



SAMPLE ASSESSMENT TASKS

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS
GENERAL YEAR 12

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Sample assessment task

Philosophy and Ethics – General Year 12

Task 5 – Unit 4

Assessment type: Critical reasoning

Conditions

Time for the task: 40 minutes in class under standard test conditions

Task weighting

10% of the school mark for this pair of units

1. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?

If I am ill, then I will not go to work today. I am not ill; therefore, I will go to work today.

(1 mark)

2. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?

If I have a moustache, I must be a man. I am a man; therefore, I must have a moustache.

(1 mark)

3. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?

(1 mark)

If the whaling fleet is breaking international law, then the international community has a duty to intervene. The whaling fleet is not breaking international law; therefore, the international community is not obliged to intervene.

4. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.

(2 marks)

Fred: 'You shouldn't eat so many hamburgers; they're really bad for your health.'

Ned: 'But you're overweight! What would you know about nutrition?'

5. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy. (2 marks)

‘We are heading for a global financial collapse. I should know; I’m a qualified physiotherapist.’

6. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy. (2 marks)

‘All three people I spoke to today think that the Prime Minister is doing a poor job. That means the Prime Minister must be unpopular.’

7. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy. (2 marks)

‘No one has ever actually proven that God exists, so God does not exist.’

8. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy. (2 marks)

‘Members of my football team donated generously to the recent bushfire appeal; so it is clear that footballers are willing to support charitable causes.’

9. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

If I was too fat, my pants would no longer fit me. My pants do still fit; therefore, I am not too fat.

- a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument. (1 mark)

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

- b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument. (1 mark)

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

- c) Justify your evaluation of the argument. (2 marks)

10. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

There has been a large increase in violent crime by young people this year; therefore, all young people today are more violent.

- a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument. (1 mark)

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

- b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument. (1 mark)

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

- c) Justify your evaluation of the argument. (2 marks)

11. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

People prefer to live in quiet streets. New tenants have recently moved into the house at the end of our quiet street. They have only been there for a few weeks and already there has been a series of noisy parties, lasting well into the night. It is clear that the new tenants are not winning many friends in our street.

a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument. (1 mark)

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument. (1 mark)

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

c) Justify your evaluation of the argument. (2 marks)

Total = 25 marks

Marking key for sample assessment task 5 – Unit 4

1. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?
If I am ill, then I will not go to work today. I am not ill; therefore, I will go to work today.

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as denying the antecedent	1

2. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?
If I have a moustache, I must be a man. I am a man; therefore, I must have a moustache.

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as affirming the consequent	1

3. What is the technical name for the following formal fallacy?
If the whaling fleet is breaking international law, then the international community has a duty to intervene. The whaling fleet is not breaking international law; therefore, the international community is not obliged to intervene.

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as denying the antecedent	1

4. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.
Fred: 'You shouldn't eat so many hamburgers; they're really bad for your health.'
Ned: 'But you're overweight! What would you know about nutrition?'

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as ad hominem	1
Explains Ned is attacking Fred's <i>obesity</i> , not his argument. His obesity is <i>irrelevant</i> to the topic of nutritional knowledge.	1

5. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.
'We are heading for a global financial collapse. I should know; I'm a qualified physiotherapist.'

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as argument from irrelevant authority	1
Explains that the person's qualifications as a physiotherapist have no relevance to their ability to make predictions about the economy	1

6. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.
'All three people I spoke to today think that the Prime Minister is doing a poor job. That means the Prime Minister must be unpopular.'

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as hasty generalisation	1
Explains that, in a country of 23 million people, the person has clearly not spoken to enough people to make judgements about the popularity of the Prime Minister	1

7. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.
'No one has ever actually proven that God exists, so God does not exist.'

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as argument from ignorance	1
Explains that a lack of proof about the existence of God does not <i>prove</i> that there is no God	1

8. Explain why the following is a fallacious argument. In your explanation, name the fallacy.
Members of my football team donated generously to the recent bushfire appeal; so it is clear that footballers are willing to support charitable causes.

Description	Marks
Identifies the fallacy as hasty generalisation	1
Explains that the sample size of one football club is not conclusive evidence about the charitable behaviour of all footballers	1

9. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

If I was too fat, my pants would no longer fit me. My pants do still fit; therefore, I am not too fat.

- a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument.

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

- b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument.

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

- c) Justify your evaluation of the argument.

Description	Marks
Identifies the strength of the inference as deductively valid	1
Identifies the cogency as cogent	1
Explains that the premises entail the conclusion and/or that the form of the argument is modus tollens	1-2

10. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

There has been a large increase in violent crime by young people this year; therefore, all young people today are more violent.

- a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument.

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

- b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument.

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

- c) Justify your evaluation of the argument.

Description	Marks
Identifies the strength of the inference as weak	1
Identifies the cogency as lacking cogency	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains that the premise does not say that all young people are getting involved in violent crime the inference moves from a fairly vague premise to a very broad and generalised conclusion 	1-2

11. Read the following argument and answer (a) to (c) below.

People prefer to live in quiet streets. New tenants have recently moved into the house at the end of our quiet street. They have only been there for a few weeks and already there has been a series of noisy parties, lasting well into the night. It is clear that the new tenants are not winning many friends in our street.

- a) Circle **one** of the following to describe the strength of the inferential move in the above argument.

Weak Moderate Strong Deductively valid

- b) Circle **one** of the following to describe the cogency of the above argument.

Lacking cogency Moderate cogency Cogent

- c) Justify your evaluation of the argument.

Description	Marks
Identifies the inferential move as strong	1
Identifies the cogency as moderately cogent	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> explains that both premises support the conclusion but the conclusion itself is moderately acceptable it is not clear how many is many, and it may be the case that friendships are won through kind acts on a daily basis by the tenants that are not affected by their having noisy parties 	1-2

Sample assessment task

Philosophy and Ethics – General Year 12

Task 6 – Unit 4

Assessment type: Philosophical analysis and evaluation

Conditions

Time for the task: 40 minutes in class under standard test conditions

Task weighting

15% of the school mark for this pair of units

***Eudaimonia* and good character**

Read the following passage:

According to Aristotle, an excellent human is good at living life; he or she lives life well and lives life beautifully. He or she knows that good upbringing and good experiences are crucial to living life beautifully, to being well. Thus, the highest good for humans, the highest aim of all human practical thinking, is *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing or well-being. Therefore, moral philosophy must be concerned with understanding what constitutes good upbringing and experiences in order to achieve this end.

Good upbringing and good experiences are properly understood as the way of the means rather than ways of deficiency or excess. Good habits are described as a precondition for good character. For these reasons, a virtuous character involves the cultivation of good habits, which is a precondition for good character. Therefore, good character is a disposition which must be pursued and maintained with some effort.

Clarify, analyse and evaluate the argument presented in the passage.

You will need to:

- summarise the argument (i.e. identify the topic and the conclusion/s) (2 marks)
- clarify the core concepts (3 marks)
- clarify the main arguments (this may include identifying both explicit and implicit premises, clarifying argument structure, identifying inferential moves, identifying inferences) (5 marks)
- analyse and evaluate:
 - the acceptability of the major premise/s (4 marks)
 - the strength of the inferential moves (4 marks)
- assess the overall cogency of the argument (2 marks)

Total = 20 marks

Marking key for sample assessment task 6 – Unit 4

Description	Marks
Summary	
Identifies the topic	1
Identifies the conclusion/s	1
Subtotal	2
Clarification	
Concepts	
Clarifies core concepts	1–3 (1 mark each)
Subtotal	3
Arguments	
Accurately clarifies the main arguments	5
Clarifies the main arguments but with omissions or errors	3–4
Identifies some inferences	1–2
Subtotal	5
Analysis and evaluation	
Premises	
Analyses and evaluates the acceptability of the major premise/s	3–4
Makes assertions about the acceptability of the major premise/s	1–2
Subtotal	4
Inferences	
Analyses and evaluates the strength of inferential moves	3–4
Makes assertions about the strength of inferential moves	1–2
Subtotal	4
Cogency	
Assesses the overall cogency of the argument	1–2
Subtotal	2
Total	20
Answer could include, but is not limited to:	
<p>Core concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • virtues • good character • social contracts <p>Clarification of main arguments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of both explicit and implicit premises • clarification of argument structure • identification of inferential moves <p>Argument structure is: According to Aristotle, 1(an excellent human is good at living life); 2(he or she lives life well and lives life beautifully). 3(He or she knows that good upbringing and good experiences are crucial to living life beautifully, to being well). <u>Thus</u> 4(the highest good for humans, the highest aim of all human practical thinking, is <i>eudaimonia</i>, or human flourishing or well-being). <u>Therefore</u> 5(moral philosophy must be concerned with understanding what constitutes good upbringing and experiences in order to achieve this end). 6(Good upbringing and good experiences are properly understood as the way of the means rather than ways of deficiency or excess). 7(Good habits are described as a precondition for good character). <u>For these reasons,</u> 8(a virtuous character involves the cultivation of good habits, which is a precondition for good character). <u>Therefore,</u> 9good character is a disposition which must be pursued and maintained with some effort.</p>	

Sample assessment task

Philosophy and Ethics – General Year 12

Task 3 – Unit 3

Assessment type: Construction of argument

Conditions

Period allowed for completion of the task: two weeks (four periods in class and homework)

Task and guidelines issued to students at the start of the two week period

10 minute oral presentation in class at the end of the two week period

Task weighting

10% of the school mark for this pair of units

Construct an argument for one of the following topics you have studied this semester:

- the theory of social determinism
- the idea of the social contract
- the concept of being a person in an individual sense and the social-legal sense.

Your argument needs to clarify the key concepts and present a position that is for or against the topic. You may do both but you must clearly articulate what you agree/disagree with. You must also use your own thought experiment to help you present a clear and organised argument.

This requires you to investigate your topic using a number of sources and to make research notes from which you can construct an argument. You also need to create a poster or PowerPoint presentation that presents your thought experiment.

Part A: Note making

Use an appropriate note-making framework to take notes when constructing your argument. Your notes will be assessed on the following criteria:

- use of focus questions to shape/structure your argument (4 marks)
- inclusion of information from a range of sources (4 marks)
- the format of your bibliography (i.e. following the school protocols). (2 marks)

Subtotal = 10 marks

You are required to submit your research notes and bibliography when you present your argument to the class.

Part B: Class presentation

Prepare a 10 minute oral presentation to the class, addressing the focus questions and presenting your argument. Create a poster or PowerPoint presentation of your thought experiment for your oral presentation: this may include images and/or quotations from a philosopher to support the argument. Your presentation will be assessed on the following criteria:

- organisation, development of an argument, use of clear language that is appropriate to philosophy (4 marks)
- demonstration of your knowledge and understanding of the philosophical issues, arguments and concepts (4 marks)
- the relevance of the poster or PowerPoint presentation. (4 marks)

Subtotal = 12 marks

Total = 22 marks

Marking key for sample assessment task 3 – Unit 3

Part A: Research notes and bibliography

Description	Marks
Research notes	
Addresses the focus questions	3–4
Contains some links to the focus questions	1–2
Subtotal	4
Contains information drawn from a range of sources	3–4
Contains information drawn from a limited range of sources	1–2
Subtotal	4
Bibliography	
Follows correct format according to the school protocols	2
Lists sources used	1
Subtotal	2
Total Part A	10

Part B: Class presentation

Description	Marks
Expression	
Presents the argument in a clear and organised way The development of the argument can be easily followed The use of language is clear and appropriate to philosophy	3–4
Presents some information but it is not always clear The argument is not developed and may be difficult to follow The use of language is not always appropriate to philosophy	1–2
Subtotal	4
Knowledge and understanding	
Demonstrates a sound knowledge of philosophical issues which is used to support the argument	2
Demonstrates some knowledge of philosophical issues	1
Subtotal	2
Philosophical arguments and concepts are mostly understood	2
Displays a basic understanding of the philosophical arguments and/or concepts	1
Subtotal	2
Poster/PowerPoint	
Presents a thought experiment in a clear and organised way	2
Presents a thought experiment in an unclear or disorganised way	1
Subtotal	2
Uses appropriate images and quotations from the selected philosopher to support the presentation	2
Uses some images and/or quotations from the selected philosopher that may or may not support the presentation	1
Subtotal	2
Total Part B	12

Sample assessment task

Philosophy and Ethics – General Year 12

Task 8 – Unit 4

Assessment type: Test

Conditions

Time for the task: 60 minutes in class under standard test conditions

Read the passage and answer each question in the space provided

Task weighting

15% of the school mark for this pair of units

The Freedom to Speak is Essential

- 1 I wish to share my concern on the recent opinion (*The Daily Conversation*, 6/9/1968) that
- 2 freedom to speak on any topic should be stopped. I accept that no person should force their
- 3 opinion on others. I accept too that we should never allow people to throw dangerous opinions
- 4 around unless we can be sure they are right. But stopping the freedom to speak means we stop
- 5 people from making sure their opinion is accurate and made carefully.

- 6 Nothing is absolutely certain, but there is certainty in moral life. When we hear a dangerous
- 7 opinion we know it is wrong even if we are not absolutely certain that it is. Therefore, as a
- 8 society, we should give ourselves the freedom to test all sorts of ideas in public discussion and
- 9 debate without restriction.

- 10 There is a big difference in accepting an opinion without testing it and accepting an opinion is
- 11 true because it cannot be argued down. There is no other way to test the truth than to have the
- 12 freedom to speak and argue down our opinions. People must be allowed to discuss their
- 13 opinions and their point of view. People who are wise became wise because of discussion.

- 14 If any opinion is not heard or listened to, then we have lost an opportunity to hear the truth. All
- 15 opinions contain a bit of truth and truth itself will be lost if people have their freedom to speak
- 16 taken away. It is for these reasons that we have freedom of speech. To take that away will
- 17 cause harm to individuals and society.

1. The writer's position is that freedom to speak should never be stopped or restricted, even if the ideas or opinions are dangerous. Do you agree or disagree? Give a reason to support your answer. (2 marks)

2. According to the writer, 'there is certainty in moral life' (line 6). Explain what he/she means by this and use an example to support your explanation. (4 marks)

3. 'There is a big difference in accepting an opinion without testing it and accepting an opinion is true because it cannot be argued down' (lines 10–11). Explain the difference between the two concepts and use examples to support your explanation. (4 marks)

4. Explain how 'the freedom to speak and argue down our opinions' (lines 11–12) is the only way to get to the truth. Use an example to support your explanation. (4 marks)

5. 'People who are wise became wise because of discussion' (line 13). Explain what the writer means by his/her use of the term 'wise'. Use an example to support your explanation. (4 marks)

6. Answer **one** of either (a) or (b):

- (a) 'All opinions contain a bit of truth and truth itself will be lost if people have their freedom to speak taken away' (lines 14–16). Do you agree or disagree? Use examples to support your argument. (7 marks)

OR

(b) According to the writer, taking away the freedom to speak and argue will cause harm to individuals and society (lines 16–17). Do you agree or disagree? Use examples to support your argument. (7 marks)

Total = 25 marks

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Concept from: Mill, J. S. (1909) *On Liberty* (Ch 2). (Public domain). Retrieved February 2015, from https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/mill/john_stuart/m645o/complete.html

Marking key for sample assessment task 8 – Unit 4

1. The writer's position is that freedom to speak should never be stopped or restricted, even if the ideas or opinions are dangerous. Do you agree or disagree? Give a reason to support your answer.

Description	Marks
Demonstrates that he/she either agrees or disagrees with the writer's position Provides a reason to support the answer	2
Demonstrates that he/she either agrees or disagrees with writer's position and attempts to provide a reason	1
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	

2. According to the writer, 'there is certainty in moral life' (line 6). Explain what he/she means by this and use an example to support your explanation.

Description	Marks
Clearly explains what is meant by the phrase 'there is certainty in moral life' Uses an appropriate example to support the explanation	3–4
Briefly describes what is meant by the phrase 'there is certainty in moral life' States an example that may not support the description	1–2
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	

3. 'There is a big difference in accepting an opinion without testing it and accepting an opinion is true because it cannot be argued down' (lines 10–11). Explain this difference between the two concepts and use examples to support your explanation.

Description	Marks
Explains the difference between the two concepts Uses appropriate examples to support the explanation	3–4
States in general terms a difference between the two concepts States an example that may not support the explanation	1–2
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	

4. Explain how 'the freedom to speak and argue down our opinions' (lines 11–12) is the only way to get to the truth. Use an example to support your explanation.

Description	Marks
Clearly explains the concept Uses an appropriate example to support the explanation	3–4
Briefly describes the concept States an example that may not support the explanation	1–2
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	

5. 'People who are wise became wise because of discussion' (line 13). Explain what the writer means by his/her use of the term 'wise'. Use an example to support your explanation.

Description	Marks
Clearly explains the concept Uses an appropriate example to support the explanation	3–4
Briefly describes the concept States an example that may not support the explanation	1–2
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	

6. Answer **one** of either (a) or (b):

- (a) ‘All opinions contain a bit of truth and truth itself will be lost if people have their freedom to speak taken away’ (lines 14–16). Do you agree or disagree? Use examples to support your argument.

OR

- (b) According to the writer, taking away the freedom to speak and argue will cause harm to individuals and society (lines 16–17). Do you agree or disagree? Use examples to support your argument.

Description	Marks
Philosophical understandings	
Demonstrates a sound understanding of philosophical topics relevant to the question	3
Demonstrates some understanding of philosophical topics relevant to the question	2
Demonstrates limited understanding of philosophical topics relevant to the question	1
Subtotal	3
Philosophical argument	
Constructs a relevant, moderately cogent argument which may contain some errors in reasoning or fail to consider possible objections, where appropriate	2
Constructs a relevant, weak argument which may make controversial assumptions, beg the question, or commit several serious errors of reasoning	1
Subtotal	2
Clarity and structure	
Clearly written and well structured	2
Unclearly written with little or no structure	1
Subtotal	2
Total	7
Note: The specific points made in the response will depend on what has been taught in the classroom.	