is inside - but within our conscience is the idea of Synderesis - which is the guide which helps human seek good and avoid bad - Conscience is the actual judgement of these good and bad. Acting in the right way helps us to become more familiar with our primary precepts. Aquinas for Aquinas rationality is the most important thing, so if our mind overrides our conscience then we must follow our mind. Aquinas claims that our conscience is always developing - this idea leaves us with a criticism - if our conscience is always developing, then how will we



Ever have a fully developed conscience?

~~Piaget~~ ~~but~~ ~~is~~ ~~also~~ ~~extremely~~ ~~similar~~ ~~to~~ ~~Aguirre~~ ~~and~~ ~~believes~~ ~~that~~ ~~God~~ ~~works~~ ~~our~~ ~~conscience~~ ~~into~~ ~~our~~ ~~hearts~~, ~~but~~ ~~it~~ ~~can~~ ~~be~~ ~~corrupted~~ ~~by~~ ~~things~~ ~~and~~, ~~hence~~ ~~it~~ ~~can~~ ~~become~~ ~~un~~ ~~corrupted~~.

So here we have the first definition of Conscience from Aguirre and Aguirre and is that Conscience is the word of God? and that he "breathed".

However Freud and Piaget are two contrasting thinkers, they ~~are~~ ~~psychologists~~ ~~and~~ ~~believe~~ ~~that~~ ~~our~~ ~~conscience~~ ~~is~~ ~~all~~ ~~psychologised~~ ~~and~~ ~~that~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~trying~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ ~~with~~ ~~God~~.

Freud claims that Conscience is simply guilt that we feel when we go against our authoritative figures, like our parents. He understands that our Conscience is corrupted of three things - the Super ego which is the Conscience itself, the ego - which is what others can externally see and the Id - which is our basic level of identity. Freud used the analogy of the ice-berg to explain the Super ego, ego and Id. He said that the Super ego was the tip of the ice berg and all under was the Sub-conscience. Freud is saying here that we can never develop over time

our conscience - by leaning from others - and that when we do something wrong - we have a sense of guilt - otherwise known as a guilty conscience. Fred claims that our conscience is always developing.

Piaget who is similar to Freud - is a developmentalist - and <sup>understands</sup> ~~understands~~ that from the age 0-5 - our conscience <sup>starts</sup> ~~starts~~ and that we are <sup>aware</sup> ~~aware~~ of ourselves, from 5 → 10 - we become aware of others (emotions) and from 10+ we have a completely mature conscience.

But we ask what is a mature conscience? Does Aquinas say it is always developing and that it comes from God? Frame - who comes up with

~~Copying Fred's page~~

another view of conscience this is an authoritarian view - the idea that our conscience develops due to our idols - we look up to our inspirations and copy them - this leads us to have an unhealthy conscience which Frame disagrees with - we need to follow ourselves and reason well to have a balanced life conscience, otherwise it is not our own.

Butler would disagree with the authoritarian view by saying firstly conscience is not due to our inspirations but directly from the voice of God - which we



must follow at all times. This idea of Conscience as being the voice of God raises questions because how do we know it is God, Surely then God is responsible for all our actions, Surely then we have no responsibility? As Rich may say "we are ~~God's~~ <sup>God's</sup> ~~welsh~~ <sup>welsh</sup> puppets". Butler tries to answer these questions by saying as we must do is just <sup>follow</sup> our Conscience because it is the direct word of God and that it will always be right.

Butler introduces his principle of Reflection - this consists of a <sup>hierarchy</sup> ~~scale~~ with Conscience on the very top - with Self-love and <sup>benevolence</sup> ~~kindness~~ in the middle and our basic <sup>drives</sup> ~~drives~~ at the bottom (like the need for food when hungry). Butler claims that we must keep our Self-love and benevolence in balance to be healthy - and by using our Conscience and ~~feeling~~ <sup>feeling</sup> we can do this. However we have an objection - what about people who are not able to keep Self-love and benevolence in balance? Surely then that makes them <sup>un-healthy</sup> ~~unhealthy~~ and makes them lose love they are going against God?

Finally Newman - he claims that

Conscience is the voice a 'messenger' from God - not the voice of God, simply a messenger from God - again he claims that our conscience should always be followed, this is a dangerous view because we surely then <sup>we</sup> could blame anything on our conscience.

Refuting to the statement 'Conscience cannot be defined' is ~~being~~ a fair statement - because it really cannot be defined. As some say it's the voice of God, some say the messenger, others ~~then~~ <sup>from</sup> intuitive fibres and some just say that it is developed - so where does it come from? Do we acquire it like Rutter would say or do we develop it like Freud would say?

~~There we go~~ ~~the answer~~

This debate could lead to a conclusion because if conscience was the voice of God then how do we know, what does it mean if we do something bad and don't feel a sense of guilt? Surely then this is questioning God's benevolence? But then if we develop it then where does it stop - can we ever have a fully developed conscience?

This is where conscience leads us - with a lot of rhetorical questions, which can



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be answered but can easily be argued against.

In Conclusion - ~~and~~ the very fact that we feel guilty when we do something wrong, or feel good when we do something right, or the fact that sometimes we do know our conscience and sometimes we don't, shows that our conscience is subjective and innate in a sense. But along with conscience we must also use our rational thought ~~and~~ to try about a perfectly healthy and balanced conscience whether it's God's ~~own~~ direct word or not.

As St Paul said conscience is written on our hearts by God but it is up to us human beings to use it right, whatever we think it is, conscience is undeliable - which is why we must keep ~~the~~ a healthy conscience and do what is right and wrong - and go against our conscience when necessary, and do as it tells us when we should.

Whether it is the voice of God or not it is still our conscience, so deliable or not - it can still help us to hear ~~the~~ and tell us right from wrong.

U (16)

### Examiner Comment

The candidate covers a fair range of material, and evaluates most of its points. There are some inaccuracies, such as the comment that Aquinas identified the conscience as the voice of God, but in general the material is accurate. The conclusion is in line with the body of the essay, and suggests that the conscience is on the whole a subjective phenomenon. The number of suggested definitions means subjectivity has to play a part in what we do with it, so we should go against the conscience if we reason that we should do so. The essay has enough coherence to reach the bottom end of Level 5.



## Paper 2 Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology 1

### Generic Mark Scheme for 10 mark questions

Level 6 9–10 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues</li> <li>• Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>• Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 5 7–8 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered</li> <li>• Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>• Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 4 5–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered</li> <li>• Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
Level 3 3–4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon.</li> <li>• Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>• Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>• Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
Level 2 1–2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short.</li> <li>• Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>• Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>

## Generic Mark Scheme for 15 mark questions

Level 6 13–15 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question</li> <li>● Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>● Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained</li> <li>● Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>● Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 5 10–12 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question</li> <li>● Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>● Argument has structure and development and is sustained</li> <li>● Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>● Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 4 7–9 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question</li> <li>● Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>● Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained</li> <li>● Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument</li> <li>● May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
Level 3 4–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>● Attempts to evaluate though with partial success</li> <li>● Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>● Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence</li> <li>● Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>● Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
Level 2 1–3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short.</li> <li>● Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>● Argument is limited or confused</li> <li>● Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>● Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>● Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>



## Generic Mark Scheme for 25 mark questions

<p>Level 6</p> <p>21–25 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues</li> <li>• Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question</li> <li>• Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>• Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained</li> <li>• Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 5</p> <p>16–20 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered</li> <li>• Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question</li> <li>• Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>• Argument has structure and development and is sustained</li> <li>• Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 4</p> <p>12–15 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered</li> <li>• Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question</li> <li>• Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>• Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained</li> <li>• Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument</li> <li>• May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
<p>Level 3</p> <p>8–11 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon</li> <li>• Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>• Attempts to evaluate though with partial success</li> <li>• Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>• Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence</li> <li>• Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
<p>Level 2</p> <p>1–7 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short</li> <li>• Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>• Argument is limited or confused</li> <li>• Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>

Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>
0 marks	

## Topic 2: Philosophical and Theological Language

What is not so generally recognised is that there can be no way of proving that the existence of a god, such as the God of Christianity, is even probable. Yet this also is easily shown. For if the existence of such a god were probable, then the proposition that he existed would be an empirical hypothesis. And in that case it would be possible to deduce from it, and other empirical hypotheses, certain experiential propositions which were not deducible from those other hypotheses alone. But in fact this is not possible. It is sometimes claimed, indeed, that the existence of a certain sort of regularity in nature constitutes sufficient evidence for the existence of a god. But if the sentence "God exists" entails no more than that certain types of phenomena occur in certain sequences, then to assert the existence of a god will be simply equivalent to asserting that there is the requisite regularity in nature; and no religious man would admit that this was all he intended to assert in asserting the existence of a god. He would say that in talking about God, he was talking about a transcendent being who might be known through certain empirical manifestations, but certainly could not be defined in terms of those manifestations. But in that case the term "god" is a metaphysical term. And if "god" is a metaphysical term, then it cannot be even probable that a god exists. For to say that "God exists" is to make a metaphysical utterance which cannot be either true or false. And by the same criterion, no sentence which purports to describe the nature of a transcendent god can possess any literal significance.

[Extract from **A.J. Ayer**: *Language, Truth and Logic*: 115]

### Question 4 (a)

**With reference to this passage, explain why Ayer claims that language about a transcendent God is meaningless.** [10]

### Mark Scheme

According to Ayer, proving the existence of a transcendent God could be done only by an a priori proposition, but all a priori propositions reduce to meaningless tautologies. The existence of God is not a genuine empirical hypothesis, so is not even probable. The notion of God as a person with non-empirical attributes is not an intelligible notion. All talk of a transcendent God merely serves to foster the illusion that there is a real entity corresponding to the name 'God'. Belief in a transcendent God is commonly joined to belief in an after-life, but that is not a genuine hypothesis either, since it usually rests on belief in an immortal soul, which is yet another meaningless metaphysical assertion. The assertion that religious 'truths' about a transcendent God are not literally significant is supported by what theists themselves say – for example that 'God is a mystery that transcends all understanding', but by definition anything that does this must be completely unintelligible. If a mystic admits that the objects of his visions cannot be described, then he must also admit that he is bound to talk nonsense when he describes them. In describing his vision, the mystic gives us no information about the external world: he merely gives us indirect information about the condition of his own mind. This disposes also of the argument from religious experience: a man who claims to see God can give no verification for what he claims to see, whereas normal empirical observations have verifiable sense contents. Religious philosophers who fill their books with claims about a transcendent being are candidates for the psychiatrist's couch.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

4 a Ayer, a devotee to the logical empiricist school of thought, outlines his position in relation to metaphysics. For Ayer, in the hope of verification of synthetic or analytic propositions, there is 'no way that the existence of God... is even probable'. This is to say that propositions that are adverse to Ayer's claim, those that attempt to validate the idea of belief in God via analytic or synthetic means, fail.

The article relates to the verification principle which, for Ayer and the Logical Positivists, represents the faulty by which meaning ~~is~~ in relation to truth claims can be said to exist. It is otherwise known as the 'criterion of meaning' or the 'criterion of significance' because its primary objective it is first to distinguish whether a truth claim can be considered meaningful, and secondly to determine if it is true or false relative to empirical observation.

Analytical claims are claims that proclaim their asseity from the definition they have been provided with. Ayer calls them tautologies. The ontological argument is an example of a priori, analytic proposition which proclaims the existence of God, but only insofar as God is 'the existence of a certain regularity in nature'.

It is these Hume's fork, illustrating the dichotomy between analytic and synthetic truths are the basis for Ayer's distinction. Ayer broadly agrees with Hume's description also. For Ayer, the metaphysical connotations of the idea of God are

exhibitions prevalent in truth claims which  
 defer to empirical observation. It is to these  
 examples that Ayer claims, via the verification  
 principle, their utter lack of meaning. Ayer notes  
 that 'if "god" is a metaphysical term, then it  
 cannot even be probable that god exists.' For to  
 say that "God Exists" is a metaphysical  
 utterance which cannot be either true or false. It  
 is devoid of meaning, for because for a sentence  
 to acquire meaning, it must take on the properties of  
 a synthetic proposition, and for metaphysical  
 statements to be imbued with said property they  
 must also be meaningful, and verifiable or  
 falsifiable. Factual or theoretical property must be alluded to.  
 The criterion of meaning denotes that empirical  
 observation is necessary to render a truth claim  
 probable; Ayer's contention is that appeals to  
 metaphysics and the notion of a transcendental  
 God cannot even fulfill this requirement. It is  
 for this reason that Ayer asserts that 'no sentence  
 which purports to describe the nature of a transcendent  
 god can possess any literal significance.

LS - 7  
 LS - 7

## Examiner Comment

As the candidate says, Ayer is here outlining his attitude towards metaphysics: the existence of God cannot be verified empirically or by analytic means. The candidate correctly outlines Ayer's verification principle as a criterion of meaning. What then follows on the ontological argument is not clear, since the candidate refers in the same sentence to 'certain regularities in nature', which is presumably the design argument. The essay



gets back on track by tracing Ayer's position to Hume's fork (the difference between analytic and synthetic propositions). Metaphysical utterances, on this line of argument, are devoid of empirical/synthetic content, since they can neither be verified nor falsified, so they assert nothing at all. This is a good summary of Ayer's argument. It lacks sufficient reference to the passage quoted to be higher than a Level 5.

#### Question 4 (b)

**Evaluate Ayer's attack on religion.**

**[15]**

#### Mark Scheme

Ayer's attack on religion stems from his acceptance of the verification principle as the criterion of assessing the meaning of statements, including religious statements: statements/ propositions that are not logical statements and propositions, and that cannot be verified in sense experience, are meaningless. Ayer's consideration of strong verification and verification in fact led him to assert that meaning can be granted through the reduced criteria of weak verification and verification in principle. According to Ayer, religion is not verifiable even weakly or in principle.

This attack is seen by many as inept, since religious statements can be verified weakly e.g. the resurrection of Jesus might be held to be verified by associated documentary evidence (the New Testament). Also, as a criterion of meaning, the verification principle fails its own test, since it cannot be confirmed by any empirical evidence, weakly or in principle. Ayer claimed that, as a principle, it was exempt from its own rule, but that seems arbitrary. The general consensus is that Ayer's attack on religion fails.

On the other hand, the verification principle can be used to identify statements that look meaningful but are not. Hick gives some useful examples, e.g. 'overnight the entire physical universe has instantaneously doubled in size, and the speed of light has doubled', where the assertion cannot be confirmed or disconfirmed by any empirical observations, so what at first sight looks like a genuinely factual assertion fails the test of what passes for a genuine factual assertion, i.e. that it must make an experienceable difference whether the facts are as alleged or not. Some might argue that the verification principle is stronger when taken with other types of arguments against religion, for example those based on the falsification principle.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5



b As a logical empiricist, Ayer's attack on religion appeals to the notion of empirical observation; an epistemological faculty which has been the dominant composite of scientific method for many centuries. By pointing out that empirical ~~claims~~ truth claims about God are in fact metaphysical speculation on the purported existence of gods a transcendent god, Ayer illustrates that metaphysics as a discipline for the type of scientific method it had previously reported to inhabit. ~~At the~~ All things in this extract considered puts the proverbial religious believer proclaiming these truth claims in a position whereby analytic proposition illustrates a god who, to use the analysis of Antony Flew, has 'died the death of a thousand qualifications' or the complete improbability of a God at all when the synthetic proposition and empirical observation are utilised.

Ayer's argument is always rooted in scientific method, and the verification principle and logical positivism both conclude that religious language and metaphysics are nonsense and, courtesy of Ayer and Stephenson's emotivism, that ethical language is merely expressions of emotion. The chief counter to response to the analysis and evaluation proffered by Ayer usually focuses on the self defeating nature of the verification principle. That the criterion of meaning as a faculty of logic is unverifiable is often alluded to by critics



of logical positivism, such as Karl Popper. However, Ayer makes adverse claims, suggesting that the methods by which the verification principle is created are typical of the analytic logical reasoning, or Hume's 'relation of ideas', and as such 'meaning' or 'verifiability' is assumed by the definitions used to acquire meaning or verifiability. In order to verify the verification principle, you would have to define each individual linguistic phoneme that goes into the process of verification. If this were to actually be embarked upon, with each definition proving more definitions, the process would break down into infinite temporal regress.

Ayer allows the analytic reasoning of Austin's ontological argument, but refuses the notion that what the argument ~~asserts~~ asserts is anything like the idea of ~~that~~ the Judeo-Christian God at all, even something that it would beget anything metaphysical or transcendental. The arguments of Ayer, and of the Logical positivists succeed in enervating metaphysical speculation from the field of scientific method, illustrating the epistemological fallacy to it attributes. As such it is an enormously successful weakening of religious truth claims, metaphysics and religion in general, forcing all of said areas of human thought

	<p>to reside in the Fideist concept of faith as opposed to reason.</p> <p>LS</p> <p>LS 12</p>	<p>Use</p> <p></p> <p>12</p> <p></p>
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### Examiner Comment

The candidate begins well, using sophisticated philosophical language to assert that Ayer's attack on religion uses the dominant scientific epistemology of his time. The middle part of the first paragraph becomes unclear, however, and the complexity of language loses itself: for example, the juxtaposition of analytic propositions about God and Flew's comment that 'religious statements die the death of a thousand qualifications' is rather strange. The essay gets back on track with the claim that the chief counter to Ayer's attack on religion is the probability that the verification principle is self-defeating, because it is itself unverifiable by sense experience. What then follows seems to be a counterclaim, on behalf of Ayer, that the verification principle, as a principle, is exempt from its own rule, although the candidate doesn't really say that. What follows is clear enough, that verificationism seems to lead to an infinite regress, since each part of the verifying process requires verification in turn. The conclusion, that Ayer was successful in forcing religion to become more fideist in its approach, has some truth to it. All in all, the candidate shows competent understanding with some good use of concepts, and the essay merits Level 5.

### Question 6

**Evaluate the significance for religious belief of Wittgenstein's concept of language games.**

[25]

### Mark Scheme

Wittgenstein describes language as an indefinite set of social activities, each serving a purpose, each different activity being a language game: cursing, blessing, ordering, hypothesising, and so on. Each language game is defined by its users and is meaningful to those who use it. Those who have no use for a language game have no right to criticise those who have, so to demand verification or falsification of religious language using scientific/empirical criteria is not appropriate. The statements 'I believe in God' and 'I do not believe in God' are not contradictory statements, but are simply different perspectives that people can take. Trying to say something factual about God is nonsense, although in the Notebooks, Wittgenstein suggested that life is meaningless if there is no dependence on a transcendent God. However, God lies beyond any set of facts, so no set of propositions can describe a transcendent God.

This appears to provide a powerful defence of meaning for religious statements, where verification is internal, without need for external justification. It is doubtful, however, that it gets us very far. People lose their faith because something provides evidence that their beliefs are wrong, which suggests that the role of external justification is important for common sense: hence D.Z. Philips points out



that if language games don't need evidence, how do we know that believers aren't making a bungle? On Wittgenstein's interpretation, I appear to be fully justified in adopting any nonsensical language I like, whereas I would prefer to be told that I was in need of being rescued from intellectual nonsense. Language games do overlap, not least the scientific and religious language games – that is the main point of natural theology, and seems preferable to Wittgensteinian anti-realism and fideism. Whatever evaluation is offered can gain Level 6 by breadth or depth or both.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

Wittgenstein began his philosophical career with broadly speaking the same version of analytic logical philosophy as the Vienna circle or the Logical Positivists. That is to say that he placed the emphasis on verification on issues such as meaning, and utilised the criterion of meaning in his own series of works. Later in his career, he published material which refuted many of the claims of the logical positivists and which aimed to validate much of the individual, interpersonal religious meaning ~~superior~~ <sup>superior</sup> of religious belief.

His concept of Language games originates with the denial of the Logical positivists' ethos which completely dismisses metaphysical or religious propositions as erroneous. For late Wittgenstein, meaning via empirical verification reflects the subjective, non-cognitive meaning which ~~guided~~ <sup>guides</sup> much religious belief and, in an effort to ~~unlike~~ <sup>unlike</sup> such ~~language~~ <sup>language</sup> he language typical to a group with a degree of meaning, he composed his theory of Language games.

Language games connotes the idea that meaning can exist in specialised, ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> isolated languages typical to certain groups who, with the understanding and interest of it of the phenomenon they all subscribe to, realise a form of meaning. Wittgenstein utilised the logical technique of analogy to illustrate what he meant.



football fans Football fans all partake in  
 a form of language game which, according  
 to Wittgenstein, is analogous to religion.  
 Various terms, such as the 'off-side rule',  
 mean nothing to someone not participating in  
 that language game, but to someone with  
 a full understanding the term conveys up  
 various connotations due to the meaning it  
 has become infused with subjectivity and  
 interpersonally relative to the vocation of  
 football. Their personal language, or at least,  
 is specific to those in the group and to non-  
 participants with not mean anything.

This is significant to religious beliefs, as  
 it allows them to work within the boundaries of  
 truth claims and exhibit instances of meaning  
 which can be verified under the scope of language  
 games. In the era for the logical positivists, the  
 dominant scientific ideology of the first half of  
 the twentieth century, when truth claims relative  
 to empirical discourse and so scientific method  
 of a so religious or metaphysical nature were  
 considered ~~epistemologically~~ epistemologically erroneous  
 and non-sensical, ~~as~~ a logical-analytic  
 theory which supports the notion of meaning  
 in religious and metaphysical discourse is of  
 great significance for those individuals imbued  
 with religious beliefs. It validates it to a  
 certain degree and ameliorates the stigma of  
 utter lack of meaning ascribed to religious



belief and metaphysics by the logical positivists. Like with the football analogy, a participant in the abetour of religion could reconstitute against the criticism of the very sceptic logical empirist by claiming that an understanding of said abetour is fundamental to the understanding of religious belief and the meaning it entails courtesy of Wittgenstein's notion of language games. Someone with no awareness of the lenses adopted by football fans would be unable to participate and would subsequently be devoid of the faculty by which they illicit ~~very~~ informed opinion relative to football. This is significant for A participant in religious belief as it effectually voids and nullifies the ~~reasoning~~ reasoned criticism promulgated by the sceptic logical empirist in the scope of language games.

The counter response to this is one utilised by defenders of the reasoned values typical of the logical positivists and analytic-empirists of the early 20th century, which detours the analogy of the football fans to ~~illustrate~~ illustrate that, like with metaphysical and religious language, language relative to football can be learnt and understood by ~~a~~ a previously excluded individual. This individual can then utilise the abetour of the language group and still reach conclusions which render the truth claims of said group



meaningless.

The counter-response to this argues that simple knowledge and understanding ~~does so~~ of a group's activity does not necessitate participation but merely allows them to share with what actual participants are talking about in their language game. This is not enough to inspire faith in the phenomena, or indeed ~~some~~ <sup>some</sup>, which the language game ~~addresses~~ is evocative of. The sceptic who can talk like a metaphysician is devoid of the same faith that habituates meaning in the participant and subsequently his role as a critic is demeaned, as he can never understand the meaning cogitant to the language game.

A ~~parallel~~ parallel can be drawn between the reasoning of the Logical Positivists and Wittgenstein. The Logical Positivist concludes that any metaphysical or transcendental language is speculation and therefore utterly devoid of meaning. The ~~subsequent~~ use of this epistemological fallacy renders any claims to the contrary equally meaningless under the same logical faculty. Therefore, any attempt to argue against the Logical Positivist's claim in the hope of Logical Positivism is ~~erroneous~~ <sup>erroneous</sup> and ~~unfounded~~ <sup>unfounded</sup>, always to be dismissed by the same reason employed by the Logical positivists. With Language games, a contrary ~~reason~~ faculty is employed, which concludes contradictory results and any attempt by the

Logical Positivist to refute it necessitates the Logical Positivist's use of similar logic. Unfortunately, within the realm of language games only the same logic utilised by Wittgenstein to facilitate his theory can be employed, and this works in favour of the notion of language games and subsequently of the religious believer or metaphysician who wishes to defend the notion that the theories they are ~~religiously~~ ~~known~~ known for is meaningful.

Language games are significant for the religious believer in that under the guise of the logic appropriated by Wittgenstein, meaning is delegated to all phenomena and someone surrounded by a group which shares the same linguistic denials and relationships ~~both~~ between what they say ~~they signify~~ the signifier is in relation to the signified in their shared, interpersonal understanding of religious belief. It bequeathes to the metaphysicians by which ~~he~~ he can defend his vocation as meaningful.

LS - (19)  
LS - (19)

### Examiner Comment

The candidate begins with the observation that Wittgenstein began his philosophical career in the same circles as Ayer, i.e. the analytic philosophy of the Logical Positivists, and thus shared their general approach to verificationism. Later, however, Wittgenstein refuted many of the claims of the Logical Positivists, primarily because he came to see that verificationism neglects the subjective, non-cognitivist meaning of religious language. Religion can be meaningful as a language game, where meaning is personal/specific



to a group of participants, as in the game of football. Given the prevailing scientific/empirical epistemology, this was highly significant for religious belief in so far as such beliefs can be validated in their own right. A scientific/empirical critique cannot make religious language meaningless any more than someone who knows nothing about football can participate meaningfully in a discussion about that sport. The candidate gives a useful counter to this by pointing out that unlike religion, football can be empirically observed, so anybody, if they decided to study the game, could make a meaningful contribution to discussing it, whereas the same cannot necessarily be said of religious belief. The candidate goes on to develop these points. The essay shows good critical engagement, accurate knowledge and good structure. In order to reach Level 6, it perhaps needs to be more critical of Wittgensteinian 'fideism'; nevertheless the essay is at the top of Level 5.

### Topic 3: Philosophy of Religion

I believe that the justification for the enterprise lies in the nature of theology. If it is to lay claim again to its medieval title of the Queen of the Sciences that will not be because it is in a position to prescribe the answers to the questions discussed by other disciplines. Rather it will be because it must avail itself of their answers in the conduct of its own inquiry, thereby setting them within the most profound context available. Theology's regal status lies in its commitment to seek the deepest possible level of understanding. In the course of that endeavour it needs to take into account all other forms of knowledge, while in no way attempting to assert an hegemony over them. A theological view of the world is a total view of the world. Every form of human understanding must make its contribution to it. The offering of the physical sciences to that end must be made, at least partly, by those who work in them. Theology cannot just be left to the theologians, as is made clear by the recent spectacle of a distinguished theologian writing over three hundred pages on God in creation with only an occasional and cursory reference to scientific insight. It is as idle to suppose that one can satisfactorily speak about the doctrine of creation without taking into account the actual nature of the world, as it would be to think that the significance of the world could be exhaustively conveyed in the scientific description of its physical processes.

[Extract from **John Polkinghorne**: *Science and Creation. The Search for Understanding*: 1–2]

### Question 7 (a)

**With reference to this passage, explain why Polkinghorne sees natural theology as being crucially important for understanding the world.** [10]

### Mark Scheme

Natural theology uses the insights of science in order to reach a clearer understanding of the world. It works on the premise that the world is God's creation, so it must reveal God's power and intentions. It works alongside revelation from scripture and religious experience to give humans a unified world view. Scientific data must therefore be used in the attempt to understand ultimate questions. Science is the most profound context available for answering questions about the world, from the very small (the domain of Quantum Mechanics) to the macro universe (physics and cosmology). Theology must use all kinds of knowledge and take a total world view, otherwise it will be incomplete: Polkinghorne gives the example of armchair theologians who expose themselves (and others) to ridicule by writing about creation without reference to the science of the origins of the universe, which in recent years

(with Inflationary theory) may not even require an absolute beginning in a single Big Bang. Equally, understanding the world is not just about understanding its physical process: physical description and theological interpretation must, sensibly, go hand in hand. In issues such as the fine-tuning of the universe, for example, science can throw up questions that point beyond itself and transcend its power to answer (p.23). Science is not just a speculative system – it is reflected in the reality that we perceive, and is a vehicle of God's revelation of himself to humans.

### Example Candidate Response – Level 5

7a.) Polkinghorne's assertion that theology is the "Queen of the Sciences" is rooted in his belief that theology answers the most fundamental questions about human existence and the existence of the world. Only by answering theological questions about the existence and nature of God can we justify assumptions in other fields of learning. This is the "deepest level of understanding" that he refers to. For example, as a Christian, Polkinghorne would want to assert that the existence of a God complements and adds weight to theories in physics about the constants that govern gravity and other such anthropic 'coincidences.' The importance of Natural theology lies in its commitment to take into account all other fields of knowledge, leading to a "total view of the world." He is acknowledging that the sciences must contribute to the 'how' questions of existence, but insists that the 'why' element, which is as if not more important, can only be answered through a full study of theology and science together. This idea criticises the customary conflict suggested by people such as Richard Dawkins and Ken Ham between a religious world view and a Christian world view. The consequences of avoiding this necessary partnership can lead to the mistake that he refers to of writing a three hundred page book that only acknowledges half the debate as to the nature and existence of God. In this Polkinghorne may be referring back to Aquinas and his theory of natural law. Where as Aquinas used this to deduce a system of morality, Polkinghorne is suggesting a marriage between science and theology in all aspects of epistemology and ethics. If creation is a product of God then it is likely that it will be revelatory of him including his intention for the world and those who inhabit it. The way to access this knowledge is a full study of natural theology including its scientific aspects which requires us to engage in both rational deduction and inspection of the world. LS/8✓

### Examiner Comment

This essay provides a good summary of the passage. Natural theology is important because it is committed to a total view of the world, in which theology complements science by offering a setting for its theories. Science and religion must work together to answer the 'why?' questions, and in particular, the customary dichotomy exacerbated by the likes of Dawkins must be avoided in order to prevent unnecessary conflict and to eliminate naïve theology that shies away from scientific discovery. The candidate gets the three-hundred page book in the wrong era, but concludes with a good summary of Polkinghorne's wish for a marriage between science and theology which requires us to engage in both rational deduction and inspection of the world. The answer is Level 5.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

7a. Natural Theology - Knowledge of God through Science + Religion

- Need to look from both sides  
Friends not enemies

7a. Polkinghorne claims that to have complete understanding of the world - we need to have full knowledge of Science and Theology. This is otherwise known as Natural Theology.

Polkinghorne understands that Science and Theology have a friendship - "friends not foes". Polkinghorne backs this up in the passage "it needs to take into account all other form of knowledge." This is implying that Theology can't simply rely on theology alone - it needs to consider Science, they can both answer questions for each other.

As Polkinghorne states "Theology cannot be left to the theologians", he claims this is idle, without reference to Science, surely weakens any religious point made.

For example the Creation - a Theologian could say that the world was created by God and God alone - this leaves out the whole idea of the Big Bang

And the idea of quantum physics. Polkinghorne would call this "ignorant". "It is idle to suppose that one can satisfactorily speak about the doctrine of creation without taking into account the actual nature of the world." This refers back to natural theology - the fact that one can't just believe that they have a full understanding of the world by looking through one perspective.

Looking at the world only through a scientific explanation leads to many gaps - how did the world come about so orderly? - what shape has it taken? - how did the big bang actually start?

For Polkinghorne's purpose - he is stating that the questions science can't answer, theology can answer vice versa. This destroys ~~Polkinghorne's~~ <sup>the</sup> idea of the God of the gaps - which Polkinghorne is trying to break down.

"It would be to think that the significance of the world could be exhaustively conveyed in the scientific description of its physical processes". This comes on from Polkinghorne's point that we can't simply just look at the world in one perspective, it doesn't answer the questions which we face.

Natural Theology however does



any aspect; of understanding because it  
 was the whole idea of science and  
 theology. Polkinghorne's 'works' ~~would~~  
 have all been built up towards natural  
 theology because he thinks that it is  
 the most crucial thing to be fully  
 understood.

Occasionally Polkinghorne does claim that  
 the scientists should say ~~the~~ <sup>we</sup> put "the  
 offering of the physical sciences to God  
 and must be made - at least partly, by  
 those who work in them." and that  
 theologians should say that - and together  
 we can have full knowledge of  
 everything.

Although science and religion together  
 does seem very contradictory - Einstein  
 once said "Religion without science  
 is blind, science without religion is  
 lame." This shows that both aspects  
 need each other to grasp the way  
 things are. This is why natural  
 theology is so important.

14

5

## Examiner Comment

This essay provides a reasonable summary of the passage, largely by way of re-phrasing Polkinghorne's comments. There is some added comment, for example in the concluding statement that Einstein had a similar perspective to Polkinghorne, that "religion without science is blind, science without religion is lame" (correct, even if the phrases are the other way round). This reaches Level 4.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

7  
a) Polkinghorne sees natural theology as being crucially important for understanding the world because it has 'commitment to seek the deepest possible level of understanding'. Natural theology uses both religion and science to find this deepest understanding. The scholars who use natural theology must also know about both science and theology and not just leave, for example, theology to the theologians.

Polkinghorne criticises science for talking about the 'doctrine of creation' without taking into account the actual nature of the world. The doctrine of creation is the idea that there is a creator behind the universe not necessarily the big bang. Theology uses this to explain how the universe came about but needs science to fill the

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gaps. Where theology has gaps it uses 'God of the gaps' to fill in its place for knowledge that isn't known or needed any more.

The beginning of the passage reveals that Polkinghorne does see natural theology as being crucially important because he says 'the justification for the enterprise lies in the nature of theology'. ~~science~~ He also says 'a theological view of the world is a total view of the world' meaning that theology is the basis for the understanding of the world. Science and religion are not contradictory but complementary so you need both to gain a full and deep understanding of the universe but theology has the basis for that understanding.

23

34

### Examiner Comment

Here there is some accuracy of knowledge, but little development with regard to Polkinghorne's views in this extract. The technical vocabulary is limited, as witness the reference to the "big bang" theory of the origin of the universe. The essay meets the criteria for a Level 3 response.



## Question 7 (b)

**Assess critically Polkinghorne's attempt to lead physics to theology.****[15]**

## Mark Scheme

The subject matter is broad here, so candidates could discuss several aspects of Polkinghorne's view, either in breadth or in depth, or both. Polkinghorne thinks that it is amazing that the world is intelligible at all, although others might comment that if it were not intelligible, the comment could not be made – intelligibility is just part of what is. The same kind of argument is often used to dispose of the fine-tuning argument, since the anthropic principle is seen by many as just a description of the universe we inevitably find ourselves in – if it were not intelligible through the parameters it possesses, no comment would be possible, although of course Polkinghorne, like Swinburne, sees that as an evasion. Some might challenge Polkinghorne's essentially Christian interpretation of the role of physics, e.g. in his use of the 'Logos' theology. Some might challenge his view that the human characteristic of seeking ultimate solutions is symptomatic of the presence of God within us – human curiosity might be said to be a sufficient driving force. Polkinghorne's concept of the soul in terms of dual aspectism is consonant with the Christian concept of humans as a psycho-somatic unity, which Polkinghorne justifies with reference to the wave-particle duality of light, which might seem fanciful.

Polkinghorne's attempt to integrate science and religion is valuable in that for many non-religious people it demonstrates that religion is not necessarily a closed system.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

b.) The joining between physics and theology that Polkinghorne argues for throughout *Science and Creation* is founded on the belief that the old telological arguments for God that produced a God of the Gaps are now obsolete. In this he is referring to what Richard Swinburne calls the move from "regularities of succession" to "regularities of co-presence" or in Polkinghorne's own words, from the "scientifically open to the scientifically given."

The *qua* purpose arguments in question were essentially that of William Paley. He argued that if one came across a watch one would assume from the complexity of the design, the interconnected nature of the parts and the obvious intention of a purpose, that the watch had been made by an intelligent designer. Similarly, if one looks at the world, it too displays the same properties of complexity and interconnected structures but on a far grander scale, from this we can infer that it must have been made by a equivalently powerful creator that we call God. This argument perfectly displays the God of the Gaps that Polkinghorne so discredits. There is a gap in our knowledge and we fill that gap with God.

This argument was criticised heavily by Hume who pointed out a number of flaws in the archetypal *qua* purpose argument. All such arguments are based on analogy, analogous arguments become weaker the more they differ from the situation they are trying to describe. The God that Paley suggests is not so much the God of Christianity as Polkinghorne is attempting to argue for, but a divine watchmaker. It would seem that "the world was the first rude effort of an infant deity who soon abandoned it." There is no reason to suggest that there is one God, why not a number of Gods in the same way that a ship is made by many workers. Equally one could point out that the world seems a lot more like an organic structure, these are not made they grow and procreate themselves; by analogy it seems likely that the world grows independent of a designer. The question of why we are so suited to our environment is also addressed by Hume who claims that "he can hardly understand" how such things could have survived were they not so accustomed to their surroundings. Hume's final argument is that we have never seen a world being made and that our knowledge of design is so inferior that we could not possibly draw conclusions about our world's construction.

It is clear that Polkinghorne is justified in his rejection of arguments from design especially when one



takes into account discoveries that Polkinghorne considers such as the theory of evolution which explains how complexity can come about over time through a natural, ungoverned, process; and the Big Bang theory, which shows how the entire universe came about from the rapid expansion of time, space and matter from a moment of singularity with infinite density and temperature. We know both these theories to be correct from evidence. The common bone structures in different species and common genetic material point to evolution, and the expansion of the universe and microwave background radiation to Big Bang theory. However, Polkinghorne suggests that, even though these theories perfectly explain how the world has come about the way it is, it does not explain why the world is the way it is, this can only be answered by considering physics in conjunction with natural theology. As Polkinghorne says, "that the world is as important as how the world is."

He points out that science is powerless to explain science. One cannot use the constants of physics and theories of cause and effect to explain why the constants of physics are the way they are. Here he is referring to the anthropic argument, that the fine tuning of the universal constants and the resulting suitedness to life that the world exhibits indicates a creator. Polkinghorne presents some examples which compliment his argument. Had the strength of gravity compared to the strength of the big bang been different by one part in ten to the sixty then the universe would have expanded so rapidly that matter would have been unable to coalesce and there would exist a state of cold death were matter is spread evenly throughout the universe. Alternatively, gravity could have forced the universe back in on itself so that there would have been a big crunch and rather than creating a life friendly universe there would once again be a singularity. Other examples are the energy levels of carbon which are perfect to enable it to form the long chains that are essential for life, and the relationship between gravity and the weak electromagnetic force which ensures that stars do not burn out too quickly or do not have enough energy to create elements heavier than helium. Polkinghorne is claiming that the fact that these constants are such that we are in existence indicates a divine hand. He goes on to argue that "the fact that the world is intelligible is surely a non trivial fact about it." What he means by this is that our ability to understand the world we live in is so remarkable that it cannot be an unimportant occurrence.

The anthropic argument that Polkinghorne presents is initially very impressive, however there are issues that he does not overcome. The idea that the world is suited to life seems to be countered by the sheer amount of 'waste' in the universe. We are, as far as we know, the only life in the universe. Does the number of ill suited planets not indicate that this is a fluke instead of intention. Polkinghorne suggests that this is just how much is necessary, that it could not be any other way. But this is an odd argument when one is proposing an omnipotent God who can do anything. The situation was jokingly summarised by Douglas Adams. A puddle wakes up in the morning and finds that the hole he inhabits is perfectly fitted to him thus he assumes that the hole was made for him. The point is that it is equally strange for us to assume that the universe is made for us, when it seems more likely that we are an epiphenomenon of the universe. Polkinghorne is assuming that these constants could be otherwise, however, what is to suggest that this is not the only possible way. The analogy of 'turning the knobs' that is often used is misleading in that it assumes that such knobs exist at all. Alternatively, it has been suggested that this is not the only iteration of the universe, that it has come into existence infinitely many times, each time with different constants. This would mean that the chance of one iteration producing life is almost certain. Another theory is the multiverse theory, that there are infinitely many instantiations of the universe each with different constants. Again this makes life far more likely. Polkinghorne dismisses these arguments on scientific grounds, but they remain widely held theories that do not require a God creator. Bertrand Russell may have got it right when he suggested the Brute fact of the universe, the universe "just is". He is arguing that the universe does not need an explanation. However, this does seem to be dodging the issue and it is totally unfalsifiable. Stephen Hawking has suggested that the universe is its own sufficient reason, self contained, unbounded, "what place then for a creator."

These objections, although covered by Polkinghorne, are not sufficiently answered. Although many people would not disagree with his assertion that theology must take science into account, his argument that physics leads to theology is not convincing.

L6- 15 ✓  
(23)

## Examiner Comment

This is a very good response. The opening paragraph, for example, demonstrates Level 6 criteria in its use of philosophical/theological language, its style, its knowledge of Polkinghorne's view of the *scientifically open and the scientifically given*, and its evaluative stance. The following critique of naïve design arguments is followed by Polkinghorne's comment that although scientific theories such as evolution and the Big Bang go some way towards explaining how the world has come about, they do not explain *why* the world is as it is: the fact that the universe is governed by the laws of science does not explain why those laws of science should exist or operate. Such questions can only be answered by considering physics in conjunction with natural theology: "Science cannot explain science"; and the fact that the world is as it is, is not a trivial fact: it requires explanation. However, the candidate gives a high-grade evaluation of anthropic arguments, and concludes that Russell might just as equally have been right in his comment that the universe 'just is'. Polkinghorne deals with such questions but does not answer them sufficiently, so his argument that physics leads to theology is not convincing. This is at the top of Level 6.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

7  
b)

Poiklinghorne takes the new of natural theology to find a deep understanding of the universe. He feels you need both science and religion to explain and understand, because there are gaps in each theory that can be explained by the other.

Poiklinghorne uses science because it uses chemistry, physics and biology to explain its new, ~~and as~~ evidence for the universe. Where there are gaps in theology such as 'God of the Gaps' science is used to explain what happens. Science and religion are complementary although when science explains the creation of the universe it breaks it down into an intelligible brute fact, which ~~theology~~ criticises.

Poiklinghorne attempts to lead physics to theology because although ~~can't explain~~ tell us

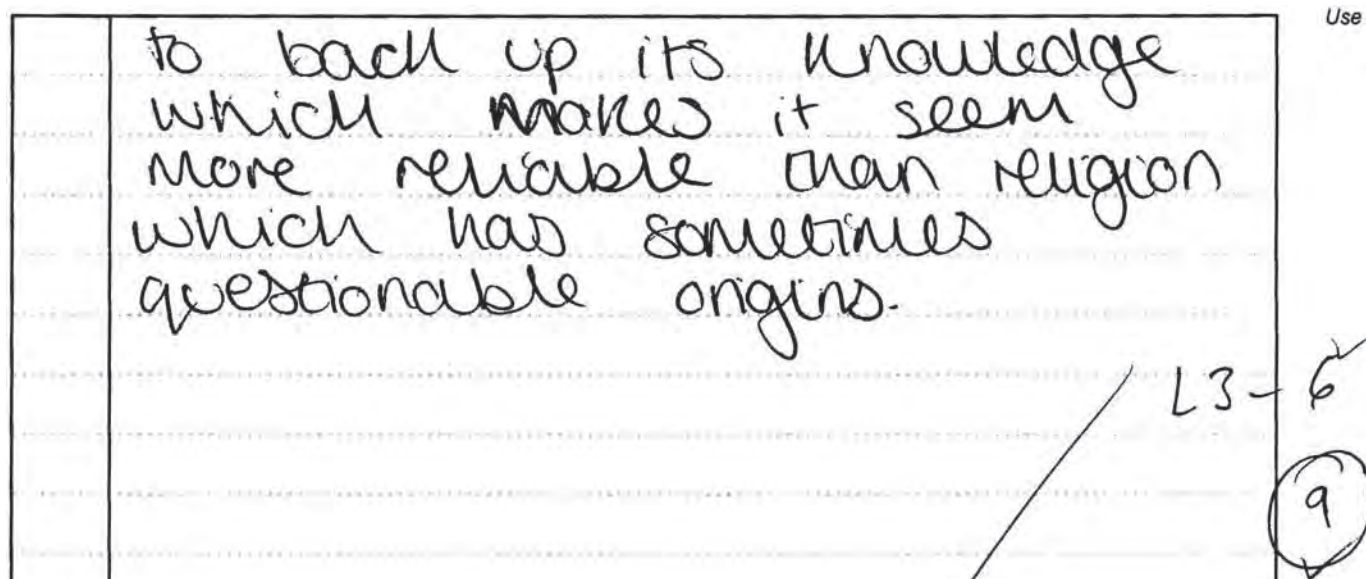
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why the universe is ordered and rational it can explain its orderliness and rationality. Polkinghorne says that you can explain the universe in physical processes ~~mean~~ which is evidence for the ~~orderliness~~ orderliness and rationality we find in it. This is a rejection of the universe being a personal creation because science states that it is an impersonal event & called the big bang. But if both science and religion come ~~to go~~ together over the ~~is~~ creation of the universe it is ~~per~~ shows it as a personal thought out creation which is the reason for the universe being ordered and rational.

Polkinghorne's attempt to lead physics to theology is ~~not~~ useful in strengthening the understanding of the creation. Physics brings new ideas into the explanation of the universe with evidence





### Examiner Comment

This response is built around a few central ideas, such as the contrast between the impersonal view of the origins of the universe through the Big Bang and the theological concept of creation by a personal God. The response is generally limited, however, and lacks development, and contains some incoherent statements such as, "Polkinghorne attempts to lead physics to theology because although can't tell us why the universe is ordered and rational it can explain its orderliness and rationality." This is a Level 3 response.

## Question 8

**Does the fact that something exists rather than nothing mean that there is a God? [25]**

## Mark Scheme

This question is, in terms of the syllabus, directed primarily at the Cosmological Argument, but candidates are at liberty to make use of any relevant material in their answers. In terms of Christian theology, for example, the main tradition concerning the creation of the universe is that it was brought about by God *ex nihilo* – from nothing, which suggests that one answer to the question is that God directed it so. As an interpretation of Genesis 1, however, the Hebrew syntax almost certainly supports the concept of God ‘creating’ by putting pre-existent chaos into some kind of order.

The Cosmological Argument suggests that empirical observation reveals (at least) three primary objects of experience – motion, causation and existence, and it posits the existence of God as the unmoved mover, uncaused cause, and uncreated Creator. The general reason given for God acting in this way is that the cosmos exists as an outpouring of divine love, or that it exists by virtue of the fact that God’s essence is his existence, so the universe exists by virtue of God’s nature. Russell assumes that it is easier to accept that the universe just ‘is’, so the question has no answer. Modern physics postulates (e.g. through inflation theory) that the universe might in fact be self-perpetuating and might always have been here, so there once having been nothing is not necessarily a valid concept.

Some candidates might point the question in an eschatological direction, for example by suggesting that there is something rather than nothing because that ‘something’ is consistent with the religious viewpoint that God has a plan for the universe. Some might suggest that the positive energy in the universe is balanced by the negative energy, in which case the total energy might in fact be zero, so in that sense, nothing exists already. Essays should be judged entirely by quality of response.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

8

The fact that something exists rather than nothing is the basis of the cosmological argument. To put it another way, 'nothing comes from nothing'. The cosmological argument and its basis have been described by Leibniz as the principle of sufficient reason – that there is a reason to talk about is an astounding fact and one that requires a God as the creator of the universe be posited.

Perhaps the first person ever to put forward a version of the cosmological argument was Aristotle. He posited that every event has a cause, creating a chain of ~~events~~ cause-and-effect. However, if this chain were to go on for infinity then it there would be nothing to cause the chain, so it wouldn't exist. This is a 'reductio ad absurdum' as if there were no chain there would be no subsequent causes, which we of course know to be false. Therefore Aristotle posits the existence of a Prime Mover who is necessary and unmovable causing all future contingent events.

An old form of argument that has been resurrected by William Lane Craig is the kalam argument. In its modern form this states that everything that came into being has a cause, the universe came into being; therefore it has a cause, and this causes God. This assumes that the universe has a beginning (and there is evidence for this, for example from microwave background radiation), that

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an ~~infinite~~ actual infinity is impossible and that the second law of thermodynamics is true.

The real work on the cosmological argument, however, begins with Aquinas. In his 'first way' - from motion - he states that everything is in motion or in a state of change. Nothing can change or move itself, therefore it must be moved by something else. But if everything were moved by something else, there would be an infinite regress of movers, and nothing would be responsible for the first movement. This again is a *reductio ad absurdum*, so he posits again a being of 'Prime Mover' who is necessary and causes all other events.

Aquinas's second way - from causation - is another similar argument for the existence of God. In it he states that everything is caused in the world, but as nothing can cause itself everything must have been caused by something else. However, this would create an infinite regress of cause and effect, and if there is nothing to cause the first cause then no subsequent causes could happen - a *reductio ad absurdum* the remedy for which Aquinas posits a 'first cause', i.e. God, that is necessary and sets the whole chain in motion.

The third way is from contingency. Here he argues that as every event is contingent there must have been a time when nothing existed. However, nothing comes from nothing, so if nothing existed before then nothing can exist now. This is a *reductio ad absurdum* because obviously



Things exist now. So Aquinas posits that there must have been a necessary being to bridge the gap and ensure that contingent events would continue to occur. The explanation for this 'bridge' can either be within itself or outside. If it were to be outside itself then we would have an infinite regress of causal explanations, so by a similar *reductio ad absurdum* to the previous arguments this bridge wouldn't be able to exist. Therefore the explanation for the one who bridges the gap lies within itself, making it the necessary God.

At no point it seems many fundamental criticisms can be levelled at the cosmological argument. The first might be that there is nothing wrong with an infinite regress — a chain of events spreading infinitely in both directions is not logically impossible. However, William Lane Craig responded to this objection with his analogy of the bookcase. In it he posits that if a bookcase with infinite red books + infinite green books would still have an infinite number of books if all the green books were taken away. He uses this to illustrate the absurdity of an actual infinity, thereby holding that the essential premise of the CA can still hold.

Secondly it might be levelled that just like the ontological argument the CA is trying to make the statement 'God exists' an analytic statement. However, Kant and many others have said that existential statements can only be synthetic as



they can only be validated by experience. Similarly, the statement that 'God does not exist' is not a logical contradiction and therefore is opposite & not analytic. Supporters of the CA might respond by saying that in fact the CA is scientific in that it looks at the way cause and-effect occurs in this world and provides the best explanation.

Scientists might then reply to this, however, by pointing out the evidence of quantum theory. This shows that at subatomic level, as exemplified by e.g. Young's slit experiment, events are unpredictable and that in fact every event does not have a cause. It is easy to see why this recent scientific discovery is a major threat to one of the fundamental planks of the CA.

Human scholars might also want to object that we could well take the best view of the world that causation is simply applied by the mind and that if we are to be true empiricists, cause and effect doesn't happen and therefore the cosmological argument doesn't help. A valid reply to this however would be that this is an overly sceptical way of looking at the world and therefore cannot be taken seriously.

A further criticism would be that the CA does not end with the God of classical theism but rather with a more deist understanding. Christians would not be content with God as a mere 'dormio-flicker' as they believe God is ever present in our universe and everyday lives.



Potteringhorne responded to this objection by stating that Aquinas was more concerned with logical hierarchy than temporal priority and that really God is every cause, as the orderer and sustainer of a 'universe' or 'created continua'.

Many people have also specifically pointed out the error in logic in Aquinas's third way. It is not necessarily true that there was once a time when no contingent event existed. However it could be replied that Aquinas's argument from contingency is just one of the cosmological arguments and that the force of the principle of sufficient reason is not diminished without it.

~~Finally~~ There is also Russell's fallacy of composition. It is true that every man has a mother, but it is not true that the human race has a mother. Similarly whilst it might be true that every event has a cause, it is incorrect to assume that the whole of the universe has a cause. Copleston responds to Russell in their famous radio debate by saying that an explanation for the cause and effect chain cannot lie within that chain itself.

Finally, many have pointed out that the C's conclusion seems to contradict its premise. If every event ~~must~~ have a cause, then how can you posit the existence of something that does not have a cause. Russell argues that if there must be an exception to the cause-and-effect rule then why does it have to be God -



Surely it can just as easily be the universe itself? Russell would also want to hold to the brute fact argument - that the universe 'just is', and that it doesn't need an explanation. Whilst many would call this a refusal to engage, this seems a bit unfair as Russell has engaged but simply found the question an impossible one to answer or one that it's simply not worth answering.

So there have been many criticisms against the CA that it seems to have been dealt a critical blow. However, Swinburne ~~has~~ is to update it by distinguishing between regularities of co-presence and regularities of succession. If we re-cast the argument in terms of regularities of succession then we can posit that the universe may have been a chaos but the very fact that there is order implies that there is a creator. Thus Swinburne is redefining what it means to have something come from nothing.

However, this seems to be mere casuistry and doesn't seem to really avoid many of the criticisms of the traditional CA. Certainly it would do nothing to convince Russell and his brute fact argument.

Thus we are forced to conclude that the fact that there is something then nothing does not in itself mean that there is a God, and we will have to look for other arguments for the existence of God to prove he exists - perhaps the Anthropic Principle is telling us that there is something so finely-tuned that ~~it~~ <sup>it's</sup> proves that there is a God.

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(25)



### Examiner Comment

This is a wide ranging and interesting essay. It begins by identifying the question as being within the orbit of the cosmological argument for the existence of God; by involving Leibniz' Principle of Sufficient Reason, and then moving on to Aristotle's Prime Mover and the Kalam argument before engaging more fully with Aquinas' 'Ways'. The argument as a whole is then subjected to some fundamental criticisms: that an infinite regress is perfectly respectable philosophically, and that the cosmological argument is trying to take over the function of the ontological argument by making God's existence analytic. The argument is then defended by the suggestion that by looking at cause and effect, 'God' posits the best explanation of the way the world is. This in turn is countered by the possibility that quantum mechanics demonstrates that some events do not have causes, and that causation is a mental overlay. The argument moves on through Polkinghorne, Russell and Swinburne. The discussion is constantly evaluative and critical, and ends up with a nice touch in pointing the reader towards the possibly superior attraction of Anthropic arguments. This essay merits the top of Level 6. It is accurate, detailed, wide ranging, and demonstrates a confident and precise use of technical vocabulary.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

~~There are several different arguments~~

8 The fact that something does exist rather than nothing means that there is a God, is similar to, and agrees with Richard Swinburnes view that 'seeing as there ought to be something rather than nothing, it indicates a creator'. The cosmological argument ~~argued that~~ is set out to explain the reason for the existence of the universe which leads to the existence of a creator, God. Whereas the ontological argument tries to prove Gods existent. ~~through that the cosmolo~~

The cosmological argument is based on Aquinas' first three ways; motion, cause and necessity and contingency, all of which lead to the idea of a ~~first~~ creator, God. Motion explains that we need a Prime-mover because nothing can be moved by itself it

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had to be moved by ~~something~~ else so it had to start with something that wasn't moved ~~it~~ itself moved so there needed to be an unmoved mover, known as the prime mover. This is similar to Aquinas' second way of causation, nothing can cause itself, everything has to be caused by something else, so it has to start with an uncaused cause also known as the first cause. Aquinas' third way necessity and contingency explains that everything is contingent because it ~~passes~~ in and out of the universe but it needs to be started by something that already exists, a necessity so it can't not exist which is ~~would be~~ God.

This relates to the ontological argument for the existence of God. God is perfect and existence is a characteristic of his perfection so he must exist. ~~but~~ But God can't be contingent



because Anselmus definition of ~~his~~ God is 'that than which nothing greater can be conceived' so if God is contingent something greater can be conceived which is necessarily existent. therefore God must necessarily exist so must exist.

There are several criticism for Anselmus argument for the existence of God such as great can be defined as anything, for example big, huge. Gaunilo also says that ~~his~~ Anselmus argument would ~~be~~ have absurd consequences if he were to use anything other than God. Gaunilo explained if I think of an island that than which no greater can be conceived, then that island must exist because it exists in my mind! Anselm replied saying that his principle was only designed to explain God's existence because he is the only being with

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necessary existence.

Aquinas was also criticised for his 3 ways because they left to many unanswered questions such as if God made us who made God?

The Design Argument has the basis that because of the complexity of the universe it gives the indication that there must be a creator. This agrees with the fact that because ~~of~~ something exists rather than nothing means there is a God. This idea of complexity being designed is criticised by Darwin's theory of survival of the fittest and natural selection rather than a God that has designed everything specifically for our needs. ~~which agree~~ This is part of the Anthropic principle which has one view that every tiny detail has been designed to our needs, we wouldn't be here if it didn't



have the specific details it does to support us. Another example of the existence of God is religious experience the theory of credibility. It is plausible to say that the fact that something exists rather than nothing means that there is a God because of the complexity of the universe that can only really be explained through a designer. And as Swinburne stated 'since there ought to be something rather than nothing this indicates a ~~designer~~ creator'.

L4 - (14)

## Examiner Comment

The essay begins by identifying the question as pointing towards the cosmological argument, although this is dimmed somewhat by an incomprehensible statement about the ontological argument. This is explained subsequently, however, at the end of the ensuing rendition of Aquinas' cosmological argument, when the candidate supports God's factual necessity by pointing to God's logical necessity in the ontological argument, although the critique of that argument which then follows is not particularly relevant. The use of the design argument to support the cosmological argument is valid, although the essay tails off with an inconsequential reference to the argument from religious experience. In so far as the response is largely relevant to the question asked, and there is a degree of evaluation, and there is some form of structure through the arguments, the essay merits a low Level 4.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

Section B

The idea that God does exist is added to fall back on by the agnostics for the existence of God. There are claims that something does exist and this is God.

The ontological argument is the only one which is a priori - it gives the biggest scope <sup>out of</sup> ~~that~~ are the other arguments because it relies on reason. It was first proposed by Anselm - who understood that God was "to which no greater could be conceived" this rests on the assumption that God exists.

Anselm's first form of the argument is that God exists in the mind, therefore there must be a greater being who exists in the mind and reality, this being must be greater than God, therefore God must exist in the mind and in reality.

Anselm's second form is that everything in the world is contingent, which ~~means~~ <sup>means</sup> that they cease to exist, so there must be a necessary being in the world who <sup>caused</sup> ~~caused~~ the contingent beings - this necessary being must be God. These two forms of Anselm's argue that

God does exist. This would not work if we had no understanding of God's existence. There were no assumptions.

Camille however does counter Aquinas' argument with his analogy of the 'lost island'. If you were to picture this crazy island in your mind it would not exist but if you imagined it in your mind and reading the survey it would exist?

Aquinas reply, that God has a necessary existence, whereas we have a contingent existence, therefore the island can cease to exist.

Descartes follows on from Aquinas and uses the idea of perfection. He claims that existence is a perfection, God is perfect, ~~therefore~~ <sup>therefore</sup> God exists. Again this all relies on an assumption that God exists, which leaves us in a grey area. Critics may say how can we assume that there is a greatest being?

Kant claims that existence is a predicate. The Cosmological argument is different to the ontological argument - because it is a posteriori - which means that this ~~can~~ <sup>assumption</sup> can be made after experience - this makes the argument more valid than the ontological one.



Plato claims - "that everything is caused by the mind" Aristotle replies and says that actually "there is a reason why we are all here - 'God'".

Aquinas proceeds with his first three ways to prove the existence of God. His first way is the idea of the un-moved mover - everything in the world is in motion and change, there must have been a first mover because infinite regress ~~is~~ is impossible, this un-moved mover must be God.

Aquinas' second way was the "un-caused cause" - again everything has a cause - these causes must have been caused by something else - infinite regress is impossible therefore God must exist.

These first two ways use reason to prove the existence of God. question.

Aquinas' third way is necessity and contingency. The world is full of contingent items which means that they cease to exist, so there must be a necessary being which caused these ~~contingent~~ <sup>contingent</sup> objects. This being must be necessary - must be God.

However although there are valid points made by Aquinas we face many criticisms. First of all why can't

are contingent beings have existed in the previous life? Does every need a cause? why does something in motion need to have something acting on it? There we are together with the teleological argument.

The teleological argument - otherwise known as the design, does give a valid proof for the existence of God. ~~Through~~ <sup>through</sup> the order, regularity and purpose of the world - Aquinas can conclude that God does exist.

There is an intelligent being in the world, which must have been brought about by an intelligent mind - this must be God. This is a valid line of argument made by Aquinas.

There however disagreed with ~~the~~ this argument - he understands that the world is like a machine - subdivided into smaller machines - which resembles a similar mechanism to a human mind. "The world is like a clock or a house it has <sup>required</sup> ~~needed~~ a designer." There points to ~~the~~ <sup>more</sup> of a human designer than a divine designer.

Paley's watch analogy - impresses on Aquinas 4<sup>th</sup> way. Imagine you are



Walking across a heath and you see a watch. If you had never seen one before, you would think that it had been designed - probably by a watch maker - like the watch the universe has also been designed in an orderly way by an intelligent designer - this is what the God.

There however critics think against saying that it is an un-sound analogy - because the watch is not like a machine at all - how can a watch and human be compared with a machine? Also says that this analogy makes ~~human too like God~~ God too human like - the more they see God is designed like a machine the more human he becomes, which is not the case. God should not be compared to us.

The moral argument also backs up the statement. We all know that there is goodness and kindness in this world - but we need something to show this goodness and kindness has come from. Philo would say his theory of faith but the moral argument would say God. We have

proof of his being at our Coruscate and  
 our inside save at right and wrong.  
 There truly must have been some  
 Sweden - this ~~Sweden~~ must be God.

These arguments are based up the  
 evidence that God exists. As Swinburne  
 said - these are all called the  
 cumulative argument. With this idea  
 he gives the analogy of the  
 heavy bucket. Let's say we have  
 one heavy bucket (the argument to  
 exist of God) and put it in  
 another heavy bucket - then the  
 bucket will be soled. Thomas  
 Flew points out that surely a  
 failure and a failure leads us  
 with a failure. This is related to  
 the argument for the existence of God.

Linking in with these arguments comes  
 religious experience - the fact that  
 people do experience God claims that  
 we do have reason to believe that  
 he does exist. on <sup>concluding</sup> ~~concluding~~ that  
 point if ~~and~~ we need did  
 experience God then how would we  
 have got he existed?

William James - interprets the idea of



mysticism - which is that when you can feel that you have experienced God.

The William James makes four types of religious experience including a poetic experience which means that it can be explained by natural thought, a passive experience - indescribable with words, a knowing experience which is when you come out of your body existing and lacking intellectuality - which is that you can't explain the experience.

Swinburne then brings up his ideas about Credibility and testimony. His principle of credibility is saying that if what you experience is true, then you probably did experience it. Unless your beliefs don't agree with your experience - you have no right not to believe.

The principle of testimony is saying that unless you have a good reason not to believe the experience then you must believe it.

Conversion and prayer are both important in the idea of religious experience.

However my part of knowing religious

	<p>             Experience is that, the fact that people              do experience God claims that he does              exist. When is it not <del>any</del>              ever experienced then we have no              proof that God does exist.           </p> <p>             Having no evidence of something              like God existing - leaves us with              nothing - because what can be proved              as facts and conclusions are. The              arguments for the existence of God are              therefore helpful and useful in showing that              something must exist because the easiest              thing to do is to point to God.           </p>
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## Examiner Comment

This essay reads as a cumulative attempt to prove the existence of God. The final statement, that "The arguments for the existence of God are ... helpful and useful in showing that something must exist therefore the easiest thing to do is to point to God", shows the direction of the essay, which basically ignores the wording (and the point) of the question, and restricts this to a Level 3.



## Question 9

**‘The concept of life *after* death is incoherent.’ Critically assess this claim.**

**[25]**

## Mark Scheme

The point of the question centres on the apparent incongruity between ‘life’ and ‘death’ where the concept of life is alleged to occur after an event which by definition signifies the end of life. Simple empirical observation shows that bodies rot, however long the process takes, so the idea that dead bodies can somehow regenerate belongs to fiction rather than serious philosophy.

Candidates may assess the claim in the question in any way they see fit. Some might consider the Freudian view that life after death is a symptom of religious neurosis, specifically of an infantile inability to accept the permanence of death by assuming a dependence upon the ability (and the will) of an omnipotent God to regenerate life where life is lost. Others might consider a Marxist or Nietzschean analysis, suggesting that all concepts of life after death are rooted in the psychology of power and oppression.

Promises of life after death are believed by the masses in order to compensate for the aridity and pain of their lives, and are propagated by religious authorities as a mechanism for controlling the population by issuing promises that by definition can never be checked because they can never be verified.

Some might argue that verification is not impossible: hence according to Hick it is eschatological, although Hick’s argument rests on what might be seen as an incoherent asymmetrical verification, in so far as life after death can never be shown to be false if it is indeed false. Hick’s scenarios of ‘Mr X’ might be held to show the coherence of a concept of life after death, although this is generally rejected because a replica cannot coherently be regarded as the same person as the person who died. Some might argue that there is no logical problem with the concept of life after death, depending on its mode and its causation (e.g. in relation to an omnipotent God).

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

9.

~~Rough: Dis - Plat a post  
 Des - bod - dub  
 cogito pineal gland  
 emb - east  
 Christ - Hick - Replica  
 August - Bod  
 Non real - material~~

The concept of life after death necessarily has two limbs to it: arguments for disembodied existence and arguments for embodied existence.

Arguments for disembodied existence can be seen to stem from the idea of Platonic dualism. This is the idea that the soul and body are entirely separate entities, and after death the body rots and the soul returns to the Realm of the Forms, from whence it came. To back up this idea, Plato uses the argument from recollection, in which he states that ~~we~~ we have knowledge due to the fact that it was acquired in the Realm of the ~~the~~ Forms, and all learning done on ~~the~~ Earth is recollection of that knowledge.

Descartes expands upon this idea with his notion of a Cartesian

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dualism. Descartes believed the soul to be housed in the Pineal gland, as it is the only part of the ~~of~~ brain not replicated. Descartes' thought was that as his body is dubitable, and the cogito is, famously, indubitable, they must be separate, as it is impossible for something to be both dubitable and indubitable.

Another dualist theory is that of Richard Swinburne, who says that as theoretically, one could divide his brain in half and put one half in one body and the other in another, there would be a question as to who was truly Richard Swinburne. This, he says, shows our true identity is not bound up with the physical, but that our soul is something extra to our physical bodies.

There are also a number of bits of a posteriori evidence for a non-physical soul, such as the phenomenon of telepathy, and the fact that, on the moment of death, exactly twenty-one grams leaves the body. However, there are a number of naturalistic explanations for these such as the loss of fluids, and genetic memory.



There are also a number of ~~weaknesses~~ weaknesses in the theoretical arguments for disembodied existence. For example, while Descartes may be able to imagine his soul functioning without his body, this does not actually make it possible. ~~One~~ Most people would say that their experience is of an embodied mind.

There is also a large amount of neurological evidence that the mind relies heavily on the brain to function, while a true function has been found for the pineal gland.

~~Russell~~ ~~has~~ Flew points out more weaknesses, namely, that our experience is too tied-up with sensation to ever imagine life without a body. Flew also points out that the way in which we recognise people is through their physical characteristics, as well as noting that words used to describe people, such as 'I', 'you' and 'he' all refer to physical ideas of that person, rather than forms of behaviour.



Most religious ideas of life after death argue for an embodied existence. For example, in the eastern religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, there are strong traditions of reincarnation. Hindu reincarnation postulates the idea of the same soul moving into another body, as if ~~to~~ putting on a clean change of clothes. Buddhist reincarnation, however, ~~works~~ works on the principle that one's karma is passed on to a karmic heir. ~~For~~ A number of issues can be seen to arise from this, such as the problem that one is held responsible for sins they have no idea they have committed. Also, it is unclear what relationship one has with their karmic heir, as well as the process by which this idea occurs.

There is also a tradition of bodily ~~life~~ life after death in Christianity, although Christians hold to an idea of bodily resurrection the paradigm of which is the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself. One should, however, note the fact that the resurrected body is not entirely the same as one had in life.



as can be seen in the writing of St. Paul, who says 'we are sown a physical body and raised a spiritual one'.

John Hick puts forward an argument for bodily resurrection with his replica theory. This works on the basis that if one will accept that a man dying in London and a replica of that man being created in New York are the same person, then it stands to reason that God can create a replica of you in a soul-making realm, and this must be accepted as being possible.

Hick's theory is, however, open to criticism. For example, there is the question of whether a replica of a person can still be called the same as that person. After all, a perfect replica of a Van Gogh painting would not be considered the same.

There is also the issue that if one is resurrected as a physical body, surely they are liable to die again, and if they are a replica, surely they will have



weaknesses that caused their death in the first place. This idea is similar to the objection that it is not clear what age our resurrected body will be, and the question of whether we will carry our defects into the 'vale of Soul-making'. For example, will those with Parkinson's disease bring that into their next life?

As well as these explanations, there are also non-realist and materialist explanations for what 'life after death really means'. Jean-Paul Sartre, for example describes hell as 'other people', ~~is~~ while another non-realist reading of the Bible says that Jesus' resurrection is merely a symbol for ~~the~~ the life continuing in his disciples.

To conclude, life after death can be seen to be largely incoherent, although a lack of any empirical proof leaves the question open.

CS

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## Examiner Comment

This candidate begins by taking the route of discussing *post mortem* existence in either an embodied or a disembodied state. The latter is supported with reference to the doctrine of *anamnesis* in Platonic dualism and to Descartes' dualistic arguments stemming from the *cogito*. There is also a coherent reference to Swinburne's argument from brain bifurcation, which suggests that personal identity is not bound up with the physical. The candidate then gives a clear set of counter-arguments: what Descartes can imagine does not amount to what *is*; mind and brain seem inseparable rather than separable; life is ineradicably tied to a physical body. The concept of an embodied *post mortem* existence is then explained through examining ideas about reincarnation and resurrection, the latter supported by, for example, Hick's replica theory, with the valid comment that a replica can hardly said to be the same person. The candidate concludes with a brief reference to non-realist and materialist explanations, such as Sartre's amusing comment that "hell is other people". The essay is coherent throughout, well expressed, accurate, and with a good range of material. As such it merits a mid-Level 5, lacking the depth and critical engagement of a Level 6 essay.

## Topic 4: New Testament: The Four Gospels

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

[John 1:1–18]



## Question 10 (a)

**Examine the significance of this passage for an understanding of who Jesus was. [10]**

## Mark Scheme

Candidates might wish to consider the nature of the Prologue itself although this is not essential.

A key question among interpreters is the original source of the Prologue, and its relationship to the rest of the Gospel. Scholarly opinions vary as to the exact genre of the Prologue, with some writers arguing for a source in the hymnic traditions of the early church (Beasley-Murray) or the Gnostic faith (Bultmann, [1971]), while others downplay the apparent lyric form and argue that even the more overtly poetic sections of the Prologue (e.g. 1:1-5) are “rhythmic prose” (F. F. Bruce) or “elevated prose” (Morris).

Following earlier attempts to locate the hymn (and particularly the Logos theme) within the broader Hellenistic world, Bultmann sought to trace the hymn’s origin to Gnostic circles, via a sect of John the Baptist’s adherents. He argues that the hymn was originally directed to John, and only later adapted to Christian usage, when the final editor of the Gospel set it here to introduce the work as a whole. Ridderbos, however, rightly points out the numerous problems inherent in this suggestion. Besides the fact that the Gnostic texts Bultmann works from post-date the Gospel by several centuries, and the lack of evidence suggesting that such Gnostic movements were even current at the time of the fourth Gospel’s composition, the contexts of redemption described in Gnosticism and the Prologue are mutually exclusive and too incompatible to allow for such adaptation from one to the other. Brown’s proposal that the hymn-like sections were written independently of the Gospel itself—but within the same Christian circles as that of the Evangelist—best explains both their apparent independence from the rest of the Gospel and their intrinsic similarities to the theology both of the Gospel and of the Johannine Epistles. (Richard Van Egmond)

Although tangential to the question, the argument might be that if the Prologue is intended to be about John the Baptist then it does not add to an understanding of Jesus.

Candidates are expected to identify key features of Christology: Jesus pre-existent; unique language use of ‘the logos’; relationship to the Father; creator; giver of life; light; victor over darkness; relationship to John the Baptist; ‘full of grace and truth’ is replacement of the Law; the Christ.

Answers may cover some or all of the various arguments and discussions of the teaching of the Prologue but are likely to focus on an understanding of ‘logos’ and the nature of the incarnation. More developed answers may reflect on John’s high Christology in comparison with the synoptic tradition in order to establish ‘significance’. Anticipate that some students may challenge the past tense of the question and consider that John is offering an understanding of who Jesus is. Others may begin to ask ‘significant for whom?’ or ‘significant with respect to what?’ which would provide an opportunity for further analysis of the literary historical context of the text as well as reflections on contemporary significance.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

John is possibly the most theological of all the Gospels, described as a "spiritual Gospel". The imagery throughout is of Jesus as the "Word". This idea of Jesus being the "incarnate Logos" is the most messianic of ideas, as resurrection does not necessarily suggest identifying as the Messiah (hence John's lack of significance placed on the resurrection), however, incarnation is vitally linked with this. Therefore, the idea that "the Word was with God" fits in with the "I am" sayings of John, which are perhaps the most explicit of claims to being the Messiah of all the Gospels (except Mark 14).

The Prologue, however, seems to put even more emphasis on Jesus' divinity as he (the "Word") is seen as being God and as having existed "in the beginning with God", therefore suggesting Jesus' immortality. Jesus, as the "light", is not "overcome" by "darkness" which further strengthens this idea of absolute power. The idea of being "the true light" is interlinked with the idea of truth, therefore Jesus is seen as bringing the truth about God's word; similarly, light is interlinked with life (eternal), therefore Jesus can be seen as having been set up as the 'saviour'. He is seen as an 'agent' of God who is able to give "power to become children of God", thus he is seen as bringing in the New Age, wherein all with faith shall be saved.

John associates Jesus with "grace and truth" which emphasises his divinity, as it is through God's grace that others may be saved. This also suggests that Jesus



"ranks ahead" of those who came before him (as he has always existed). This is illustrated by the fact that, although Moses was a lawgiver, Jesus is above and beyond the old prophets, as Lindale says, Jesus is the "greatest of all". Therefore, Jesus can be seen as having ultimate authority. This is suggested throughout but especially in the mention of Jesus' intimate relationship with God as "God the only Son". This therefore associates Jesus with the idea of being the "Son of God" and therefore both in an intimate relationship with God, (and therefore authoritative), and as related to the Messiah which was suggested earlier.

Therefore, John, as a "spiritual Gospel", appears to make the most of Jesus' divine claims by emphasising them. Jesus <sup>can be</sup> seen as the 'Passover Lamb' who is able to atone for sins and therefore give "grace upon grace". This is upheld by the fact that, during his crucifixion ("hour of glory"), Jesus' legs were not broken, as nor would a Passover lamb's have been.

Lastly, the idea that Jesus' "own people did not accept him" and was not recognised is emphasised by the need for a "witness" motif (John). This shows that Jesus was on trial from the beginning, as it is suggested by being raised in the prologue. Therefore, the need for a witness suggests that Jesus' identity needed to be proved. Therefore, cumulatively, it can be seen that much of the later themes of John are included in the prologue which suggests it has high significance in relation to Jesus. Thus, the prologue is significant in setting out Jesus' identity as Messiah, saviour and

perhaps Son of God. However, this does not mean that these "identities" are historically accurate as much of what is written is "read back" into the Gospels by evangelists. This is especially evident in John as it is a later Gospel and therefore likely to be a product of reflection. Thus, the Jesus depicted may only be the evangelist's understanding of Jesus, not Jesus' understanding of himself.

### Examiner Comment

This essay is a comprehensive account of the Johannine Prologue in connection with who Jesus was. The candidate begins with the suggestion that throughout John's Gospel, the imagery is of Jesus as the word – the incarnate *logos*, significant in that this is the most messianic of ideas (since the resurrection does not necessarily suggest identity with the Messiah). The idea that 'the word was with God' therefore fits in with the 'I am' sayings of John, which are perhaps the most explicit of claims to being the Messiah. The candidate goes on to give a comprehensive discussion of significant phrases in the text – Jesus' existence 'in the beginning', suggesting Jesus' divinity and immortality; Jesus as life / light / saviour, ushering in the new age; the witness motif in connection with John the Baptist, and so on. The whole is rounded off with the comment that the comprehensive nature of John's theology does not imply historical accuracy, and might be an example of historical read-back, which of course affects the question of who Jesus was. This essay is top-end Level 6.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

The significance of John 7: 2-18 when attempting to gain an understanding of who Jesus was is dependent upon how much we believe the evangelist has altered history to fit in with his life purpose or setting. However there are many themes that we pick up from the passage that are consistent throughout John.

Firstly, is the topic of life which is at the heart of John's gospel. 'All things come into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being,' thus states the ultimate control that God has and how we exist as part of his divine plan. We then experience some Johannine dualism regarding 'light and darkness,' 'the light shines in the darkness.' This is emphasizing the need for faith and how when you 'see the light,' you will become a follower of Jesus/God. It states that those who are blind do not find faith and thus remain in the dark with no one to guide them.

Another theme throughout John's gospel is the association with the Church which helps to imply who John perceived Jesus to be. Verse 13 states 'not of ~~the~~ blood or of the will of flesh or of the will of man, but of God,' this can be tied in with Christianity and to a certain extent reflected in communion. John proposes Jesus as coming in truth, 'the glory ~~of~~ as of a Father's only son, full of grace and truth.' The passage then comes on to state that 'grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.' It is therefore Jesus who is sent by God to proclaim his truthful and glorious message. Glory is another theme that runs throughout John's gospel when prescribing characteristics to Jesus.

Therefore this passage acknowledges the main themes that are portrayed throughout John's gospel regarding Jesus.

The extent to which these give us an understanding of who Jesus was depends upon how reliable we believe John to be. However the passage taken as it is implicates Jesus <sup>with</sup> several characteristics

### Examiner Comment

This candidate starts with the evaluative comment that the significance of John 1:1-18 when attempting to gain an understanding of who Jesus was depends on the extent to which we believe that the evangelist has altered history to suit his own aims. The essay then looks at some of the themes in the Prologue that are picked out consistently elsewhere by John, beginning with God's plan in so far as it encompasses Jesus. The dualism of light and darkness picks out the need for faith in Jesus – those who are 'blind' do not find faith, and thus remain in darkness with no-one to guide them. The rest of the essay is rather desultory. There is a reasonable attempt to use theological vocabulary, with some supporting evidence, and the essay just reaches the bottom end of Level 4.

### Question 10 (b)

**'The synoptic gospels are concerned with the "Christ of faith" not the "Jesus of history".'**  
**Discuss.** [15]

### Mark Scheme

This question may be successfully answered by close reference to the development of scholarly reflections on the purpose of the synoptic gospels and/or by close reference to the text. Clarity about the terms used in the question are essential for this question to proceed but this may only be revealed contextually.

It was in response to Schleiermacher's attempt to combine the 'historical Jesus' with the 'Christ' of dogma that David Strauss (1808-74) wrote *Der Christus des Glaubens and der Jesus der Geschichte* (1865). His most famous work *Leben Jesu* (1835), had applied the 'myth theory' to the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

In 1906 Albert Schweitzer published *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung* (History of the Jesus-life research). It was published in English in 1910 as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*.

Schweitzer pointed out how Jesus' image had changed with the times and with the personal proclivities of the various authors. He took the position that the life of Jesus must be interpreted in the light of Jesus' own convictions, which he characterized as those of 'late Jewish eschatology'.

An evaluation of the historical accuracy of any part of the synoptic texts may be offered to support 'Jesus of history' claims with analysis of the triple tradition as perhaps having some of the strongest claims. Aramaic words of Jesus quoted in the text may also be used to support Jesus of history, as well as reflections on the survival of Christianity itself. In addition passages with no particular theological direction or function in the text may be used to support eye witness claims (e.g. Mark 14:51-52).



To support 'Christ of Faith' candidates may reflect on the genre of a 'gospel'. Reflection on the prologues of the synoptic tradition could be fruitful. They may draw on the record of miracles, the resurrection or the teachings of Jesus all of which support claims about Jesus' identity as the Christ. Any texts which suggest that the gospels are for the creation and nurture of faith and for apologetic/polemic may also be drawn upon. Expect wide ranging responses.

Evaluation is needed with any conclusion based on the evidence presented. Some may conclude that the Gospels are working at both levels.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

To divorce the "Christ of faith" from the "Jesus of history" is to consider this problem too simplistically. All of our information concerning Jesus is gained through a prism of the evangelists' understanding. This suggests that, to some extent, our view of the historical Jesus is obscured, however, this does not mean that ~~the~~ the gospels are not concerned with the "Jesus of history" at all or that we cannot know anything about him. Despite the gospel being the medium in which one is able to spread the "good news" of Christ which therefore seems relatively faith-based, there are others who see the Synoptics as fairly factual. Some may see it as impossible to gain much knowledge of Jesus through the Synoptics, however, compared to John which is often seen as the "spiritual Gospel", the Synoptics are far more fact-based. In the argument for literary dependency, John is often seen as having used and reinterpreted (spiritually) the more historical ~~text~~ Synoptics, especially Mark. This therefore suggests that, at least in comparison to John, the Synoptics are also, to some extent, concerned with the "Jesus of history".

John omits the 'Agony in the Garden' which suggests his preoccupation with divinity and therefore the "Christ of faith". The Synoptics, on the other hand, include this expression of Jesus' humanity. This 'weakness' on Jesus' behalf surely undermines the idea of him as a divine authority, therefore it is difficult to ascertain why



it would be included if it were not historical.

Mark's <sup>(Mk)</sup> Gospel is the earliest and therefore seen as the most probable to be historically accurate (at least as far as Mark's agenda lets him). This can be seen by Mark's often negative portrayal of Jesus and the disciples. During the stilling of the storm, the disciples are shown to have a lack of faith while Peter's denial shows a lack of commitment. This shows a negative aspect to the disciples but may be explained as an encouragement to those believers who must remain steadfast in their faith. Similarly, Jesus is sometimes shown as losing his temper; he says "Get behind me Satan" which seems to place him in a dubious light. Matthew and Luke, on the other hand, as later Gospels (Synoptic problem → expand on Mark's shorter Gospel and share circa 235 verses of Q-material) seem to dampen down Mark's Gospel, therefore making ~~its~~ <sup>their</sup> portrayals of Jesus and the Twelve more palatable. In this way it can be seen that the Synoptics are not concerned with the "Christ of faith"; however, they are not completely unconcerned with the "Jesus of history" as faith needs a grounding in history in order to have true meaning.

Similarly, Wrede's "messianic secret" suggests that the evangelists actively promote the "Christ of faith", even to the expense of historical fact. However, it seems not likely that Jesus may have had a reason for his need to be secretive; explicit claims would have been seen as rebellion and therefore led to an earlier arrest and his ministry having

been cut short. Therefore, again, parts of the Synoptic Gospels (especially Mark) are grounded in the ~~so~~ history behind the "Christ of faith". ✓

Other aspects of Jesus' lifetime can also be seen as historical fact, such as the crucifixion. This would have been an embarrassment to the Church as it is a Roman death reserved for murderers and others like that. Thus, it seems nonsensical to include a fabrication which is embarrassing which therefore suggests it was fact. ✓

Similarly, Sanders suggest that there is so much disagreement over the resurrection, especially over who was the first to see Jesus, that it must be grounded in fact. This is based upon the idea that, had it been a "cover-up", surely the stories would have matched up in order to make it more believable. Therefore, the very inconsistencies within the <sup>Gospels</sup> ~~bible~~ can often be seen as evidence for <sup>their</sup> ~~a~~ being fact-based. ✓

Therefore, it is obvious that the synoptic gospels are more concerned with the "Christ of faith", as can be seen by the different points of emphasis among them, influenced by their context. Thus, we cannot escape the prism of the evangelist's understanding, however, nor is the historical element of the Synoptics eliminated. ✓  
As can be seen, there are a number of instances wherein the Synoptics are concerned with the "Jesus of history" - however, the "Christ of faith" has



number	
	precedence over the "Jesus of history". ✓ 15

### Examiner Comment

This essay begins impressively with the claim that to divorce the 'Christ of faith' from the 'Jesus of history' is to consider the problem too simplistically, since all of our information concerning Jesus is gained through the prism of the evangelists' understanding; nevertheless this does not mean that the evangelists were not concerned with history or that we cannot know anything about Jesus. The essay goes on to illustrate that the primary concern of the evangelists is with the Christ of faith: for example John omits the 'Agony in the Garden', presumably because of his concern with Jesus' divinity; similarly Wrede's 'messianic secret' suggests that the evangelists actively promoted the Christ of faith even at the expense of historical fact, although even here there may have been an historical basis to the theme in the fact that explicit messianic claims would have been seen as rebellion. Other aspects of Jesus' life are also probably portrayed factually, for example the crucifixion, which (being the Roman punishment for murderers) must on one level have been an embarrassment to the early church. The candidate thus concludes that the evangelists did have a factual basis to their dogmatic concerns. This is top-end Level 6.

## Question 12

‘Jesus was a law-breaker not a law-maker.’ Discuss.

[25]

## Mark Scheme

Scholars such as Kummel have argued that Jesus did break the law and that this was the reason for his trial. Some see him as consciously and deliberately anti-Torah. Evidence which students might bring to support this could be questions of healing on the Sabbath, working on the Sabbath, and ritual washing and fasting. Others may draw upon his challenges to the Pharisees – those brought directly and those delivered in parables to show that he challenged the authority of the law. The accusation of blasphemy might also be drawn upon. ‘Love God, Love your neighbour as yourself’ may be used to support the idea that Jesus saw himself as replacement for the law, as might numerous texts from the Johannine tradition. As replacement Jesus can be seen as *both* law breaker and law maker. The ultimate movement of Christianity away from the Jewish law, post crucifixion, might also be used in support.

Others, such as Bultmann, have argued that Jesus was an observant Jew. Banks: ‘Jesus neither moves out from the Law in making his own demands nor relates those requirements back to it.’ Candidates may draw upon Jesus’ observation of Jewish traditions such as Passover. Did Jesus break the *spirit* of the Law may be a further line of enquiry.

A discussion presenting evidence from the text is anticipated with built in awareness of literary criticism.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

Jesus is presented in the gospels as being in a constant clash with authorities over the interpretation and practise of the law which some would argue led ultimately to the Jews seeking Jesus's death. It is hence vitally important for us to assess whether "Jesus was a law-breaker [or] a law-maker" in order to establish not only ~~whether~~ what <sup>place</sup> importance Jesus placed on Jewish law <sup>but also</sup> and whether ~~this~~ his clash



with the law led him to his death. We should be aware that the question may be presenting us with a false dichotomy as although at times Jesus breaks the law and at times 'makes' laws, ~~even Jesus emphasises that he~~ we should consider that Jesus may not be in opposition to the law, but in fact, supersedes it.

~~The~~ There ~~are~~ are two types of law that we should consider in order to establish the respect that Jesus had for it. The first is the written law believed to have come from Moses and the second is the oral law which has been interpreted <sup>by</sup> the Pharisees. Before we begin our ~~discussion~~ <sup>debate</sup> we must recognise that even today there are still debates about the interpretation of <sup>oral</sup> ~~written~~ laws and that ~~for Jesus~~ this kind of debate was a common and almost accepted part of Jewish life at the time of Jesus. The fact that there was no overriding agreed ~~interpretation~~ <sup>interpretation</sup> could have left Jesus room to perhaps flout the ~~law~~ <sup>generally agreed interpretation of</sup> the law without breaking it.

There is only one place in the Gospels where Jesus is shown explicitly to break the written law and this is in Mark when an aside is added "thus he declared all foods clean". If this addition is historical then it would lead us to view Jesus as both a law-breaker

and a law-maker however as Sanders points out this is highly unlikely to be historically accurate. ~~and much more in Paul~~ Peter is shown to debate with Paul over the interpretation of the food laws and Peter emphatically refuses to break the food laws. ~~As Peter~~ Peter, as a disciple of Jesus would have ~~surely~~ known whether Jesus had negated the food laws and as his one of his most devout followers would almost certainly have adopted such an important view. It ~~do~~ seems more probable ~~that~~ (especially when we consider that Matthew's version of the story does not have him aside) that this is simply an example of retrojection by <sup>the</sup> early Church who wanted to portray Jesus as supporting their developing views.

The main issues concerning Jesus and his adherence to the law are hence over his "breaking" of the oral laws. We have already mentioned how it is not really fair to call ~~breaking oral laws~~ Jesus a "law-breaker" by breaking oral laws as they were only commonly agreed interpretations of laws with not fully established but we must still look at how Jesus appears to break laws such as purity <sup>and working</sup> ~~heating~~ on the Sabbath. ~~and~~ The most intriguing situation where Jesus is shown to break the law of no work on the Sabbath is when he is caught by the Pharisees picking grains of corn because he and his disciples



were hungry. Although it was deemed acceptable to ~~break laws on the~~ work on the sabbath if it were a life or death situation, being hungry hardly seems like an adequate reason to break the law. Jesus uses the excuse that David broke the sabbath when he was hungry and hence Jesus ✓  
 enrages the Pharisees by suggesting he has the ✓  
 same kind of authority as King David. ~~but the~~  
~~reason~~ It could be argued that this story was not included in the gospels to show Jesus's flouting of the law but rather ~~to~~ as a ploy to ✓  
 Jesus's absolute authority. We ~~should also~~ are also unable to declare Jesus is a 'law-breaker' from this passage because as Sanders points out it is probably not historical. It seems very ✓  
 strange that a group of Pharisees would happen ✓  
 to be wandering through a corn field, especially on the sabbath. It is unlikely that the evangelists would have <sup>wanted to</sup> included the story to show Jesus as a political rebel and law-breaker and hence more ✓  
 likely that it ~~was~~ is a story to show Jesus's authority.

Other instances of when Jesus breaks the sabbath law are ~~also~~ also inconclusive in proving that Jesus's ~~own~~ aim was to break the law. As Sanders says "Jesus was far more radical and far more arrogant than one who broke food laws and laws of the sabbath". ~~When Jesus~~ The healing miracles which Jesus conducts on the sabbath would probably not

have produced a great amount of attention as it was accepted to heal on the Sabbath in life or death situations (although one could argue that healing a withered hand and a paralytic man was not a life or death situation ~~the~~, the healing was certainly a life changing event) if it were not ~~the~~ for the authority Jesus was appealing to when he broke the law. When Jesus healed the ~~man~~ paralytic he said "Son, your sins are forgiven". Only God had the power to forgive sins and hence this would have been seen as a blasphemous statement - ~~however one could~~ Some ~~equal~~ people would say that the passive voice used could be suggestive that in fact all Jesus was saying was that God had healed the man however this ~~seems~~ does not fit with the crowd's reaction. What is more important is the fact that Jesus only used words to cure the man (as he does in most of his healings) and so it could be argued that Jesus was not actually 'working' on the Sabbath and hence not breaking the law.

Having established that Jesus can not be shown to conclusively and deliberately break the law in the gospels for the purpose of purely showing himself to be a law-breaker, we must discuss whether Jesus was a law-maker. This ~~or~~ concept also seems unlikely if we refer to The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) when Jesus ~~can~~ tells his disciples that he comes



"not to replace the law but to fulfill it". This concept of fulfillment rather than replacement is very important to our discussion as it shows that he did in fact have high regard for the Jewish Law but that his aim was not to make new laws but to supersede the current laws by re-orientating them. In Matthew scholars have suggested that Jesus is pointing towards a "hermeneutical key" which centres interpretation of the law around love and mercy.

At points in Jesus's Sermon on the Mount Jesus is shown ~~to~~ to actually make the law stricter which emphasises that he is neither a law breaker or a law maker. In his antitheses Jesus states that "whoever even looking at a woman is enough to commit adultery." If we combine this with ~~Jesus's statement that~~ the fact that when Jesus was asked what the greatest commandment was ~~as~~ he answered "love the Lord thy God with all your heart.... and love thy neighbour as thyself" ~~as seen~~ which are quotes from Deuteronomy and Leviticus. We see that in fact Jesus held Jewish law in very high regard and emphasised aspects of which were already key to all Jews.

Jesus was not a "lawbreaker" as ~~he does not~~ shown at ~~cannot~~ the ~~only~~ Aware of the "constraints of history"

(A.E. Harvey) we can conclude that it appears that the historical Jesus was probably neither a law-breaker or a law-maker. Jesus saw himself as in continuation with God's unfolding plan through secular history (Luke's idea which Conzelmann pointed out) ~~the~~ and a fulfillment of Jewish prophecy and ~~here we can be quite~~ using a cumulative argument based on the text which very rarely shows Jesus breaking the written law and only occasionally shows Jesus decisively denying the oral law we can suggest that Jesus did not see himself as a law-breaker. There is also little evidence <sup>in the</sup> text of situations ~~in the text~~ when Jesus makes completely new laws which are not ~~dependent~~ extensions or reorientations of old laws. The false dichotomy presented in the question proves to be false. Jesus ~~breaker~~ is more likely to have believed he succeeded the Jewish law and ~~here~~ re-orientated it than to have completely dismissed it. Jesus objected to the hypocritical way Pharisees practised their laws without any true intention and the way they placed them above the need to show love and mercy to others rather than the actual laws themselves.

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### Examiner Comment

The candidate begins with the interesting comment that “We should be aware that the question may be presenting us with a false dichotomy, as although at times Jesus breaks the law and at times makes laws, we should consider that Jesus may not have been in opposition to the law, but in fact supersedes it. Further, the candidate points out that debate about the oral law was more or less an accepted part of Jewish life at that time, so the fact that there was no overriding agreed interpretation could have left Jesus room perhaps to challenge the generally agreed interpretation of the law without breaking it. The candidate then goes on to discuss a range of issues concerning the question, including the possibility that Jesus broke the food laws and ‘declared all foods clean’ (Mark 7:18-19), in which case we might argue that Jesus was both a law-breaker and a law-maker. The candidate also considers how difficult it is to unravel some of the relevant narratives – for example the interesting issue of Jesus eating ears of corn on the Sabbath may be unhistorical, and it may have been included for all sorts of reasons. This is very mature reasoning, and this level of excellence is sustained throughout, not least in its conclusion that the supposed false dichotomy of the question is indeed false. This would be at the top of Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

The extent to which we believe that 'Jesus was a law-breaker not a law maker' is dependent upon the ~~author~~ authority that Jesus believed that he had. There are several titles associated with 'who was Jesus', including Messiah, Son of God and Son of Man. Jesus himself seems to prefer the title Son of Man. This may be due to the ongoing secrecy and disclosure motif associated with Messiahship. However we can only interpret the information we have.

Therefore in Jesus' time there were two types of Jewish Law: The written law ~~was written~~ by Moses and published from Mount Sinai and The oral law as stated by the Pharisees. There is certainly a majority that believe that Jesus rarely if ever broke the written law. However there are several instances throughout the Gospels where conflict occurs between Jesus and the Pharisees over the oral law. Conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees is a central motif amongst all the Synoptics.

The extent to which one can argue Jesus as a law maker, depends upon how we define such a being. There are certain teachings frequently provided in parables which as Tertius describes are 'weapons of warfare against his opponents'. However there is certainly no written law and the extent to which Jesus' teachings can be regarded as laws is dependent upon how we interpret them and the authority that we assign to them.

Therefore Jesus being assigned the title 'law breaker' can be supported due to a number of conflicts and ultimately the Destruction/Cleansing of the Temple which Pilate assigns the reason for Jesus' sentence. Regarding the written law there is one circumstance solely in Mark regarding Jesus



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breaching the food laws whereby he could be considered a 'law-breaker'. However this story only appears in Mark and therefore the history cannot be trusted. As Hurvey states there are the 'constraints of history' which always <sup>create</sup> an amount of unreliability over the gospels. Another big conflict in the gospels between Jesus and the Jewish Law is regarding corn picking on the Sabbath. However Jesus may feel, depending on the image he associates with himself, that God has given him permission to carry out this work on the day of the Sabbath and thus he does not feel that he is 'breaching the law' but that he is more-powerful and thus can over-rule the law.

Matthew's Gospel states that Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount. This is an individual story only found in Matthew. Stanton states Matthew as the 'most Jewish, anti-Jewish and pro-Gentile' and therefore describes the conflicts from a relatively stable position. On the Sermon on the Mount Jesus does not break or question any of the written laws as stated by Moses but reinforces them, especially regarding adultery. Therefore Jesus cannot be regarded as a 'law-breaker' in this circumstance and if anything can be perceived as a 'law-maker'.

The cleansing of the Temple, which ultimately is associated with why Jesus was sentenced to crucifixion is the only destructive ~~story~~ story by Jesus. Meyer argues that the cleansing of the Temple is an 'implicit presentation of Jesus' credentials'. However this action was out of sync by Jesus as though the gospels he was described as a humble king or Messiah. For example prior to the Temple incident, he enters Jerusalem, not on a strapping horse as associated with kingly rule, but fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 entering on a donkey. Therefore Jesus



clearly did not feel that he needed to break laws in order to express his ultimate authority as the Messiah. The incident of the cleansing of the Temple is Jesus trying to bring in a new era and remove the sinners (den of robbers) in order to restore faith.

Therefore the heart of the conflict lies in the fact that what Jesus perceives as the right thing to do regarding Christianity and salvation the Jews feel neglected. The Pharisees do not feel that unconditional forgiveness without any sacrifice is sufficient. One of the themes throughout Luke is the challenge to Rich and Pious to the poor combined with salvation for all. For example Jesus feels that eating with sinners who are willing to repent can be justified and is trying to expand the kingdom. However the Jewish followers believe that sinners should be neglected until repenting and sacrificing.

Jesus certainly was not tied down by the laws of his era and believed that what he was instigating was morally supported by God and therefore correct. I would regard Jesus as a teacher as opposed to a law-maker, as he made certain suggestions as to righteousness and practical obedience in Matthew especially. Ultimately Pilate obviously perceived Jesus to be a law-breaker and blasphemer in order to warrant his crucifixion. However from the Synoptics it is fair to conclude that Jesus did not always adhere to the laws entirely but due to him being the Son of God or Messiah he believed he had the authority to act as he did. Although the counter argument as stated in John's Gospel is the fact that Jesus sees himself in the Pontifical title: Son of Man.

Modern Christians may regard Jesus as a law-maker if they perceive as Calvin states that there are no moral absolutes without God. As Newman reinforces they may



number	<p>believe that therefore God is the voice of our conscience. Therefore the fact that in the New Testament Jesus was spreading the Word of God throughout Israel, he can be indirectly perceived as a law-maker. Jesus' reinforcement of Moses' laws may also be an argument for him being a law-maker as he is now making those written laws relevant to that society through the Sermon on the Mount.</p> <p>Finally therefore there <del>was</del> was obviously sufficient evidence to suggest that Jesus was a law-breaker including the destruction of the Temple, <del>which</del> due to the punishment he received. Although Christians will feel this was all part of his divine plan, not knowing the status he prescribed to himself this statement seems plausible. The fact that Jeremiah acknowledges parables as 'weapons of warfare against his opponents' shows that conflict was a major part of Jesus' life. Jesus taught mostly in parables and therefore was constantly questioning the Pharisees, who were his main Jewish opponents.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">16</p>
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## Examiner Comment

This response considers a fair range of issues, and the knowledge is generally accurate. The candidate begins by suggesting that whether Jesus was a law-breaker or a law-maker depends on the authority that Jesus believed he had. This is a good point, but unfortunately is not expanded here, and when it is mentioned later, receives less consideration than it deserves. The essay discusses the apparent dichotomy between Jesus' adherence to the Law (as in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount) and his willingness to work round or against it (e.g. in his lack of concern for food laws, eating with sinners, and in his comments and actions concerning Sabbath observance). There might be mileage in the claim that Jesus was more concerned to challenge the oral law rather than the written Law, although the candidate does not develop this theme clearly. Although the essay covers a fair ground, the argument is sporadic rather than sustained, and in some respects is odd, such as the material about the "destruction of the Temple". The essay is at the top of Level 4.

## Paper 3 Topics and Key Texts in Philosophy and Theology 2

### Generic Mark Scheme for 10 mark questions

Level 6 9–10 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues</li> <li>• Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>• Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 5 7–8 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered</li> <li>• Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>• Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 4 5–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered</li> <li>• Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
Level 3 3–4 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon.</li> <li>• Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>• Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>• Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
Level 2 1–2 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short.</li> <li>• Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>• Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>



## Generic Mark Scheme for 15 mark questions

Level 6 13–15 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question</li> <li>● Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>● Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained</li> <li>● Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>● Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 5 10–12 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question</li> <li>● Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>● Argument has structure and development and is sustained</li> <li>● Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>● Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
Level 4 7–9 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>● Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question</li> <li>● Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>● Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained</li> <li>● Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument</li> <li>● May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>● Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
Level 3 4–6 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>● Attempts to evaluate though with partial success</li> <li>● Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>● Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence</li> <li>● Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>● Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
Level 2 1–3 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short.</li> <li>● Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>● Argument is limited or confused</li> <li>● Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>● Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>● Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>
Level 1 0 marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No relevant material to credit</li> </ul>

## Generic Mark Scheme for 25 mark questions

<p>Level 6</p> <p>21–25 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of a wide range of philosophical/religious issues</li> <li>• Insightful selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Excellent critical engagement and detailed evaluation of the wider implications of the question</li> <li>• Complete or near complete accuracy at this level</li> <li>• Argument is coherent, structured, developed and convincingly sustained</li> <li>• Employs a wide range of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Good evidence of wide reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows good understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Confident and precise use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 5</p> <p>16–20 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is accurate and a good range of philosophical/religious issues are considered</li> <li>• Systematic/good selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Good critical engagement and evaluation of the implications of the question</li> <li>• Response is accurate: answers the question specifically</li> <li>• Argument has structure and development and is sustained</li> <li>• Good use of differing points of view and supporting evidence</li> <li>• Some evidence of reading on the topic beyond the set texts</li> <li>• Shows competent understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Accurate use of philosophical and theological vocabulary</li> </ul>
<p>Level 4</p> <p>12–15 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is generally accurate and a fair range of issues are considered</li> <li>• Reasonable selection and application of ideas and concepts</li> <li>• Some critical engagement and evaluation of the question</li> <li>• Response is largely relevant to the question asked</li> <li>• Argument has some structure and shows some development, but may not be sustained</li> <li>• Considers more than one point of view and uses evidence to support argument</li> <li>• May show some understanding of the links between different areas of study where appropriate</li> <li>• Reasonable attempt to use philosophical and theological vocabulary accurately</li> </ul>
<p>Level 3</p> <p>8–11 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some accuracy of knowledge. More than one issue is touched upon</li> <li>• Attempts to select and apply ideas with partial success</li> <li>• Attempts to evaluate though with partial success</li> <li>• Response is partially relevant to the question asked but may be one-sided</li> <li>• Some attempt at argument but without development and coherence</li> <li>• Some attempt to use supporting evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is occasionally used correctly</li> </ul>
<p>Level 2</p> <p>1–7 marks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some key points made. Possibly repetitive or short</li> <li>• Explores some isolated ideas related to the general topic</li> <li>• Argument is limited or confused</li> <li>• Response is limited or tenuously linked to the question</li> <li>• Limited attempt to use evidence</li> <li>• Philosophical and theological vocabulary is inaccurate or absent</li> </ul>



Level 1	● No relevant material to credit
0 marks	

## Topic 2: Ethics

Man is conceived by Bentham as a being susceptible of pleasures and pains, and governed in all his conduct partly by the different modifications of self-interest, and the passions commonly classed as selfish, partly by sympathies, or occasionally antipathies, towards other beings. And here Bentham's conception of human nature stops. He does not exclude religion; the prospect of divine rewards and punishments he includes under the head of 'self-regarding interest', and the devotional feeling under that of sympathy with God. But the whole of the impelling or restraining principles, whether of this or of another world, which he recognizes, are either self-love, or love or hatred towards other sentient beings. That there might be no doubt of what he thought on the subject, he has not left us to the general evidence of his writings, but has drawn out a 'Table of the Springs of Action', an express enumeration and classification of human motives, with their various names, laudatory, vituperative, and neutral: and this table, to be found in Part I of his collected works, we recommend to the study of those who would understand his philosophy.

Man is never recognized by him as a being capable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end; of desiring, for its own sake, the conformity of his own character to his standard of excellence, without hope of good or fear of evil from other source than his own inward consciousness. Even in the more limited form of Conscience, this great fact in human nature escapes him. Nothing is more curious than the absence of recognition in any of his writings of the existence of conscience, as a thing distinct from philanthropy, from affection for God or man, and from self-interest in this world or in the next. There is a studied abstinence from any of the phrases which, in the mouths of others, import the acknowledgment of such a fact.† If we find the words 'Conscience', 'Principle', 'Moral Rectitude', 'Moral Duty', in his Table of the Springs of Action, it is among the synonyms of the 'love of reputation;' with an intimation as to the two former phrases, that they are also sometimes synonymous with the *religious* motive, or the motive of *sympathy*. The feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation properly so called, either towards ourselves or our fellow-creatures, he seems unaware of the existence of; and neither the word *self-respect*, nor the idea to which that word is appropriated, occurs even once, so far as our recollection serves us, in his whole writings.

[Extract from **John Stuart Mill**: *Essay on Bentham* in *Utilitarianism*: 99–100]

### Question 4 (a)

**Examine the ideas about Bentham's philosophy which Mill addresses in this passage. [10]**

### Mark Scheme

The passage shows one of the key areas of difference between the thinking of Mill and Bentham. Summarised by Ryan as: 'And however much at odds it sometimes is with his determinist universe, Mill's concern with self-development and moral progress is a strand in his philosophy to which almost everything else is subordinate.' (Alan Ryan, *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill* London: Macmillan, 1970) In his Autobiography, Mill identifies two 'very marked effects' on his 'opinions and character' brought about by the period of his mental crisis. The first involved no longer making happiness 'the direct end' of conduct and life. The second effect was that Mill 'gave its proper place, among the

prime necessities of human well-being, to the internal culture of the individual', i.e. the cultivation of the feelings. He had, he says, ceased to attach 'almost exclusive importance to the ordering of outward circumstances, and the training of the human being for speculation and for action'. Ideas on Bentham which candidates might identify and explain:

1. The limits of Bentham's perception of human nature. Humans are solely driven by pleasures and pains.
2. The limits of Bentham's perception of the religious motive – 'self-regarding interest', 'self love or love or hatred towards other sentient beings'.
3. The limit of Bentham's understanding of conscience – a subjective reality with no external point of reference.
4. Bentham's inclination to identify higher 'Springs of Action' with self interest.
5. Bentham's inclination to ignore completely the subjective experience of '*self respect*' and human capacity to make moral judgements about others and self ('feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation').
6. Mill argued that Bentham had failed to properly incorporate the notion of character into his ethics which created a lack of attention to interior culture.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

4(a) Mill addresses three main parts of Bentham's Act Utilitarian philosophy in the passage: firstly, Bentham's ascription <sup>that</sup> of human value as being based on the basis of <sup>vest</sup> personal self interest; secondly, that humans have no greater goal than pursuing their own self-interest, and that spiritual perfection is not an end in itself; and thirdly, that humans have no further common value save that of self-interest, certainly nothing on the scale of Conscience or Duty.

Mill states that Bentham's Act Utilitarian philosophy sees man as "susceptible of pleasures and pains" and thus governed by "self-interest" and, occasionally, the emotions as exhibited in "sympathies" or "antipathies" towards others. While this much can also be said of Mill's own Rule Utilitarian philosophy, Mill criticises Bentham on the grounds of his limited conception of human nature, which arises in the essay he attributes to Bentham's lack of experience with human suffering. ~~But of this~~ Bentham's sole preoccupation with so-called "self-love, or love or hatred towards other sentient beings" as the sole basis for moral action is rejected by Mill, who argues that utilitarianism needs to take into account the more spiritual or intellectual goals as well, such as those listed in Mill's "higher pleasures". Mill, however, admits that Bentham may have taken such spiritual notions into account as evidenced by his placing of religion near the heading of "self-regarding interests" and "sympathy with land", so it might be wrong to assert that Bentham ignored such concepts. Mill also rejects Bentham's statement that humans have no greater goal than that they pursue "without hope".



of good or bad or evil from <sup>an</sup> other source than his own inward consciousness. Bentham saw ~~that~~ the ultimate ethical goal for his utilitarian philosophy as "the greatest good for the largest number", with good, according to Mill, usually meaning physical rather than spiritual pleasure. Again, Mill himself would here reject this in favour of a division between higher "intellectual pleasures" and less valuable "physical pleasures".

Mill also criticises Bentham's rejection of common human values beyond the sheer goal of maximizing pleasure. Bentham treats such ideas, such as "conscience", "principle" and "moral duty" as merely part of a much wider ~~utilitarian~~ self-interest goal of "love of reputation" or also "sympathy with kind", rather than ~~the~~ Mill's argument that there is an "inward consciousness" that generates a feeling of "moral approbation or disapprobation" or "self-respect", which suggests a more fathomable concept that is clearly independent of any connections to utilitarianism. Mill would agree for ~~the~~ ~~law~~ conscience on the basis that it is part of his assertion that Man is capable of pursuing "spiritual perfection" as an end in itself as part of a wider approach to maximizing utility towards the "higher pleasures". In this case, however, Mill, like Bentham's philosophy which he criticises, falls back into the trap of trying to link conscience with utilitarianism and the pursuit of happiness when Mill's own criticism of Bentham would seem to want ~~to assert~~ ~~to assert~~ conscience that is more independent of such heteronomous actions.

9



## Examiner Comment

This is a wide-ranging response, covering the major themes in the passage, and offering useful critical comments. The use of vocabulary is confident and precise. The quality of the response is largely self-evident, but is particularly visible, for example, in the conclusion, where the candidate discusses Bentham's habit of lumping together such concepts as *conscience*, *principle*, and *moral duty* under the utilitarian banner of self-interest. Mill's comment that Bentham seems incapable of pursuing spiritual perfection as an end in itself is part of his wider approach to maximising utility towards the higher pleasures. If so, observes the candidate, "Mill, like Bentham's philosophy which he criticised, falls back into the trap of trying to link conscience with utilitarianism and the pursuit of happiness when Mill's own criticism of Bentham would seem to want to assert a conscience that is more independent of such heteronomous actions." This is top-end Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

4a) Mill starts the passage by talking about Bentham's view that human beings naturally seek pleasure and avoid pain. Mill shares this view as it is the basis for Utilitarianism, Bentham's formulation of which Mill updated. Mill addresses the idea of Bentham's that humans are governed by self-interest or sympathies towards other beings and that is as far as Bentham's idea of human nature goes. This idea of Bentham's leads to the idea that humans seek their own pleasure and also, through a sense of community, the pleasure of others, which in turn is the basis for the idea that the general happiness is the highest good.

Mill explains that Bentham does not exclude religion but he would classify the prospect of divine reward and punishment as self-interest as all one's actions would be with that final reward for the self in mind. Bentham would argue that religion comes under the principles he has already outlined, those of either self-love or love (or hate) for another. The 'Table of the Springs of Action' show Bentham's interest in evaluating and classifying human motives, this ~~idea~~ interest is also seen in Bentham's ideas such as the Hedonic Calculus. Mill admired Bentham because he was one of the first philosophers to bring scientific method to ethics as in, for example, the Hedonic Calculus.

Mill then talks of Bentham's idea that



external sanctions effect what people desire as an end and internal sanctions seem not to come into ~~the~~ it. Mill notes that "nothing is more curious than the absence of recognition in any of his writings of the existence of <sup>conscience</sup> ~~consciousness~~". This is because Bentham was a social reformer who was more interested in laws than in individual morality, therefore the motivation of the self did not seem particularly important to him. This may also explain why Bentham took a quantitative rather than qualitative view of pleasure and his theory is positive for the majority while ignoring the minority of people in a situation. Mill points out that if we find the words 'conscience' or 'moral duty' in Bentham's Table of the Springs of Action, he means 'love of reputation'. This demonstrates Bentham's interests in society and reputation rather than inward morality and motivation.

8

## Examiner Comment

This candidate gives a fluent overview of the passage, distinguishing between Bentham's view that humans are governed by self-interest and Mill's view that humans are capable of higher pleasures. For example, Bentham classifies the religious prospect of divine reward and punishment as one aspect of self-interest, as all one's actions are performed for the prospect of the final reward of happiness in mind. The candidate refers, for example, to Mill's perception that Bentham makes no reference to the existence of conscience, because Bentham was a social reformer who was more interested in laws than in individual morality, which might also explain why Bentham took a quantitative rather than a qualitative view of pleasure. Bentham is 'more interested in society and reputation than in inward morality and motivation'. Given that the candidate selects only some of the themes in the passage, this is top end of Level 5 rather than Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

One of Bentham's key and influential themes is that human beings are based on the desire for pain and pleasure; his Principle of utility. 'Man is conceived by Bentham as a being susceptible of pleasures and pains..' this is what governs humans. The extract entails themes of human nature with religion. However, Mill addresses Bentham's view on pleasure and pain by saying instead of it being pleasure and pain, it is happiness that humans are governed by. That your life should be enjoyed, this measured by quality. However, Mill acknowledges that Bentham doesn't exclude religion, but comments on the restraints of Bentham's principles and his 'Table of the Springs of action', which is an 'express enumeration and classification of human motives..'. Mill is emphasising how Bentham relies on calculations, which Mill disagrees with, as you can't measure human desires.

Mill believes that God is influential and that to desire happiness is the sole basis of morality and when you reach the end (God) you reach spiritual perfection, which Bentham does not. That instead of it being a collective desire, it needs to be for one's own's sake; drawing the difference of Mill focusing on the individual. This bringing in the topic of sanctions. That for principles and 'rules' to be appreciated and respected it needs to be an internal desire, not an external pressure such as peer pressure. 'Inward conscientiousness'. Sanctions must be from the individual not as a force. Mill argues this point with God, and believes humans have a more established relationship or desire to God than Bentham says. Finally, Mill argues how he believes his theory is more about the individual than a group; Bentham with his greatest good for the greatest number being the right thing. The idea of religion is what Mill is addressing, and how it ties in with Utilitarianism. Mill addresses more similarities between the ethical theory and religion ..'they are sometimes synonymous with the religious motive..', whilst also addressing the idea and role of your conscience.



3

## Examiner Comment

Although there is some accuracy of knowledge in this answer, its main concern is the candidate's statement that "Mill believes that God is influential ... and when you [reach] the end (God) you reach spiritual perfection". Apart from the oddity of such statements, they are not the concern of the extract, where the reference to God is merely within the context of Mill's comments about Bentham's view of conscience. This essay accordingly merits a Level 3.



## Question 4 (b)

**‘Mill’s Utilitarianism is preferable to that of Bentham.’ Critically assess this claim. [15]**

## Mark Scheme

Candidates should have offered in part **(a)** many of the key ideas and are expected to draw on the observations made in that section to develop an evaluative response. Demonstration of key differences between the Utilitarianism of Mill and Bentham expected:

Bentham

‘The greatest good [pleasure] for the greatest number’

Focused on the individual alone

Quantitative – hedonic calculus

Act Utilitarianism

In search of maximisation of happiness

Consequentialist

Mill

‘The greatest happiness for the greatest number’

We should protect the common good, universalistic

Qualitative – higher/lower pleasures

Rule Utilitarianism

Consequentialist

Some candidates might argue that Mill’s insistence on higher pleasures and a higher dimension of human life is to be preferred to Bentham’s purely quantitative ideas about pleasure and pain. Some might argue that Bentham appears to have ignored or treated too lightly some areas of human experience which do not sit easily with his philosophy. Others may draw out the strengths of Bentham, who is philosophically coherent and does not require us to value the subjective pleasures of others against an ideal, which is itself difficult to justify. It might be argued that philosophically Mill compromises the whole principle of utility and Bentham’s secular approach to ethics by his introduction of ‘higher’ pleasures. Other candidates might argue that since both make the presumption that pleasure can in some sense be the measure of a good life that neither one is preferable to the other. Others may debate how the term ‘preferable’ is employed and to whom it is applied. The conclusion reached is not important. Candidates are free to respond however they choose to the question and will be graded on their ability to draw evidence and make evaluative reflections.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

US

45) Mill's utilitarianism attempts to distinguish itself from Bentham's utilitarianism based on several criticisms by the former of the latter: firstly, that the latter ~~only~~ focuses on physical pleasure as a ~~the~~ "philosophy fit for swine", secondly, that it would be impossible to expect a moral agent to calculate and weigh up the ~~best~~ benefits versus losses on every occasion according to the Teleific Calculus, and thirdly that Bentham's utilitarianism ignores the role of higher "spiritual" ~~parts~~ or "intellectual" ends, which again links back to the first criticism that Act utilitarianism places too much emphasis on the lower "swine" pleasures.

Mill's utilitarianism sets out to rectify these errors and in doing so, certainly made utilitarianism a much more practical ~~theory~~ philosophy; however, it also created additional problems which Mill failed to take into account. Similarly, it fails to resolve certain outstanding problems of utilitarianism.

In response to the first criticism Mill set up a division between ~~the~~ "higher pleasures" and "lower pleasures", reasoning that without such a division an oyster, who lived for a long time would otherwise accumulate enough utility to beat even great composers such as Haydn who nevertheless did not have such long lives. Mill saw ~~that~~ the higher pleasures as being more intellectually based, including things such as reading, companionship or reasoning, and thus ~~in~~ in any decision ~~made~~ ~~made~~ the higher values should be valued at a higher level compared with the "lower" values such as physical pleasures such as eating.



~~as of course~~ Admittedly this does resolve the "as per dilemma" and puts greater emphasis on intellectualism, which in normal Act utilitarianism could reasonably be said was neglected due to the significant sacrifices required for the development of intellectual virtues through time spent on study and contemplation. However, the question of what should be considered a "higher" or "lower" pleasure now pops up; and ~~as to this~~ Mill never provided a comprehensive list of activities that were firmly to be placed in the ~~higher~~ or "lower pleasures" camp. ~~At this~~ utilitarianism thus substitutes one problem for another.

The second criticism is answered by Mill by the ~~formulation~~ <sup>prediction</sup> of "rules" based on repeated experience and reasonable ~~prediction~~ of the outcome. Human experience, Mill argues, has demonstrated again and again that acts such as murder ~~are~~ generate greater welfare loss, than good, and thus it is not encouraged. Mill thus attempts to solve the problem caused by utilitis pointing out that the Teleific Calculus is an overly complicated mechanism for ethics, especially when situations demand an immediate response. It is not clear, however, that his attempt succeeded. After all, ~~the utilitis~~ one of the key tenets of utilitarianism is that each case has to be treated on a case-by-case basis due to the differing circumstances involved: surely this means that the moral agent has to apply the Teleific Calculus just to see if there is <sup>still</sup> need to stick to the rule, as opposed to acting differently. Mill's system also seems to treat all past iterations of an action as having equal weight - for example, in setting up his rule arguing that murder led to ~~led~~ to a net welfare loss, Mill



ignores the difference in actual amount of welfare lost in each individual case as well as a fundamental difference in the circumstances surrounding each case.

Mill attempts to address the third criticism – that Act utilitarianism fails to take into account the importance of spiritual ends – by again elevating the "higher pleasures" over the "lower pleasures". He argues that any well-bred person who has experienced the two pleasures would unambiguously choose the former over the latter. Adding that "It is better to be as Socrates disappointed rather than a swine satisfied" and that only people who have not experienced higher pleasures would agree otherwise, he reaffirms his argument that the higher pleasures are better as an end for themselves. However, much of his justification for this line of thought, while not necessarily wrong, seems to stem from ad hominem attacks characterizing his opponents as ignorant of the higher pleasures, which is hardly convincing.

Mill's Rule utilitarianism, furthermore, fails to solve some of the fundamental problems of utilitarianism: the arguments by opposing moral theories, particularly Christian theists, that mankind's goal on this Earth is not to maximize pleasure but to, for example, "grow into the likeness of God"; G.E. Moore's "naturalistic fallacy" which accuses utilitarianism with confusing "the good" with the notion of "happiness"; and the problem not demonstrated in the Metaphor of the Ass, where an ~~Ass~~ ass, stuck between two equally favourable and desirable modes of action – to eat or to drink, eventually starves to death because there is no obvious



reason to choose one over the other. Thus a decision cannot be made. Similarly, utilitarianism cannot solve a problem when the ~~two~~ solutions offered are of equal desirability and worth.

Mill's Rule utilitarianism, therefore, is not really superior or inferior to Bentham's Act utilitarianism. In an attempt to solve some of the issues arising from the latter it creates more problems for itself. It in any case fails to solve some of the fundamental problems of utilitarianism.

### Examiner Comment

This is a very mature and well written answer to the question. It sets a comprehensive agenda based on three criticisms of Bentham by Mill: first, that Bentham's theory focuses on pleasures fit for swine; second, that it is unreasonable to expect an agent to undergo the rigours of the felicific calculus every time a moral decision is contemplated; and third, that Bentham ignores the higher spiritual or intellectual ends of human life. The candidate then claims that Mill's Utilitarianism set out to rectify these problems, with the result that the theory became more practical, but Mill still failed to resolve other outstanding problems. Thus, having higher pleasures might seem more noble, and stops us having to accord high moral worth to long-lived and happy oysters, but Mill failed to give sufficient indication as to which pleasures are high and which are low. Further, taking into account the utilitarian value of past rules might be a short cut to the machinations of the felicific calculus, nevertheless a key tenet of Bentham's theory is that blanket rules do not exempt people from taking case-by-case decisions, and from taking into account the different circumstances involved. Mill's ideas also failed to solve the concerns of other theories, such as G.E. Moore's accusation that Utilitarianism commits the naturalist fallacy in identifying happiness with 'the good': hence the candidate concludes, with some justification, that neither theory of Utilitarianism can be said to be preferable to the other. This is top-end Level 6.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

4b)

Utilitarianism

Reason - Socrates / poor higher / lower pleasures (swing-ethic)

Bentham

- subversive, critical thinker
- reformer -> science / religion
- methodical - utility
- self-interest v. duty

Competent judges - rich

Rogers / Krisp - whiskey drunk / no imagination

Enjoy lower pleasures eg chocolate

Benevolent spectators - selfish / duty

Empirical

Doesn't understand human pleasures eg. poetry

Lacks scholarly eg. Plato

Both Mill and Bentham's versions of Utilitarianism have criticisms, and Mill highlights in his book the weaknesses of Bentham, including his lack of imagination and scholarly influence. Nonetheless, he also emphasises the strength of his argument, self interest and duty, and his critical approach to ethics. Mill's version is praised due to its variance <sup>in types of</sup> pleasures and use of reason, however also has criticisms, such as the issue of competent judges, the problem with pleasures being both higher and lower, and also the problem with benevolent spectators. Nonetheless, Mill's Utilitarianism is preferable to that of Bentham, due to Mill's rule-utilitarian approach and development and improvement of

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many of the weaknesses of Bentham's approach. Bentham was an Act utilitarian, meaning he believed people should seek the greatest good of the greatest number. Mill praised his work, due to Bentham being a subversive and critical thinker, therefore approaching ethics reasonably. Mill considered Bentham a reformer in ethics due to his integration of both science and religion in philosophy, due to his understanding of religion's motivation, yet disregard of being able to reach spiritual perfection. Mill also praised Bentham's methodical explanation of utility and the strengths this brought to utilitarianism. The fact he introduced the Hedonic calculus emphasises how serious ~~he was~~ he was about utilitarianism and logical he was in trying to make it ~~an~~ a theory that was generally accepted. Mill foremost praised Bentham's observance of the issue of self-interest disguised as duty. Bentham understood how many people were selfish and used duty as an excuse to act in a manner, yet believed Christians were the most honest, due to their universal consideration for humanity and motivation ~~by~~ <sup>by</sup> religious reward that made them act honestly and for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Nonetheless, Mill highlighted the flaws in Bentham's argument, maintaining that although it is a strong basis for morality, it lacks imagination, due to his



focus on his own experience. His approach is empirical, and in that sense limiting due to his failure to consider the rational elements to Utilitarianism and expand his own experiences. Bentham also limits himself to his own experiences, meaning he ignores scholars who could credit and support his new, such as Plato. Mill sees this as a significant weakness to Bentham's Utilitarianism. Mill also emphasised how Bentham proves through his theory how he doesn't understand human pleasures. Bentham discredits the value of poetry, demonstrating his lack of understanding of the true nature and desires of humans. Although Bentham presents a strong basis for Utilitarianism, Mill's weaknesses demonstrate how limited it is as an ethical theory.

Mill's approach to Utilitarianism is praised for its emphasis on the difference between higher and lower pleasures. Mill uses this to differentiate his approach from Bentham's 'swine ethic'. Mill believed humans have lower pleasures, such as eating, and higher pleasures, such as listening to music. This demonstrates how Mill developed his approach from Bentham's enthusiasm, making it a compelling approach to ethics. Mill also emphasised the importance of reason, therefore differentiating humans from the capabilities of animals; better to be a human dissatisfied than



a pig satisfied, better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied? Mill therefore uses reason and a ~~various~~ variety of pleasures to differentiate his ethical approach to Bentham's, making it compelling, due to its development from Bentham's weaknesses.

Nonetheless, Mill's argument has criticisms, such as the injustice of competent judges, as rich humans will benefit from ~~it~~ being able to experience both higher and lower pleasures. It therefore presents another criticism, as some humans enjoy lower pleasures, such as eating chocolate, meaning they could in fact get more pleasure from eating than reading poetry, therefore weakening Mill's competent judges argument. Roger Krisp highlights how whisky can be both a higher and lower pleasure, due to its ability to make people drunk, but also the enjoyment people get from drinking it, meaning pleasures are in some cases ambiguous. Finally, Mill's issue of benevolent spectators is hindered by the fact that some people are selfish, and don't care for other people, so will value themselves and their friends and family over the happiness of strangers. Alike to Bentham, this demonstrates the weakness to Utilitarianism as a whole, as it fails to properly recognise how humans are selfish and just because they desire their own happiness, doesn't



mean they desire that of others too.

In conclusion, Mill emphasises how Bentham presents an excellent basis for ~~the~~ utilitarianism, due to his innovative observation of the issue between self-interest and duty and his useful and methodic inference of utility in utilitarianism. Nonetheless, the fact that his approach lacks imagination, scholarly influence, his misunderstanding of human pleasures, and the problems with measuring or determining consequences through the Hedonic Calculus weakens his approach to utilitarianism. Mill on the other hand, although <sup>there are</sup> ~~he has~~ weaknesses to his argument, such as the issue of competent judges, enjoyment of lower pleasures, and problem with benevolent spectators, his argument is strong due to its development from Bentham's weaknesses. Mill introduces higher and lower pleasures and also emphasises the integration of both virtue and justice in utility, making it a strong ethical approach. Therefore, Mill's utilitarianism is preferable to Bentham's, as he developed the argument from the weaknesses of Bentham's utilitarianism, making it a compelling <sup>version</sup> ~~the~~ of utilitarianism, and a strong approach to ethics.



8



### Examiner Comment

The main problem with this answer is that much of its material does not directly address the question set. For example, the first two pages deal primarily with Mill's approval of Bentham's concerns, rather than with the question set – i.e. whether or not Mill's utilitarianism is *preferable* to that of Bentham. What follows often lacks development, such as the claim that Bentham ignored scholars who could credit and support his view, such as Plato; but how Plato might have done so is not explained. The claim that Mill's distinction between higher and lower pleasures stops Utilitarianism from being a 'swine ethic' is better supported, as is the discussion of the difficulties of distinguishing higher from lower pleasures. The candidate also makes a reasonable point in claiming that Utilitarianism in general does not acknowledge that humans are selfish, and may not desire the happiness of others. The conclusion shows some critical engagement, although it introduces material that would have been best discussed earlier, such as the problems with using Bentham's calculus. This is a reasonable Level 4 answer.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

Mill believes that Bentham's theory and approach was too cold and mechanical, therefore went about ways of trying to improve debatable topics. Mill is qualitative rather than quantitative. Mill's Utilitarianism is generally preferred in comparison to Bentham, however receives some criticism for still not addressing the issues of it being hard to predict future events; to 'measure' an event or action. However, Mill's 'improvements' allow the condoning of evil actions which within Bentham's Act Utilitarianism can be justified. ✓

A main factor to why Mill is preferable to Bentham is his concern with the individual. That unlike Bentham's principle of utility, that a situation needs to be measured to see whether it is right/wrong or good (useful) by which pleasure and pain outweighs. Mill argues that there is more to human beings than pleasure and pain, which is happiness. Thus, a situation is now 'measured' by the level of happiness created. It is not, the greatest good being a result from the greatest number. Therefore, Mill dismisses Bentham's Hedonic Calculus, as it is a mechanical approach and instead good and happiness is on a scale. Mill believes there are higher (mind) and lower (body) actions. Humans, should desire higher intellects as that brings about a greater happiness. Such as going to the Opera, rather than going out to get drunk. Therefore, an action is ✓ judged on the quality of it rather than the quantity. However, Mill acknowledges that there is some necessity in desires for lower physical pleasures such as food to eat. However, this leads to the application of justice to wrong and evil acts such as torture. If there are three prison guards torturing a prisoner for the sake of them finding it fun, Mill condones this as it is low pleasure and therefore wrong. Whereas Bentham could argue and justify such events, by saying the three men torturing achieve a greater ✓ amount of happiness than the one man suffering.

As a result of Bentham, Mill is Rule based and believes you need some 'rules of thumb' to follow rather, such as don't rape. Both Mill and Bentham are consequentialists, but Mill tries to make an action less situational and consequential. ✓ Mill believes that humans desire happiness, not just a measurement of pleasure and pain.



Therefore as a result, Mill is preferable to Bentham, yet suffers to criticism still, such as not being able to predict future events. However, that is Utilitarianism as a whole. Mill does manage to create a smoother and realistic ethical theory, which involves more compassion for an individual and not believing humans are only reduced to pleasure and pain.

6

### Examiner Comment

Although the response is on the whole relevant to the question, the quality of the language obscures meaning, for example the examiner needs to interpret 'condoning' as meaning 'condemning', and to supply the context of abbreviated statements such as, "Mill is qualitative rather than quantitative." The basis for comparison between Mill and Bentham is narrow, and includes questionable comments such as that concerning the prison guards torturing a prisoner. Like much else here, the comment is not justified, like the claim, towards the end, that Mill "yet suffers to criticism still, such as not being able to predict future events." The general treatment of higher and lower pleasures and of justice takes the essay to the top end of Level 3.

### Question 5

**Consider the view that Fletcher's Situation Ethics is not a Christian ethical system. [25]**

### Mark Scheme

An outline of the key aspects of Situation Ethics may be anticipated. This may include introductory remarks about the historical political and social context in which Situation Ethics arose. Expect a summary of Fletcher's four presuppositions and six working principles.

Expect a range of responses which may include some of the following points:

*Not Christian* – existentialist influence, non-deontological flavour, focus on pragmatism, relativism, end justifies the means. Challenge to church and traditional Christian values. The Roman Catholic Church initially condemned Situation Ethics cf. 'Instruction on "Situation Ethics": *Contra Doctrinam*' (1956).

*Christian* – J Fletcher a Bishop, influence of Tillich, Bonhoeffer, focus on Agape, example of Jesus. Catechism of the Catholic Church states: §1757 The object, the intention, and the circumstances make up the three 'sources' of the morality of human acts.

Candidates may argue that Situation Ethics is not an ethical *system* so much as an ethical method.

The Anglican Bishop John Robinson was an early supporter of Situation Ethics saying that it was: '*The only ethics for the man come of age*'. He later changed his view on the basis that individuals were not necessarily capable of taking responsibility for the morality of their actions: '*It will all descend into moral chaos*'.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 6

5.

S.E → outline → Joseph Fletcher 1960's  
→ taxi driver.

→ 4 ~~four~~ fundamental p's  
→ 6.

→ Xian?

→ look at N.L. BRIEFLY → also not in Bible

→ Divine Command as approach to N.T + ethics.

→ although easier to follow or practical,

N.T doesn't give specific eg's

→ also culture bound, human book etc. *universal  
many  
prohibited  
things*

conc. though not ~~typical~~ Christian ethics,

Xian ethical systems as tries to use Jesus' most important teachings in a system that's easier to follow.

Situation ethics was developed by Joseph Fletcher in the 1960's, a time when people had begun questioning absolutist ethical systems such as the Catholic Church's formulation of Natural Law. Fletcher said that the right action in any situation is the most loving act as love ~~was~~ is at the centre of everything. However despite its strength, Situation Ethics has ~~some~~ had much criticism, especially from the Catholic Church and many would argue that it is not a Christian ethical system as it is too subjective and relativist. It seems though that the other Christian ethical systems seem just as flawed and Situation Ethics, while perhaps not offering a strict ethical theory, offers a system by which people can live in accordance with the most important



principles of Jesus' teaching.

Fletcher had an encounter with a tax driver who said that sometimes we must go against our principles and do what is right. This got Fletcher thinking and he developed situation ethics. Fletcher aimed for his theory to be between Antinomianism (no laws) and legalism (strict laws). He argued that situation ethics (situationism) provided the perfect balance, an ethical theory which provided rules that should normally be obeyed yet ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> may be broken in order to achieve the most loving action. Fletcher developed four working principles to follow: pragmatism, relativism, personalism and particularism, as guidelines one should follow. He also set down six fundamental principles which ~~at~~ almost all emphasise the importance of love for example the only thing desirable in itself is love and love and justice mean the same thing. Fletcher's emphasis on love is because he felt Jesus' key teaching was 'love thy neighbour as thyself'. It could be argued he took the view that the Bible was a human book with inconsistencies from which key principles for leading a good life could be extracted, a very different view from <sup>Divine Command Theory</sup>.

Here are many strengths of situation ethics, mainly that it allows for flexibility depending on situation. Fletcher uses examples to demonstrate this for example

the true story of the woman who could not escape the gulag unless she fell pregnant. This would mean adultery <sup>with a prison guard</sup>, however because of the situation she fell pregnant so as to return to her husband and children. The family accepted this, something Fletcher uses to demonstrate the success of his theory. Other strengths are it allows for compassion rather than rigid rules and it seems logical to act depending on situation. However, is it a Christian ethical? I shall examine other theories held to be Christian and compare them with situation ethics.

Natural Law, formulated by Aristotle then Aquinas and later adopted by the Catholic church, avoids weaknesses of situation ethics such as difficulties in the justice system, ~~not~~ justifying any action as 'being' and ~~its~~ the difficulty and subjectivity raised when applying it. Natural law is based in Aquinas' final and efficient causes which argue that every object has a purpose (telos) and a cause. As the world is ordered by God, following the natural law i.e. fulfilling our purpose, <sup>and becoming closer to God.</sup> fulfilling God's will. For Greeks like Aristotle, actions had no intrinsic value though Aquinas, when he brought in the ~~fundamental~~ primary and secondary precepts made actions right or wrong in themselves.

Aquinas argued that humans naturally seek the good though they may confuse apparent



and real goods. Aristotle and Aquinas both placed emphasis on reason and how it is used to decide our purpose. Where the theory starts getting classified as 'Christian' however is when the Catholic Church took the natural law and as it becomes absolute, the importance of reason seems lost to be completely absolute. If you disobey the Natural Law, you disobey God <sup>and used to their advantage</sup> is the conclusion the church drew from it, and this impacts applied ethics such as abortion and euthanasia as it would argue those actions are unnatural and therefore wrong.

Although many argue Natural Law to be a Christian ethical system ~~to~~, like Situation Ethics, it is not in the Bible which suggests it has no more <sup>as it also seems to ignore Jesus' main teaching of love.</sup> is not less claim to be Christian than Situation Ethics. Vardy saw a problem with taking general principles of natural law down to specific examples <sup>as the Catholic Church did</sup>. He argued that in the example of sex, despite it and procreation being compatible with the primary precepts, being for procreation, it may also serve other purposes such as a bond of love. He saw Aquinas' idea of body parts only having one function as naive. The Natural Law, though not being completely absolutist, shows no compassion, especially concerning situations which seem to go against Jesus' teachings of love and compassion. The theory over-simplifies situations into black and white where it may not be possible to avoid grey areas.

Another example of an absolutist

Christian viewpoint is Divine Command Theory or the view that something is good because God commands it. This is an approach to interpretation of the Bible that is favoured by <sup>true</sup> Christians as it is easy to follow as rules are set down and not questioned. The theory would not allow for situationism ~~as~~ found in Situation Ethics and if an action was deemed wrong, even if it would bring about the most loving act in a certain situation, it would <sup>always</sup> ~~not~~ be wrong irrespective of time or culture or situation. Although Situation Ethics, unlike Divine Command Theory avoids words such as 'always', there are rules which should usually be adhered to and these are common to those of most ethical theories for example do not kill.

The problem with a Divine Command approach to the Bible is that it ignores the major problems with treating the Bible, especially New Testament Ethics as the final word of God. The Bible is culture bound, it was written in a certain culture for a certain <sup>audience</sup> ~~audience~~ at the time of writing. The gospels and Paul's letters reflect personal opinions of writers and cultures and situations that the teaching was aimed for. Also, as seen in the sermon on the Mount, there actually are no fixed set of rules to follow, more a way of life teaching, as Situation Ethics suggests.



In conclusion, although Situation Ethics may not be in the Bible and is not strictly a Christian 'ethic', it works as a Christian ethical system as it tries to establish a way of life suitable to Christians and atheists alike. This universability is an attractive aspect of the theory and may even help promote Jesus' teaching. It reflects aspects of the Bible such as the Sermon on the Mount though does not have the weakness of being an intrinsic ethic. In comparison with Natural Law, Situation Ethics seems to show an ethical system more in tune with fundamental Christian values and cannot be disproven by it ~~as~~ as Natural Law also does not appear in the Bible. Divine Command, though easy to follow, is not a practical approach and Situation Ethics seems a practical, comprehensible and compassionate Christian ethical system.

25

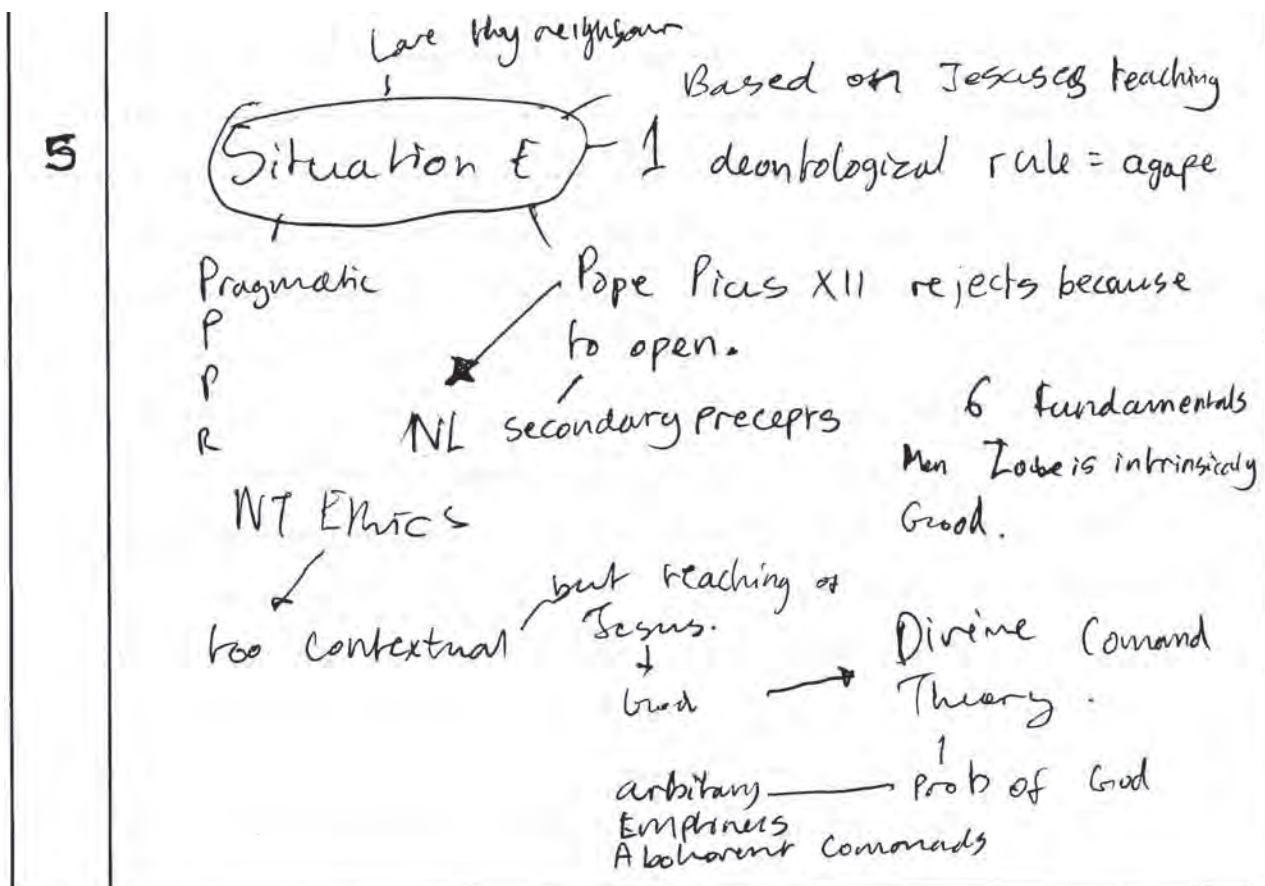


## Examiner Comment

This essay begins with the judgement of the Roman Catholic Church that Situation Ethics is too subjective and relativist to be a Christian system, and gives an instant counter-argument, that the other Christian ethical systems are also flawed. The background to the theory is then given in clear detail, and in turn this is followed by a discussion of Natural Law and Divine Command Theory as alternative Christian ethical systems. The candidate argues that Natural Law has no real biblical basis, since it derives essentially from Aristotle, with God bolted onto it, so its credentials as a Christian ethical system are in effect no greater than those of Situation Ethics. Divine Command Theory receives a similar judgement, since the theory is culture-bound, and relies on treating the Bible as the final word of God. While this may not discredit it as a Christian system, Divine Command Theory advocates fixed rules, whereas the Sermon on the Mount, for example,

is more a way of life. In so far as Situation Ethics tries to establish a way of life for Christians (and atheists alike), and is in tune with fundamental, compassionate Christian values, there seems no reason to deny that it is a Christian system. This is a Level 6 response.

Example Candidate Response – Level 4





Fletcher's Situation ethics is a Christian ethical system because its bases are founded on the principle of Jesus the cause of Christianity. However the Catholic church rejects Situation ethics because it is too open to interpretation and too subjective. Situation ethics is Christian in the fact that it is in accordance with the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. Just because it has been rejected by the Catholic church does not mean it is not a Christian ethic.

Situation ethics is based on the absolutist principle that is 'do the most loving thing in any given situation'. This has strong similarities with the teaching of Jesus of which Fletcher has based his ethics on: 'Love thy neighbour as thyself'. Fletcher says that Love is intrinsically good especially agape because it is unconditional love. However the idea that an ethic should be based on doing the most loving thing is open to criticism since doing the most loving thing might not always be the right thing to do. Fletcher has however classified that the most loving thing is always the right thing to do.

Pope Pius XII rejected Situation ethics because it was too open to interpretation and too subjective. Also the Catholic church is founded on years of Dogma which has compiled so the church was not prepared to drastically change itself to be suited to an interpretative ethic. The Catholic church

bases many of its rules on secondary Precepts which are arrived at with the application of reason on Aquinas' primary Precepts from natural Law which are: Worship God, live in an ordered society, reproduce, learn or be educated and defend the innocent. So the Catholic church makes the rule that it is bad to have an abortion because you are not defending the innocent. Situation Ethics recognizes that in some situations it might be the most caring thing to do for example if the mother can not possible support her child economically. Situation ethic to the Catholic church seems to reject the word of God because there are no set rules other than 'do the most loving thing' Fletcher doesn't understand this rejection because his ethic is based on the word of Christ which is God as a human. ~~The~~ The view of the Catholic can be understood by rejecting Situation ethics because how do we know what the most loving thing is to do in any given situation, well the Catholic church believes this comes from the bible and the bible is the word of God which is the most loving thing since God is benevolent. Fletcher however does not entirely reject the bible and he understand that other principles can be learnt from the bible such as worship God



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but he believe that is secondary to the most important value which is 'do the most loving thing in any given situation':

The divine command theory challenges ~~the~~ ~~there~~ existence of God since it makes him either not benevolent or not omnipotent. The three problems that create this situation is The Arbitrary problem, the emptiness problem and the problem of Abhorrent commands.

~~They all suggest~~ The Euthyphro dilemma:

'Is it good because God commanded it or did God command it because it is good'

suggests that there could be morality other than God. This would be a problem for the Catholic/Christian Church but not for Situation ethic because you can still do the most loving thing regardless of the existence of God. This suggests that Situation ethics needs not be a Christian ethic but chooses to be which really shatter the idea of being a Christian ethical system.

Situation ethic is based on the teaching of Jesus therefore making it a Christian ethic since Christ is from God. The Euthyphro dilemma makes it seem as if it can still be a Christian ethic regardless of existence of God but since it is base in Christ it is supported. The Fact it is rejected by the Catholic church does not nullify the ethic either.

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### Examiner Comment

The essay begins well, giving some solid reasons why Situation Ethics should be considered as a Christian ethical system, particularly the claim that to do the most loving thing in any situation is arguably a clear summary of the practical approach shown by Jesus' *agape*. The candidate suggests that the rejection of Situation Ethics by the Roman Catholic Church is based on its preference for the rule-based system devised by Aquinas which now carries the weight of centuries of tradition. The candidate gives a rather perfunctory account of Divine Command Theory, mainly to show that it is subject to the problem of abhorrent commands, and to Euthyphro's dilemma. By contrast, those who follow Situation Ethics have no problem with this dilemma, since it is still possible to do the most loving thing regardless of the existence of God. The candidate then makes the useful point that Situation Ethics does not need to be a Christian ethic, but perhaps chooses to be, which (in effect) shatters the idea of its being a Christian system. The essay suffers from a rather narrow treatment of its points, but there is some critical engagement with the question, and this merits a Level 4.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 3

Joseph Fletcher is one of the main leading philosophers for Situation Ethics. Joseph Fletcher believes that Agape is the most important element to a dilemma and a way of life. He shares a similar belief and theme with Religion and Jesus of love being an absolute, however it was rejected by Pope Pius XI as it was too flexible. Perhaps an alternative recognised christian approach such as Natural Law shows a Christian ethical system.

Fletcher believed that there needed to be a balance between legalism, which was too rigid and harsh and antinomianism which was too flexible. He believed that in the middle there is Agape, and that you should follow guidelines and 'rules' but be prepared to break them to do the most loving thing. An action and situation is justified by the amount of love delivered from it. Such as he shows with example of a New York taxi driver; the taxi driver discusses his political views on their relative election and who they are both going to vote for, the taxi driver says he is going to put aside his principles and family traditions of voting for Republican and vote for Democratic instead, as he thought that right then that would be the most loving and right thing to do. This is argued to reflect the manner of Jesus. Jesus was prepared to break laws in order to do the most loving thing, as that is what he believed was the right thing to do. Situation Ethics provides 4 working principles, pragmatism, relativism, positivism and personalism. These are all the principles that Fletcher puts forward in order to tell when a situation is required of Agape and to break the rules. Fletcher also has 6 fundamental principles such as spread justice and Agape being an absolute. So like the church, he promotes love over all. However, even though there are basic working principles, the church requires stronger established guidelines and rules for their ethical system. Situation ethics is far too flexible and gives too much freedom to an individual. (We are less autonomous than this.) One could argue that this could be naive as this could justify any situation of that individual believed they were doing the

most loving thing. This is why it is not considered an Christian ethical system; it preaches similar views however is not strong enough.

A Christian ethical system shared the view of natural law as actual laws can be formed. Natural law believes that natural order has a purpose, that purpose was put there by God, God is good and therefore so is natural order. From this Aquinas believes that all man can deduce precepts by applying reason to inclinations. Humans could then see the primary precepts such as, preserve human nature, educate children, reproduction. From the primary precepts you can create laws such as no contraception or homosexuals as this breaks the precept of the purpose of reproduction, do not murder or rape as you need to preserve human life and send children to school as they need to be educated. These as a result are strong principles the Catholic Church hold. This ethical system is far more stricter and leaves less grey areas. This approach is far more straight forward.

This bringing up one of the faults with Situation Ethics, more rules are required for a Christian ethical system, more enforced guidelines. The comparison between Natural Law and Situation Ethics highlights why Situation Ethics can be given the view that it is not a Christian ethical system. Situation ethics is only consequentialist and therefore can give no structure or guidelines to future events, and can't give a structure or guidelines on how to live your life. With Natural law its believed as these precepts are seen through reason, and God put the purpose on the Earth, to follow the precepts is to follow God's will.



### Examiner Comment

This essay shows a reasonable understanding of the demands of the question, although the response is rather limited in depth. It gives a fair overview of Situation Ethics, and of Natural Law as another mainline Christian ethical theory, and it reaches an appropriate conclusion based on this comparison, namely that a consequentialist theory can give no structure or guidelines about future events. The quality of expression is often weak, however, and it really defends only one viewpoint, which restricts it to a top Level 3.



## Topic 3: Old Testament: Prophecy

<sup>10</sup> Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very centre of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. <sup>11</sup> For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,  
and Israel must go into exile  
away from his land.' "

<sup>12</sup> And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; <sup>13</sup> but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

<sup>14</sup> Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, <sup>15</sup> and the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

<sup>16</sup> "Now therefore hear the word of the Lord.  
You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel,  
and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'

<sup>17</sup> Therefore thus says the Lord:  
'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,  
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,  
and your land shall be parcelled out by line;  
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,  
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.' "

[Amos 7:10–17]

## Question 7 (a)

**Consider what this passage contributes to our understanding of Amos' message. [10]**

## Mark Scheme

Candidates may seek to place the text in its social historical and literary context. Reference to the reign of Jeroboam, which was long and prosperous (and thus associated in the popular mind with divine approval), to the long standing debate about the nature of prophecy and the prophet in this period and to textual analysis would all be relevant preparatory material for a response to the question. To the functionaries of the northern shrine, allegations of corruption would have been ludicrous, since current theology equated prosperity with divine approval.

Reflections on Amos' message might include reflections on Amos' claim to authority, his fearlessness in delivery of his prophecy, the judgemental message towards Amaziah, Bethel, professional prophets, the King, and other nations (branded as 'unclean'). The message of destruction for the Northern Kingdom which in this passage appears to be declared because of their rejection of Amos and his message – this is seen by Amos as a rejection of God since he believes himself to be the subject of divine election. Good candidates will identify what this passage contributes to our understanding and may also identify features which are absent from this passage.

Candidates could consider whether or not Amos functioned as a cultic/professional prophet. One view is that being taken from the flock signifies his rejection of being a *nabî* (7:14). Others take 7:14 to be in the past tense, with 7:15 being an admission by Amos that he has now assumed the status

of a *nabi*. Amaziah addresses Amos not as *nabi* but as *hozeh* – ‘seer’, which is confusing. Amos’ banishment to Judah seems to imply that Amos was a southerner and that Amaziah was telling him to go back there; but some suggest that he was perhaps in the employ of the northern royal shrine of Bethel, and was being banned for the crime of speaking against both the king and his royal shrine. In other words, the basis for understanding Amos’ message is not clear. The unit in 7:10-17 is stylistic, and is similar to other narratives in which the focus is the challenge to prophetic authority. It serves to show the basis for Amos’ authority, although whether or not it reflects historical fact is not known.



## Example Candidate Response – Level 5

According to this passage, Amos was a shepherd in Judah before God called him to prophecy in Israel. Amos ~~pre~~ prophesized about Israel's destruction by the Assyrian army, which would mark the beginning of Israel's exile. The shortened version of Amos' message is repeated by Amaziah to the ~~and to the~~ point King of Israel: "Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from the land." Jeroboam II was the King of Israel at that time, and Amos predicts the ~~king's~~ King's death "by the sword", which implies that the king would die in a struggle against the Assyrian army. And if the king dies in battle, usually the nation that killed the king would take over the dead king's nation, thus the destruction of Israel and take-over by Assyrian empire. "Israel must go into exile away from the land". "Exile" means that people in Israel would be scattered, forced to move to other places, away from their land — their "promised land" given to them. This "exile" would be Israel's punishment for refusing to acknowledge God and turning to other ~~the~~ Canite gods.

As mentioned before, Amos was not from Israel; he was a humble shepherd in Judah. This fact would have made a really bad impression to the people of Israel. ~~the~~ ~~Bad~~ Amaziah the priest is especially annoyed at Amos because in Amaziah's point-of-view, this lowly shepherd who is not even from Israel is uttering words of doom and destruction on Israel and its king. Amaziah is a priest, ~~someone~~ who was thought to have been appointed by God Himself, and had great authority and power. It would have been shockingly ~~surprising~~ surprising to him that this ~~stupid~~ uneducated Judean was proclaiming God's anger and punishment on God's chosen nation (because Israelites thought it was impossible that God would actually ~~allow~~ allow His own nation to be destroyed). The priest even calls Amos a "seer", and the way he ~~addresses~~ addresses and talks to Amos seems to be in a mocking if not a scornful manner. ~~Amaziah~~ Amaziah emphasizes that Amos has no right to be in this place, because it is a "sanctuary" and "temple of the kingdom".



Amos humbly admits that he is but a herdsman, BUT he brings in Yahweh's name. Amos tells of his commissioning by the LORD, and how Yahweh told him to prophesy. This is the ultimate authority and the weight to the authority is great. ✓

In verse 16, Amos repeats Amaziah words "Do not prophesy against Israel and do not preach against the house of Isaac". This statement goes directly against God's command to Amos "Go, prophesy to my people Israel". This means that Amaziah is acting against the very power of God Himself. ✓  
Amaziah's title as priest or his claim to be an important figure in "Bethel, the king's sanctuary, ~~and~~ and temple of the kingdom" is no match for the Holy One of Israel, Yahweh. ✓

So, Amos completely ignores Amaziah's sayings, and ~~goes straight~~ right away he starts prophesying again in verse 17. The words of the LORD in verse 17 foreshadows the coming events — the punishment of Israel because of the sins against God and humanity. Verse 17 might be directed towards Amaziah, but it also symbolizes the "doom" that is to come to the whole nation. ✓

"Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city". The women were carried off to different lands when nations were seized. This quote either means that women ~~are~~ are forced to sexual activities by the men ~~there~~ of the conquering nation, or it could mean that because there is no way that a woman could earn money and food, they ~~have~~ have no choice but to sell their bodies for ~~the~~ food and money. ✓

"Your sons and daughter shall fall by the sword." Many people will die. Innocent children will die. They will die "by the sword", a cruel way to die.

"Your land shall be parcelled out by line". When the Assyrians took over the northern kingdom, they purposely destroyed the land (sometimes with salt and other methods) so that nothing could grow from the land.

"You yourself shall die in an unclean land". "unclean land" means places outside the Holy Land, Israel. It was a devastating thing for a Jew not to be able to be



buried in the "promised land".

The whole family suffers – wife, children, the man himself.

The final ~~words~~ "and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land" concludes the final words of doom in this passage.

The whole purpose of Amos' message was exactly this – ~~to~~ to warn people about the ~~the~~ punishment that would surely come. Amos' message was indeed given to him by God, and ~~therefore~~ Amos can say it with authority because God gave him that authority

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### Examiner Comment

The candidate gives a reasonable description of the background to this extract, and goes on to make some useful points about Amos' message: the fact that Amos was from the South illustrates the antipathy towards that message felt by those who received it in the Northern Kingdom. Moreover, Amos' lowly status as a shepherd / tender of sycamore trees, contrasts with the exalted status of those to whom his condemnation was addressed, notably the king, Jeroboam, and the royal shrine headed by Amaziah. Amaziah in particular, considering himself to be appointed by God, would have been affronted by Amos' message of rejection and destruction. Amos nevertheless claims the ultimate authority for his message – he was commissioned by Yahweh. Where Amaziah forbids Amos to prophesy, he in fact contradicts Yahweh's commission to Amos, illustrating that Amos' message of doom is unavoidable – hence the prediction of Amaziah's fate, and the impending annexation of the North by Assyria. The knowledge is accurate, covers a fairly wide range of ideas, and is well expressed. The essay lacks deeper insights into the text, but merits a top Level 5.

## Question 7 (b)

**‘Amos spoke only words of doom.’ Critically assess this claim.****[15]**

## Mark Scheme

Candidates are expected to draw on information presented in part (a) but no credit for repetition. Candidates may consider the causes for words of doom – worship of other gods, hypocritical religiosity, corrupt religious leaders and hypocritical religious ceremonies, social injustice and oppression of the poor and the perversion of justice. He condemns social injustice in Judah and the surrounding pagan countries. He warns that there will be a day of judgement which will be a day of darkness for Israel because it has deserted God.

The issue of the last three or five verses of Amos has long been one of scholarly debate and candidates might be expected to draw on this whole debate. Is the text consistent in showing God to be not only just but also loving and forgiving? The small ray of hope in 7:1-6, 5:4-6 may be referred to by way of support for this view. Or is there reason to believe that these verses were added later? The book seems to have undergone a series of editings which candidates may show awareness of:

- \* the Book of Amos seems to have undergone an editing process as part of the Book of the Twelve, in which hopeful expansions to the text were a standard feature, which in turn suggests that they are intrusive to Amos’ message
- \* Jeremiah’s comment that ‘true’ prophets before him did not speak salvation oracles also suggests that 9:11-15 in Amos are post-exilic additions to the text
- \* the severity of the language in general suggests unmitigated doom (appropriate quotations selected by candidates).



## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

It is true that many of the prophets in the Old Testament spoke oracles of doom and destruction, and Amos is not excluded from this list. However, just like all of the other prophets, Amos does not only prophesy about Israel's impending doom, he also give God's promise of salvation and restoration.

In Amos, the first parts of the book is filled with the wrongdoings of the nations, and God's ~~po~~ punishment that would soon come because of the sins. Amos writes about God's ~~strong~~ anger towards moral, social and spiritual corruptness ~~are~~ apparent in all of the nations, even in His own Israel. He is also angered by ~~the~~ Israel and Judah's "adultery" of serving other Canite gods, and even says that He detests the sacrifices and prayers to Him by the people because He knows they are not pure but insincere. Amos particularly highlights the social injustice – for example, rich people exploiting the poor, adultery and incest, ~~and~~ and ~~many~~ the unfair and unjust trials, especially for widows and fatherless children.

And for all of this corruption and sin, Amos proclaims God's ~~judgment~~ judgment and punishment, and keeps reminding people that the judgments are looming – coming closer and closer. God's punishment will not be lifted, because their sins have gone too far to reverse the punishment. Amos even writes that even prayers and sacrifices will not stop the punishment from coming.

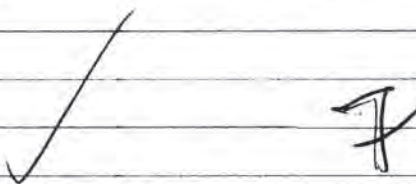
However, even in the midst of the ominous message and oracles of doom, God's unconditional love and forgiveness is evident. God loves His people, and continually asks them to come back to Him. This does not mean that He will not lift the punishments, however. The "doom" and "destruction" were brought by the people themselves. But, although the punishment is still coming, the LORD gives opportunities to the people to repent and come back to Him. If they do, God will forgive them and will postpone the punishment (notice that He will postpone, not get rid of). God, who has the ultimate



power, can push the punishment to a later time. Yet, if the people do not listen to the warning, the punishment will be imminent. ~~In this sense, the~~ In all of this, there is a hint of God's love, mercy, and forgiveness. The punishment He brings is only brought on the people by themselves.

On a much bigger scale, by the promise of Israel's redemption, God's promise of salvation and His unfailing love is shown. God promises that after the punishment is over, God will restore Israel, gather His people together, and reunite the two nations (Judah and Israel). In all of this, Yahweh reveals that He will surely faithful to His promises and His covenant with Israel's forefathers. The promise of restoration is not a word of doom, and shows that although the prophet Amos did speak "hellfire and damnation", God always inserts His promise of unfailing love and care, and His forgiveness for His people.

If prophets only spoke words of doom, there would be no hope of the recipients of the message — they would be better off to renounce their faith. But because the prophets do speak of God's goodness, love, and mercy, there is hope, and the message of doom shouldn't bring them down, but the message of redemption and restoration should serve to encourage people to remain pure and faithful to God.



### Examiner Comment

The candidate begins with the comment that doom oracles were common in OT prophecy, but Amos, in common with others, includes salvation oracles in his message. The candidate summarizes the catalogue of wrongdoing levelled by Amos against Israel – moral and social corruption, manifested by social injustice and religious decay, for all of which the punishment cannot be lifted. The element of salvation oracle is contained in the occasional message that Israel should return to Yahweh, followed by a concluding promise of restoration after punishment. The candidate displays a limited level of critical awareness here, with no acknowledgement of the general opinion that the concluding salvation oracle is an editorial addition. Nevertheless, the conclusion, that without that element the recipients of Amos' message would be better off by renouncing their faith, is a fair point. The selection of ideas and concepts is reasonable, if limited, and there is a degree of critical engagement. This is a Level 4 response.



## Question 8

**Critically examine the theme of messianic hope in Second Isaiah, Micah and Malachi. [25]**

## Mark Scheme

The message of the coming Messiah is not totally consistent in the three books cited and candidates may attempt to offer some historical, social and literary context for each work. Candidates are expected to be able to identify and comment upon the key texts concerning the messianic hope.

Second Isaiah is an exilic prophet. In Deutero-Isaiah the key passages are the suffering servant passages including 52:13-53:12. The historical context is the exile and these passages are ones of hope for forgiveness of Israel and return from exile. Debate concerns the identity and paradoxical nature of the suffering servant – whether this is an individual or Israel herself, the servant is chosen by God – which connects the messianic tradition historically to the monarchy and to the prophetic tradition. The nature of the Messiah is to suffer. This picture of vicarious suffering is a unique feature of the Messiah in these passages and echoes the roll of the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement. The Messiah is not a priest but has a priestly function. It is due to this willingness to take on the burden of innocent suffering that there is hope. It is a messianic hope of salvation and has a universal element (52:14-15).

Micah was a pre-exilic 8th century BCE prophet but the text is complex with a series of editors. In Micah the key passage is 5:2-4 in which both the exile and the return from exile are anticipated. The Messiah will belong to the family of David, and will thus be associated with the monarchy as well as the priesthood. He will come out of Bethlehem, and will restore the fortunes of Israel and Judah but the message is one of universal relevance. His greatness will extend to the ends of the earth and he will bring peace and security to all people.

In Malachi the messianic hope is found in 3:1-4. This is a post exilic work probably 460 BCE. The temple has been rebuilt and still there is injustice. The 'messiah' is referred to as a 'messenger' from God, but it may be that a theophany of Mt Sinai variety is anticipated. The message will be delivered from the Temple and will involve renewal of covenant and priesthood.

Reflections on the divergence in the Hebrew Scriptures regarding this hope may be found. Themes such as the universality of the messianic hope, associations with the house of David, Jerusalem and priesthood may be expected as well as reflections on the function of the Messiah.

## Example Candidate Response – Level 4

In the days of kings and the prophets, Israel was straying away from their faith, turning away from Yahweh who brought them out of Egypt ~~and~~ to the promise land which ~~flowed~~ overflowed with milk and honey. Instead, the Israelites turned to Canaanite gods, especially Baal. And because His chosen people had not acknowledged ~~to~~ Him and was unfaithful to Him, the LORD Yahweh sent his prophets to speak warnings against the Israelites that destruction would come soon if they did not repent. The prophets spoke oracles of doom – how Israel and Judah would fall, fire from heaven would come down on them, and their enemies would destroy their land and scatter their people. ~~However~~ However, because Yahweh is a good and forgiving God, He promised salvation and restoration of Israel. And part of His restoration plan was ~~to be~~ to be fulfilled through the "Messiah", the savior from King David's line who would come to save them.

The "Day of the Lord" and the "Messiah" – these promises were given to the people by Yahweh through the prophets, particularly through Isaiah, Micah and Malachi, the writing prophets. These prophets spoke of "the Day of the Lord", the day when God Himself would come to earth. Israelites heard this and believed that this is the day that God would judge other nations and make Israel above all of them in authority and power. And by "Israel", they meant the reunited "Israel", which God had also promised. Judah and Israel wouldn't be separated ~~into~~ nations, but one. The prophets spoke of this "Day" where God would show his ultimate power and ~~give~~ His "chosen nation" would be victorious over all other nations.

However, there are some misconceptions of the Jews about the "Day". ~~God~~ Yes, God would come gloriously and victoriously to earth, but Israel would be judged first before the other nations. Some people believed that the "Day of the Lord" is the second coming of Christ. However, this Day could also signify the coming of the Messiah himself, because Christ did indeed rise victoriously and saved all of us from sure eternal death. The "Day" is a fulfillment day where God fulfills all of his promises.



The second part of the Messianic hope in the writings of the prophets is the Messiah himself. In Second-Isaiah, (Isaiah 40-55), there are sections which are called "servant songs", writings about the Messiah. In these servant songs, Isaiah prophesies about the coming "King" who would be the ultimate king over Israel. According to tradition, this Messiah would save Israel from other nations, lead the people against other powers, and lead Israel victoriously in battle and free Israel from oppression from other nations for good.

But of course, this is the traditional Jewish version of the Messianic hope. A closer look at Second-Isaiah's servant songs reveal that the "Christ" or the "Messiah" does not lead revolts, but saves humanities from spiritual death.

In the servant songs, God calls the Messiah "my servant". This word "servant" doesn't mean the servant we know today - one that serves and is inferior to the one he serves. Instead, it means "trusted envoy" or "confidential representative", which is what Jesus Christ was.

There are 4 parts of the servant songs. The first two parts are rich in praise and glory of the Messiah who would come from the "line of David", from the city of Bethlehem (David's home town). This shows that the Messiah would have a humble beginning, which goes contrary to the Jewish tradition that the Messiah would be royal, in the sense that he would be born in a kingly fashion. These two songs perfectly match up with the "glory", "awe" and "victory" also found in Micah and Malachi and other prophetic writings. These show that the Messiah will indeed arise gloriously, just like God will in the Day of the Lord. These are the promises that the Jews held onto so dearly - that God would rescue them. However, the sad thing is that they failed to recognize the "King" that God sent, as predicted by Isaiah in the last two



parts of the servant songs.

✓ The two last ~~of~~ songs of the servant songs predict the suffering of the Christ. And it also prophesizes that ~~these~~ those people waiting for the Messiah ~~will~~ will not recognize him, and instead, they will be the cause of the Christ's suffering.

✓ Here, in the last two songs, it reveals the Messiah's ultimate purpose of coming into this world. His purpose was not to lead Israel against its physical enemies and to be their physical king who would sit on the throne made by people. Instead, it was to save humanity from its true enemy, Satan, and to lead people into salvation and ~~and~~ rescue them from eternal death. This was to be accomplished through the "sacrifice" of the Holy Lamb, Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who didn't have any sin or any inclination of it, would act as our "interceder" for the sins of the world, be our "unblemished" and holy ~~sacrifice~~ sacrifice, and die an innocent death that would bring about a new covenant with God. In this sense, he did not "save" Israel from other enemies like Cyrus did (another man prophesized by Isaiah, who would rescue Israel), but he gave salvation and was victorious over death and sin — and he gave us this gift to us as well. And unlike what the Jews believed, Jesus Christ the Messiah would be king and savior for everyone (not just Jews), because he would be the "light for the Gentiles and to the ends of the earth".

✓ ~~But~~ But of course, in order to do this, the Messiah would endure pain and hardships. Isaiah 53:5 says "But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed by our iniquities; ~~the~~ the punishment for the ~~our~~ peace ~~that~~ he endured, and through Him we are saved."



### Examiner Comment

The candidate identifies the prophetic messianic material in general as an element of salvation amidst the prevalent mode of doom oracles. The messianic material is associated with themes like the Day of the Lord, which draws together themes of universal judgement and the restoration of Israel. The candidate applies this to Jesus, although no evidence is offered for this interpretation. The candidate gives a generalised account of the messianic material in Second Isaiah, concluding with the statement that the messiah here saves humanity from spiritual death. Here the candidate does argue that the Servant figure refers to a 'trusted envoy', or 'confidential representative', which facilitates the identification with Jesus. Some links are made with Micah and Malachi, for example in the 'glory'/'awe'/'victory' of the Messiah. The bulk of the rest of the essay is a largely confessional identification of the Messiah with Jesus and with later Christian theology. For the most part, the response is accurate and relevant, and merits a good Level 4.





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