



## **GENERAL COMMENTS**

The 2011 Philosophy examination required students to have a detailed understanding of the set texts and a strong grasp of the basic skills of analysing and evaluating arguments. Every question on this year's paper required students to explicitly refer to the set texts. Although most students demonstrated a sufficient grasp of the concepts, arguments and viewpoints expressed in the set texts, some students did not have an accurate or detailed understanding of these concepts, arguments and viewpoints. This was particularly the case with Weil and Nietzsche. Many students also struggled with those arguments which are not the 'big arguments' within the texts. It was, however, pleasing to see that most students recognised the significance of evaluation; although these evaluations were not always successful, the process of evaluation appeared to be understood.

### **Areas of strength and weakness**

#### **Strengths**

- Most students were able to answer most, or all, of the examination questions.
- Most students provided appropriate evaluations of arguments and viewpoints.
- Many students demonstrated a good understanding of Hume and the texts studied in previous years.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Although students were able to answer most, or all, of the questions, many responses demonstrated only a basic understanding of the concepts, arguments and viewpoints expressed in the set texts. For example, a significant number of students could only provide a vague outline of Weil's needs and demonstrated only a superficial understanding of the key concepts in Nietzsche's work.
- Students' understanding of the concepts, arguments and viewpoints expressed in the new Unit 3 texts was sometimes inaccurate. A significant number of students confused Nietzsche's idea of the noble morality with the 'future' morality and described the nobles as *ubermensche*, and Weil's idea of order was often defined as social order and her notion of liberty as the capacity to 'do what you want'. It was also noted that many students still inaccurately claimed that Nietzsche's views are necessarily hedonistic.
- While many students could accurately describe the 'big arguments' in the set texts, they sometimes struggled with others. This was particularly the case with Question 1 of Section A, in which students were able to accurately describe the 'leaky jars' argument but struggled to provide sufficient detail for other examples/arguments. Similarly, in Question 2 of Section A, many students simply discussed the Mean in further detail, rather than identifying the guidelines.
- Although students generally performed well in terms of answering the questions correctly, some students still did not do as the question asked. This was particularly the case with the Aristotle question in Section A (as noted above) and with the questions in Section D. In the case of the latter, many students provided expositions of the philosophers' arguments but did not explicitly relate them to the question asked or did so in a cursory way.
- While the majority of students recognised the need to evaluate arguments when asked and understood the process of evaluation, a number of students were uncertain of exactly what to evaluate. This was particularly the case with the Weil question in Section A and the second question in Section D.
- Students and teachers are reminded of the importance of having an accurate understanding of the key concepts associated with the set texts. As well as displaying an inaccurate understanding of Nietzsche's noble morality, a number of students also appeared to struggle with concepts relating to Section C of the exam, in particular, inductivism.



## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

**Note:** Student responses reproduced herein have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information

### Section A

#### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	10	22	26	25	17	2.2

Arguments that could be offered against the view that the good life is a life of pleasure include the following.

- The leaky jars: Socrates uses this analogy to demonstrate to Callicles that a life spent pursuing desire is terrifying rather than pleasurable.
- The gully bird and the life of itching and scratching: Socrates uses these examples to highlight the meaninglessness of a life spent fulfilling desire.
- The catamite (male prostitute): This example is used by Socrates to show Callicles that a life of pleasure is not necessarily a good life.
- The example of thirst: In the moment of quenching thirst we feel both pleasure and distress. Because we can feel these two things simultaneously (and both are simultaneously lost) they cannot be opposites, like good and bad, thus pleasure is neither good nor bad. Socrates uses this argument to demonstrate that pleasure is not the same as good.
- The coward and the brave man: In battle, both cowards and brave men feel pleasure at the enemy's retreat. Socrates uses this argument to demonstrate that to feel pleasure does not equate to being good or having a good life.

Possible points for evaluation

- As Callicles points out, although it may be true that a life of pleasure requires the never-ending pursuit of desire, this isn't necessarily terrifying. Indeed, it can be what makes the life of pleasure so enjoyable.
- How adequate are Socrates' analogies and examples? Why should we necessarily assume that the jar of the pleasure seeker leaks? Is it true that when quenching thirst pleasure and distress co-exist or is one lost as the other is gained?
- In the case of the catamite and the coward and the brave man, the argument only works if we accept (as Callicles does) that the life of a catamite and a coward are necessarily bad. If it can be demonstrated that this is not the case then both arguments fall down.

Most students were able to identify at least one of the arguments against Callicles' view. While the leaky jars was popular and generally well-understood, many students were unable to provide a second argument or to move beyond simply identifying an argument ('the life of itching and scratching'). A large number of students cited Callicles' claim that the life Socrates is advocating is that of 'a stone or corpse'. This response was only considered acceptable if the student provided further development; for example, by providing some argument as to why such a life could be considered as akin to a stone or corpse.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to provide two of Socrates' arguments against Callicles' view and a developed evaluation (an evaluative point or points and reasons to support them) against one of these arguments.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Firstly, Socrates argues that the good life is not a life of pleasure with the argument from opposites. He reasons that because good and bad are opposites, and because opposites cannot co-exist, then pleasure and pain, which he claims can co-exist (e.g. drinking when thirsty), are neither good nor bad. Secondly, Socrates argues that when pursuing a life of pleasure one's mind is in an unstable and erratic state akin to a leaky jar, not capable of retaining any fulfilment. I disagree with Socrates' leaky jar argument because Callicles' claim that the continual pursuit of desires is the good life necessitates the conclusion that it is this very act of having continual desires fulfilled that is good. Socrates fails to address this point.*

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## Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	41	22	21	10	6	1.2

- Aristotle's guidelines at the end of Book II include: choose the lesser evil, as one vice is always more erroneous than the other; we should drag ourselves away from what we are naturally inclined to choose (as we are more inclined to choose the more erroneous vice); and guard against pleasure.
- Elsewhere in the text Aristotle recommends that we follow the example of the virtuous man and do as the virtuous man would do.

### Possible points for evaluation

- If virtue is a matter of habituation, as Aristotle claims, surely there is a risk that by erring towards the lesser evil we will cultivate the habit of the lesser evil rather than the Mean.
- How can I be sure that my natural inclinations are predisposed to choose the more erroneous extreme? What if I am actually brave and misinterpret my actions as rash?
- In guarding against pleasure we run the risk of erring towards boorishness, which Aristotle identifies as a vice.
- For the example of the virtuous man to be of any use, we need to actually know who the virtuous man is and what the virtuous man would do – which seems to suggest that we already have a good knowledge of virtuous action.

Many students appeared to find this question challenging. A significant number of students simply described the Mean or how the Mean is found and a large number of students, rather than providing two guidelines, described the Mean in two different ways.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to accurately identify and describe two of the guidelines and provide developed evaluations for each.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response. Although the expression is a little confusing, the content is excellent.

*One of the guidelines he proposes is that we should take the 'lesser of the evils'. Hence it is preferable to lean towards rashness than cowardice because it is closer to courage. This is difficult though because if the 'lesser of two evils' is the vice closer to the mean, then it is even more challenging to achieve the mean itself since it is easily replaced by the closer vice. A second guideline Aristotle offers is that we should stay away from the vice that gives us the most pleasure, since we cannot treat pleasure in an objective way. The implication of this is that those individuals who are not habituated at a young age to enjoy virtuous acts will be going against the vice they find pleasurable, making it difficult for them to find the mean since it is contradictory to their nature.*

## Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	24	30	35	1.9

- *Ressentiment* is the resentment (jealousy, hostility, hatred, envy, etc.) felt by the slave towards his master. It may also be understood as a deep-seated resentment or disgust towards one's own feelings.
- The slave morality results when this *ressentiment* turns creative and produces morality.

In general, students were able to provide an accurate response to this question. Most students had a clear understanding of the term *ressentiment*; however, some students struggled to describe its role in the slave morality and instead simply described slave morality. Such responses could not be awarded full marks.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to provide an accurate definition of *ressentiment* and describe the role it plays in the production of slave morality.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Ressentiment entails a deep seated resentment of the strong types, by which one comes to condemn not only the nobles themselves, but all the attributes of self-determined, life-affirming strength they embody. Slave morality is born out of resentment, a reactive morality defined by the condemnation of the strong and a reflective praise of weakness, compassion and other 'life-denying' ideals.*

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## Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	23	25	26	15	11	1.7

### Order

- ‘A texture of social relationships such that no one is compelled to violate imperative obligations in order to carry out other ones.’ An absence of order results in ‘spiritual violence’, which arises from our love of the good and our compulsion to do the right thing. Weil does not believe there is a method for diminishing the incompatibility of obligations and says that the idea of a situation in which conflict doesn’t exist is perhaps a fiction because ‘when duty descends to the level of facts so many independent relationships are brought into play.’ The impossibility of total order should not be cause for resignation, however, as there is great value in striving for this ideal.

### Possible points for evaluation

- It would be fair to say that, in general, people do seem to suffer from something akin to ‘spiritual violence’ when they are confronted by a conflict of obligation. Often we can become paralysed by anxiety in such situations. Weil’s other suggestions about our response to such a conflict also ring true. Often our response to such anxiety is to make no decision at all – to ‘see what happens’.
- Weil claims there is no method for diminishing the incompatibility of obligations. This means we have a need that cannot truly be met because the nature of our existence prohibits it. This seems problematic – how can we be motivated by something that is impossible to attain?

### Liberty

- The capacity to make meaningful choices. These choices are to be made within a framework of limited rules understandable to the common man in both content and purpose, and which emanate from a source of authority belonging to the people. Weil does not see the existence of such rules as contradictory to liberty as she believes that, without rules, humans either seek refuge in irresponsibility or become crippled by responsibility and conclude that liberty is a bad thing. Weil believes only those lacking in goodwill or who remain ‘adolescent’ find such rules oppressive.

### Possible points for evaluation

- The evidence would suggest that liberty is a ‘need of the soul’. Generations of people from different countries and cultures have fought and died for it.
- That said, the denial of liberty often goes hand in hand with other forms of degradation and suffering, so perhaps what people fight against is not the denial of liberty but physical persecution, mental torture, a loss of family and culture, etc.
- Weil says that liberty is coextensive with rules. This seems to make sense as well-chosen rules operate to increase our liberty by limiting the liberty of others. The problem remains as to what these rules should be and how we find a balance between impinging on people’s liberty and securing it. On this front, Weil’s prescriptions are very vague.

### Equality

- The recognition that every human being is due the same amount of respect and consideration by right of their humanity (in other words, it is unconditional). Natural differences between individuals should not imply differences in respect. Weil also notes that the way in which society is constructed conspires to produce a lack of respect – equality of opportunity can produce feelings of inadequacy as well as aspiration, both of which can produce a lack of social fluidity. To balance this out, Weil suggests that jobs which have greater responsibility/prestige should carry greater personal risk. Weil also mentions the correlation of income to value as another source of inequality.

### Possible points for evaluation

- Again, there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that equality is a ‘need of the soul’ – many people have risked their lives to secure it – however, it could also be understood as a social product. The prevalence of this idea in the modern West could be used as evidence to support such a claim. Perhaps equality is not a ‘need of the soul’ but simply an artificially constructed human idea – supported by the fact that other cultures don’t place a high significance on equality – how could it be a need of the soul if a whole lot of people show no need for it?



- Although it seems difficult to argue with Weil's description of equality, it does seem to create a conflict with some of the other claims Weil makes in the text, such as her approval of capital punishment (although Weil views such punishment as a manifestation of respect).
- It is doubtful whether Weil's prescriptions for redressing social imbalance are realistic. Already people understand that certain important jobs, such as CEO positions, carry significant risks yet they are still considered prestigious and pursued accordingly.

## Punishment

- Weil considers punishment a 'vital need of the human soul'. By committing a crime, an individual puts themselves outside the chain of eternal obligation. Punishment, especially with the consent of the offender, returns the individual to it. For this need to be satisfied, the penal code must not merely be a method for exercising pressure through fear and must 'wear a consecrated and solemn aspect'. The type of punishment meted out to the criminal should accord with the kind of obligation that has been transgressed and it should both wipe out the stigma of the crime and serve as a form of education, compelling the offender to a 'higher devotion to public good'. According to Weil, the severity of punishment should decrease as it moves down the social scale.

## Possible points for evaluation

- Is punishment really a 'need of the soul'? Many offenders actively avoid punishment. If punishment is a need of the soul, why do we spend so much time trying to avoid it? Our avoidance may suggest it isn't a need of the soul at all. Even young children will try to hide their misbehaviour.
- Weil claims that punishment can bring the offender back into the chain of eternal obligation. However, punishment as it currently exists tends to do the opposite – the vast majority of criminals re-offend. Of course a counter-argument could be raised that this doesn't point to the ineffectuality of punishment as a tool of 'educating' the offender and returning them to the chain of eternal obligation; rather, the problem could lie with the methods we use. This highlights a further problem of Weil's argument. How much punishment is required and what must its nature be to redeem the criminal?
- Weil's claims regarding capital punishment don't seem to work. How would capital punishment re-educate the offender and return them to the chain of obligation? It would seem that Weil needs to clarify her notion of punishment – while she appears to be espousing an idea of punishment-as-rehabilitation, ideas of retribution seem to be creeping in and compromising her claims.

## Freedom of opinion

- Weil claims that 'complete, unlimited freedom of expression for every sort of opinion... is an absolute need on the part of the intelligence' and that without it the soul becomes sick. Weil outlines three ways the intelligence is exercised: through problems of a technical nature, in the act of choice and in theoretical speculation. She claims that when the soul is healthy it exercises each of these three ways in turn with different degrees of freedom – only in the case of the last should the intelligence be in possession of 'sovereign liberty'. Weil extends this belief to society and claims that it is therefore desirable that the press be granted 'free reserve' as long as it is understood that the works they produce do not pledge their authors in any way or contain direct advice. Works intended to influence public opinion, however, should be bound by particular law. If a writer publishes written matter contrary to moral principles recognised in law and which later become influential, that writer must go on the record saying the work does not express a personal attitude or be punished or discredited. Once an individual sets out to influence public opinion that individual can no longer claim to exercise unlimited freedom, as intellectual freedom, according to Weil, requires a corresponding protection against suggestion. Thus the government should rigorously control propaganda and, Weil adds, offences against moral principles and that which is base in tone or thought, in bad taste, or which is vulgar should be recognised and controlled. Weil goes on to claim that only individuals, and not groups, can claim freedom of opinion. Indeed, Weil claims that groups should actively be prohibited from expressing freedom of opinion because when this does not happen the freedom of the individual is curtailed, resulting in spiritual violence to that individual. A necessary extension of this claim is to abolish political parties. Finally, Weil suggests a distinction needs to be drawn between associations concerned with interests (wages, etc.) and ideas. She says associations for promoting ideas need to be subject to two conditions – excommunication cannot be applied and recruitment is voluntary. In this way, Weil hopes to preserve the individual's freedom of opinion.

## Possible points of evaluation

- Weil's initial claim regarding freedom of opinion seems at odds with her myriad of prescriptions.





- Weil seems to believe it is possible to very easily separate texts that do not contain direct advice from ones that do. Surely in reality this is far more difficult? Also, how are we to always distinguish the intentions of the text from the interpretations of the reader?
- Weil's beliefs regarding the kinds of opinions that should be curtailed fall prey to being subjective. Thus it would seem impossible to take these ideas beyond the realm of theory.

Many students found this question challenging. Responses often demonstrated a superficial understanding of the needs and the outlines were often couched in the vaguest terms or were simply inaccurate or tautological. For example, order was often described in terms of an 'orderly society', liberty was often defined simply as 'freedom to do what you want' and punishment and freedom of opinion were described as 'the need to be punished' and 'the freedom to express opinions' respectively. Students also appeared to struggle to evaluate the needs. Rather than evaluating Weil's dual claims that each need is a 'need of the soul' and that its absence creates 'spiritual violence', students often just gave reasons for why we might prefer; for example, liberty or order. Such responses could not be awarded full marks.

To receive full marks for this question students needed to provide an accurate outline of two of the identified needs (outlines did not require as much detail as given above) and develop evaluations for each.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Weil claims that all citizens are entitled to freedom of opinion to some extent, and moreover it is an essential part of any open and flourishing society. However she argues that if one's intention is to spread ideas which could manipulate or influence others, restrictions on one's freedom of opinion ought to apply. I consider that Weil's claim is flawed in the sense that if all those who want to express an opinion are restricted by the state, how will ordinary citizens establish a view that is considerate of all opinions on disputed issues? Weil also argues that punishment of criminals is necessary to restore their disordered soul and should 'foster a sense of justice' amongst criminals. Moreover, those in positions of power ought to be punished more than a person of lesser status if they commit a crime. I consider that Weil's view of punishment fails to consider the physical and mental harm that many punishments can have on people, and will do anything but restore their soul to order and if fact make them more despondent, e.g. criminals kept in isolation in cramped and primitive prisons.*

## Section B

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	9	14	25	28	23	2.5

- The noble morality is 'pre-moral'. According to Nietzsche it grows spontaneously and proceeds from a robust 'yes-saying' to life. It is the morality of the 'masters'.
- The slave morality develops reactively to the noble morality, when *ressentiment* turns creative and gives birth to morality. The slave morality is aligned with the first Christians who were slaves under the Roman Empire.
- Socrates may view Nietzsche's nobles as synonymous to Callicles' strong, therefore claiming that as the masses will always be stronger than a single man, the nobles can hardly be considered superior.
- Socrates might also accuse the nobles, who respond according to their impulses, as being without restraint. Such a morality could not be superior for it will necessarily produce distress (and a disordered mind).
- Along these lines, Socrates might also claim that, because the nobles' morality accords with what they like/don't like, they will not be able to delineate between what is truly right and wrong and might agree with Callicles that it is better to do wrong than suffer it. Such a view jeopardises the wellbeing of the soul and therefore could not be considered superior.

Students generally performed well on this question. Most were able to define the noble and slave moralities and accurately describe how Socrates might respond to the view that the noble morality is superior. Some students, however, provided answers which demonstrated a poor understanding of Nietzsche's thought. For example, the noble morality was often described as the morality of the *Urbemensch*, and some students claimed that Socrates would be critical of the noble morality because it promotes rapacious desire, thereby confusing the noble morality with hedonism.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to provide accurate definitions of the noble and slave moralities and plausibly describe how Socrates might respond to Nietzsche's claims and why.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Nietzsche draws a distinction between the healthy nobles, who live with the values of vitality and life affirmation, and the slaves, who are reactive and resentful, denying the essence of life for a notion of good and evil. Nietzsche advocates the life of the nobles*

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*on the basis of their psychological freedom and capacity to self-legislate, to choose what they want. Socrates would suggest that the nobles are indicative of a life that lacks restraint and balance. A good life as Socrates suggests is one of order and discipline and the complete freedom of the nobles denies this.*

## Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	9	9	16	21	24	13	9	3.2

- For Aristotle, happiness is *eudaemonia*, a state of flourishing that may otherwise be described as 'living well and faring well'. This state is achieved when we fulfil our unique function to a degree of excellence. One of the ways we can do this is in the field of virtue which requires us to use our critical faculties to find the Mean in a given situation.
- Aristotle describes happiness as something which shares the characteristics of the chief good: all else is done for its sake; it is achieved in praxis; it is the most final good; it is pursued for its own sake and not for the sake of something else; it is self-sufficient.
- Although Aristotle believes that happiness is not a matter of good fortune, there are things, such as good looks, good children, friends, political power and wealth, which facilitate it.
- Aristotle also describes happiness as a good of the soul.
- Weil does not explicitly talk about happiness in her text. However, she does give us some understanding of what constitutes human fulfilment. For Weil, to be fulfilled requires the fulfilment of physical and spiritual needs. This involves the recognition of each human being as sharing a common eternal destiny. It might also be assumed that fulfilment also comes through exercising our obligations to ourselves and others.

Students did not need to include all of the above points in their response.

### Possible points for comparison

- Both Weil and Aristotle recognise human flourishing as synonymous with fulfilment; however, what constitutes this as flourishing is different for each.
- Weil's and Aristotle's ideas on flourishing are intimately tied to their views of human beings' nature, but they differ on what this nature is. For Aristotle our nature is defined by our capacity to reason, for Weil it has to do with our 'eternal destiny' – a kind of essential humanness.
- Although both Aristotle and Weil recognise the importance of action to achieve fulfilment (for Aristotle happiness exists in praxis; for Weil our obligations are things we are required to act on), this is more completely the case with Aristotle, for *eudaemonia* cannot be divorced from action. For Weil, fulfilment is brought about not only through our own actions, but also through those actions done by others for us (fulfilment of our needs).
- Further to this point, in the case of Aristotle, fulfilment is more completely in the hands of the individual, whereas in the case of Weil, fulfilment is in some respects dependent on the actions of others.
- Both Weil (through the notion of the needs as antithetical pairs) and Aristotle (via the Mean) see fulfilment as tied in with balance.
- Both Weil's and Aristotle's views of fulfilment tie in to views about virtuous action.

Most students performed reasonably well on this question. Generally, students were able to accurately describe Aristotle's views regarding happiness and human fulfilment; however, describing Weil's views appeared more challenging. A number of students, rather than providing a comparison of the views, simply evaluated each view. As this kind of response did not address the needs of the question, it could not be awarded full marks.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to outline the views of Aristotle and Weil and provide some critical comparison of these views. Alternatively, students could provide a critical comparison of the views within their comparison and demonstrate an understanding of each philosopher's views on happiness/human fulfilment.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Aristotle believes that human fulfilment was exercising reason in the field of virtue by using the mean to find the appropriate way to act in accordance to the vices of excess and deficiency. Whilst it is difficult to become virtuous, one who has achieved virtue through a whole life time lives the good life, that person is fulfilled. Weil's view differs to Aristotle's as it distinguishes between needs and virtues. She believed that it was by meeting our earthly needs that we live a good life. This is achieved by finding a balance between two needs rather than finding the mean. For example, eating and resting/not eating, rather than finding a mean between rashness and cowardly behaviour: courage. The views differ as they concern different questions. Aristotle could argue*



*that it is by becoming virtuous and using the mean that leads to human fulfilment. Whereas Weil would suggest human fulfilment is respecting all human beings and fulfilling this obligation through the needs.*

## Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	11	8	16	21	20	23	3

This question required students to identify a contemporary debate regarding how we should live and to discuss it in terms of arguments and viewpoints expressed in at least two of the set texts. Overwhelmingly, students chose to focus on issues relating to consumer culture, corporate greed and the distribution of wealth. The recent 'Occupy' protests also featured heavily amongst student responses.

Students generally performed well on this question and were able to draw clear connections between the selected debate and the arguments and viewpoints expressed in the set texts. However, a number of students simply identified and discussed an issue explored in the set texts (for example, the pursuit of desire) without connecting it to a contemporary debate regarding how we should live. Such answers could not be awarded full marks.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to identify at least one debate and provide a plausible discussion on how the arguments and viewpoints expressed in the set texts might comment on this debate.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*These texts are studied to this day for the simple fact that they have remained just as pertinent today as they have ever been. An issue such as illegal immigration may have the set extracts of both Aristotle and Weil to offer by way of guidance. In Weil's eyes, the recognition of one's shared humanity with an immigrant, and the subsequent recognition of one's obligations to the wellbeing of that person is tantamount to a harmonious interaction. Likewise, Aristotle would condemn the notion that one may do with an illegal immigrant as they wish, as excessive shows of aggression or deficits in compassion are both points of departure from what Aristotle regards as a flourishing human being.*

## Section C

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	7	11	21	28	19	13	2.8

Yes, Hume agrees with Russell that we may be in no better a position than the chicken. Hume believes that, like the chicken, we use past experience to predict the future. This inference is based on the flawed belief that the future will always conform to the past and that when two events occur one after another a causal relationship exists between these events. For Hume, this has no rational ground and so 'begs the question'.

Possible points for evaluation

- We might query Hume's dismissal of the observation of uniformity as grounds for assuming a causal relationship and predicting the future. Although uniformity doesn't mean that a state of affairs will continue *ad infinitum*, perhaps it still counts for something. After all, Hume's claim that it doesn't is based on his other claim that cause and effect are merely psychological. Uniformity may suggest that, rather than psychology, we simply do not understand the nature of cause and effect at this point in time.
- Popper's criticism of Hume runs similarly to the above. While it would be irrational to grant authority to any belief, this is not necessarily true for those beliefs that have been robustly tested, which have survived attempts at falsification and which are critically accepted/acknowledged as provisional.
- Whatever the theoretical conundrums of inductive reasoning, it is something we use every day and is how we learn to navigate our world. So while Hume may be justified in his criticism, it is also worth noting his later remarks that we would be mad to ignore it.

When answering this question, most students recognised that Hume would agree with Russell and provided reasons as to why. However, some students, rather than discussing the crucial issue of induction, instead focused on describing the problem of cause and effect. Such responses could not receive full marks.

To receive full marks for this question students needed to explicitly identify that Hume would agree with Russell and, drawing on the set text and in particular the problem of induction, explain why. Students then needed to provide a developed evaluation of Hume's argument.





The following is an example of a high-scoring response. Although it is somewhat convoluted in terms of expression, the student has touched upon all of the required elements.

*Hume would certainly agree with Russell that there is no way to be certain of 'matters of fact', as he puts it (things known from experience). These are based on the relationship between cause and effect, this relationship is learned posteriori (after the fact) rather than a priori (before experience). A person can never determine that a billiard ball colliding with another will cause the second ball to move without prior experience. If that is the case and we only learn the relationship via experience this implies that we learn it through habit or custom. And as Bertrand Russell suggests as there is no definitive uniformity principle that ensures the future will resemble the past then we cannot make inferences from experience that similar effects will follow from similar causes in the future and no matter of fact is certain. The sun may not rise tomorrow as the secret powers in nature may change. This is very sceptical and leaves little certainty with the world. Surely the knowledge that we cannot trust anything past the present testimony of our senses is not helpful i.e. do I trust that when I go home tonight that it will be in the same position as yesterday? Life would be too hard if we didn't trust matters of fact.*

## Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	14	11	19	18	18	13	7	2.8

- Unlike the chicken that bases its beliefs on confirmation and therefore expects uniformity in the farmer's behaviour, the scientist works from the principle of falsification, only accepting (provisionally) a theory that has been genuinely tested.
- Scientific thinking is characterised by a critical attitude which only accepts (provisionally) theories which have withstood multiple attempts at falsification. The behaviour of the chicken is more akin to the dogmatic attitude, in that it bases its approach on confirmation.

Students only need to discuss one of the above points.

## Possible points for evaluation

- A number of theorists have questioned the accuracy of Popper's account of science, claiming that, rather than proceeding via a process of conjecture and refutation, science instead proceeds via confirmation. Thus scientific thinking is really not so different from the thinking of the chicken.
- Critics have also argued that if science did in fact operate as Popper suggests, many theories which are widely considered scientific would be discounted and the field of science would be dramatically narrowed.

Most students were able to describe how Popper's view of scientific thinking was different to that of the chicken, but had problems evaluating his view. A number of students appeared to have misread the question and provided no evaluation at all.

To receive full marks for this question, students needed to provide some discussion of how Popper's view of scientific thinking differs from the kind of thinking exhibited by the chicken (including an explanation of the difference between inductivism and falsification) and give a developed evaluation of this view.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Popper believes that scientific is based on a series of conjectures and refutations rather than induction. Science is based on testable theories and predictions that have the ability to be falsified, according to Popper. However, much like Kuhn might argue, one finds it difficult to imagine that the scientific community would aim at falsifying theories, more likely that many theories are accepted as they coincide with the knowledge or beliefs of that community. Popper disputes that induction is the most apparent method of knowledge however predictions based on past events are common in science.*

## Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	18	20	29	20	13	1.9

- According to Kuhn, change in science is the result of a crisis within the prevailing paradigm brought on by the failure of the paradigm to address persistent anomalies.
- According to Popper, science proceeds via a process of conjecture and refutation. Change comes about as the result of falsification.
- Inductivism proceeds via confirmation. Change occurs as the result of new discoveries.
- Kuhn uses a number of examples to illustrate his argument, including the change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system and the paradigm shift from Newton to Einstein.



Although most students were able to discuss Kuhn's view of scientific change, a significant number of students had difficulty describing the difference between his account and that of the other two theories, particularly inductivism. A number of students simply described Kuhn's account of scientific change without reference to these other views or limited their answers to Kuhn and Popper. Most students were able to accurately identify one of Kuhn's examples of scientific change.

To receive full marks for this question students needed to identify the difference between Kuhn's account of scientific change, falsification and inductivism and identify one of Kuhn's examples of scientific change. The best answers usually included an account of Kuhn's understanding of crisis.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*In Popper's falsification, scientific change is triggered by a single falsifying result which leads to the immediate abandonment of a theory. According to inductivism, scientific change occurs after a series of observations are generalised into a new rule. By contrast, Kuhn suggests that scientific change is caused both by a build up of anomalies within a paradigm, which break down its explanatory and predictive power, just as Ptolemaic astronomy's predictions were hampered by anomalies, in combination with social pressures for paradigm change such as the desire for calendar reform. In the era Ptolemy's geocentricism was replaced by the Copernican model. With these factors, science enters a revolutionary period in which new paradigms are proposed and scientific change is effected.*

## Section D

Question chosen	None	1	2	3
%	1	62	27	9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Average
%	3	5	8	9	12	13	11	10	7	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	6

This section of the examination appeared challenging for many students. Although most students had a good general understanding of Descartes and Armstrong, a significant number of students had difficulty identifying what material was relevant to the question and therefore provided either a slim exposition of the philosophers' work or one which was indiscriminate and all-inclusive. Students also had difficulty connecting the philosophers' work to the question, resulting in an exposition of the philosophy that did not truly address the needs of the task. Like last year, improvement in the area of evaluation was noted; however, some students had difficulty evaluating the arguments in terms of the question and instead simply evaluated the philosophers' arguments.

Students overwhelmingly chose to respond to the first of the three questions. Students who selected this question demonstrated a good, general understanding of Descartes; however, some students could not discriminate between relevant and irrelevant material, and a number of students did not appear to understand the argument of the wax.

Question 2 was selected by around one quarter of the students. Although students generally demonstrated a good understanding of Armstrong's arguments, using this material to discuss the question of whether we can conclude that a robot which behaved like an intelligent human being had inner states causing its behaviour appeared more challenging. This was particularly evident in student evaluations which, rather than evaluating what can be inferred from Armstrong's work in terms of the question, simply evaluated Armstrong's arguments. Some students drew on Armstrong and material beyond Armstrong, and this was acceptable where the material was relevant; for example, with Searle's Chinese Room.

Less than 10% of students chose to respond to Question 3. This question was often misinterpreted by students, who tended to focus on critically comparing the views of Descartes and Armstrong rather than discussing whether there is an account of mind that is superior to both views. Of those students who responded appropriately to the question, some did so in a cursory way, simply dismissing the possibility of a superior view and going on to discuss the merits of both positions.

It is not possible to anticipate all acceptable responses to essay questions. The questions do, however, imply that all essays will engage in a critical discussion of the relevant set texts and produce a reasoned judgment about the arguments and viewpoints they express. All essays should contain some kind of exposition (either of arguments, viewpoints or concepts), provide evaluations of these arguments, viewpoints and concepts, and use concrete counter examples.



Below are the criteria with which all essays were assessed.

## Assessment criteria

### Expression

- Did the student present the argument in an organised way?
- How clear and precise was the language used by the student?
- To what extent was the language appropriate to philosophy?

### Achievement level

- 0 The student had not reached level 1.
- 1 The student expressed some basic ideas but it was not always clear what the argument was trying to convey. The use of language was not appropriate to philosophy.
- 2 The student presented some ideas in an organised manner. There was some clarity of expression, but the argument could not always be followed. The use of language was not always appropriate to philosophy.
- 3 The student presented ideas in an organised way and the development of the argument could be easily followed. The use of language was appropriate to philosophy.
- 4 The student presented ideas in a clear and coherent way and insights were clearly articulated. The use of language was effective and appropriate to philosophy.
- 5 The student presented ideas in a coherent and incisive way, insights were clearly articulated and the argument was focused and sustained. The use of language was precise and fully appropriate to philosophy.

### Knowledge and understanding

- To what extent did the student demonstrate knowledge of the philosophical issues?
- How well had the student understood philosophical arguments and concepts?

### Achievement level

- 0 The student had not reached level 1.
- 1 The student demonstrated a superficial knowledge of philosophical issues but there was only limited understanding of the concepts used.
- 2 The student demonstrated some knowledge of philosophical issues and there was a basic understanding of the concepts used.
- 3 The student demonstrated a secure knowledge of philosophical issues, and concepts were generally understood.
- 4 The student demonstrated a wide-ranging knowledge of philosophical issues, which were used effectively to support arguments. Philosophical arguments and concepts were largely understood.
- 5 The student demonstrated knowledge which was comprehensive and in-depth, and was used incisively to support arguments. Philosophical arguments and concepts were fully understood.

### Identification and analysis of relevant material

- How well did the student understand the specific demands of the question?
- To what extent did the student provide relevant supporting material?
- To what extent did the student provide appropriate examples?
- How effectively did the student analyse the supporting material?

### Achievement level

- 0 The student had not reached level 1.
- 1–2 The student showed little awareness of the specific demands of the question and identified relevant material in only a limited way. There was little analysis and few or no examples.
- 3–4 The student showed some awareness of the specific demands of the question and identified and analysed some relevant material. Some appropriate examples were used.
- 5–6 The student showed a good understanding of the specific demands of the question and identified material which was nearly always relevant. There was a sound analysis of the material. Examples were appropriate and gave support to the argument.
- 7–8 The student showed a clear understanding of the specific demands of the question and identified relevant material which was analysed in a thoughtful way. Examples directly supported the overall argument in a persuasive manner. Some counter-arguments were presented.
- 9–10 The student showed a full understanding of the specific demands of the question and identified material which was always relevant. The implications of this material were drawn out in a detailed analysis. Examples were



well-chosen and compelling in their support of the argument. Counter-arguments were presented in a convincing way.

Development and evaluation

- Did the student develop the argument in a coherent way?
- How well did the student test ideas and arguments?
- To what extent did the student express a relevant, personal response?

Achievement level

- 0 The student had not reached level 1.
- 1–2 The student developed ideas and arguments in a basic way but there was little or no evaluation.
- 3–4 The student developed some ideas and arguments but the development was simple, or was asserted with support or reference. There may have been some basic evaluation of the ideas and arguments.
- 5–6 The student developed ideas and arguments in a sound way and there was a consistent attempt to evaluate them, even if this was not fully developed.
- 7–8 The student developed ideas and arguments from a consistently held perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments was thoughtful and convincing.
- 9–10 The student developed ideas and arguments from a consistently held and well-justified perspective. Evaluation of the ideas and arguments was compelling or subtle with strong evidence of personal reflection.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response to Question 2. Although some of the expression is muddled and the first evaluation is not quite convincing, the response is notable for its consistent attempt to engage in a sustained evaluation of the arguments and viewpoints. The student has also worked hard to bring the discussion back to the question, making this a very focused response.

*Would a robot which behaved just like an intelligent human being with inner states which caused its behaviour have a mind? David Armstrong argues that the mind is only the physical brain states of our central nervous system, and therefore he would claim that it is possible that a robot with identical physical states which caused its behaviour would have a mind. In this essay, I will consider this possibility of robot's one day possessing minds very similar to ours with reference to Armstrong's physicalist view and the various notable objections to it which call into question the likelihood of robots being able to one day possess minds. I will conclude that Armstrong's physicalist account is not compelling enough to justify the claim that robots with sophisticated physical causal states would have minds, leaving the nature of the human mind mysterious and uncertain.*

*In what way would a physicalist view of the mind support the likelihood of robots having a mind similar to that of humans? Placing his faith in the modern sophisticated understanding of neuroscience, as science is the only intellectual discipline capable of reaching a consensus on disputed issues, Armstrong argues that mind, the 'inner arena' that lies behind and causes behaviour, is nothing more than the physical states of the human body's central nervous system. Armstrong therefore claims that mental states ought also to be considered causal states which bring about human action. Therefore, under Armstrong's physicalist account of the mind, it seems that robots would be able to one day possess a mind if it had exactly the same inner states as an intelligent human being. Other than the difficulty of scientists/doctors being able to create an exact replica of the human central nervous system in robotic form, which is something researchers have attempted for several decades to do, the possession of a mind by a robot is entirely plausible if Armstrong's physicalist theory of mind is correct.*

*But how convincing is Armstrong's physicalist theory? Firstly, Armstrong's account fails to adequately explain the nature of consciousness in purely physico-chemical terms, a fundamental aspect of the mind that must be present within the physical inner states of a robot if it is considered to have a mind. Armstrong argues that consciousness is nothing more than one physical state 'scanning' another. Just like how we observe the external environment and are aware of its variations, so too does one brain state 'observe' another during consciousness, allowing us to be selective about our behaviour, e.g. whether to be angry or not. However Armstrong's account of consciousness is inadequate due to a crucial flaw, the fact that the existence of a brain state scanning another requires the existence of infinite sets of scanners, or a realisation that consciousness is inherently limited. Therefore, due to the failure of Armstrong's physicalist theory to account for the strange and subjective nature of human consciousness which is a critically important aspect of the mind, the possibility of a robot with identical physical inner states to a human being having a complete mind is cast into doubt.*

*Are there any more facts than physical facts, and what implications does this have for the possibility of robots having minds? A second failure of Armstrong's theory is acknowledging the possible existence of non-physical facts, which could render it impossible for robots to possess a mind identical to humans, highlighted by Frank Jackson's example of 'Mary the Neuroscientist.' Jackson claims that if Mary had a complete knowledge of all physical facts, but was unable to see any colour due to a genetic defect, then if she saw the colours red or blue for the first time, she would learn something new. Jackson therefore contends that there must be more facts than purely physical facts, placing attempts to account for the mind in only physical terms in an uncertain state. Therefore, if there are more facts than physical facts in relation to the mind, then the purely physical states that would be present in a robot would fail to constitute a complete mind, calling into question the validity of the existence of a mind when there are physical inner states.*



*Despite these issues, does there seem to be any convincing relationship between the mind and physical brain states that would be able to reconcile the validity of the claim that robots would be able to possess minds? It seems that there does appear to be a close relationship between the mind and the brain, even though explaining the nature of this relationship and then applying it to the physical workings of a robot would be extremely hard. Since the 18th century, scientists have discovered that lobotomy procedures, whereby a doctor makes small incisions in particular areas of the brain have had a significant impact on a patient's behaviour, rendering a previously hysterical patient docile and inactive. Moreover, victims of significant injuries to the brain and skull have had their capacities to judge situations, reason and predict, crucial aspects of the human mind, impaired or made completely redundant due to the damage to the brain. Furthermore, when some of this damage to the brain is rectified by reconstructive surgery, many patients experience a notable improvement in the capacities of their mind (e.g. reasoning, judging) that had previously failed them. It would therefore seem that the brain does indeed have a close connection to the mind, and that the physical states of the CNS must somehow be connected to our mind. However a physicalist account is unable to outline the precise nature of this relationship whilst addressing other difficulties the physicalist account of the mind faces, rendering the claim that a robot may hypothetically be able to possess a mind implausible.*

*In conclusion, a physicalist account such as Armstrong's fails to account for several aspects of the human mind which cannot be easily accounted for in physical terms. It therefore appears highly unlikely that robots would be able to possess a mind, even if they had exactly the same inner states as a sophisticated human being.*