Government of **Western Australia**
School Curriculum and Standards Authority

Western Australian Certificate of Education
ATAR course examination, 2016

Question/Answer booklet

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Please place your student identification label in this box

Student number: In figures

In words

Time allowed for this paper

Reading time before commencing work: ten minutes
Working time: three hours

Materials required/recommended for this paper

To be provided by the supervisor
This Question/Answer booklet

Number of additional answer booklets used (if applicable):

To be provided by the candidate
Standard items: pens (blue/black preferred), pencils (including coloured), sharpener, correction fluid/tape, eraser, ruler, highlighters

Special items: nil

Important note to candidates

No other items may be taken into the examination room. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that you do not have any unauthorised material. If you have any unauthorised material with you, hand it to the supervisor **before** reading any further.

Copyright © School Curriculum and Standards Authority 2016
Ref: 16-064

Structure of this paper

Section	Number of questions available	Number of questions to be answered	Suggested working time (minutes)	Marks available	Percentage of examination
Section One Critical reasoning	9	9	50	30	30
Section Two Philosophical analysis and evaluation	2	2	80	40	40
Section Three Construction of argument	5	1	50	30	30
				Total	100

Instructions to candidates

1. The rules for the conduct of the Western Australian Certificate of Education ATAR course examinations are detailed in the *Year 12 Information Handbook 2016*. Sitting this examination implies that you agree to abide by these rules.

2. Write your answers in this Question/Answer booklet.

3. You must be careful to confine your answers to the specific questions asked and to follow any instructions that are specific to a particular question.

4. Additional working space pages at the end of this Question/Answer booklet are for planning or continuing an answer. If you use these pages, indicate at the original answer, the page number it is planned/continued on and write the question number being planned/continued on the additional working space page.

Section One: Critical reasoning **30% (30 Marks)**

This section contains **nine (9)** questions. Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 1 **(2 marks)**

If the British people vote to exit the European Union (EU), the effect of the exit on British agricultural export markets will be utterly devastating. British farmers will never be able to compete with countries in which labour is much cheaper, and the whole industry is likely to collapse. The British people should not vote to exit the EU.

For the above argument:

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

(b) Name the fallacy. (1 mark)

Question 2 **(2 marks)**

Marriage is nothing more than a legal commitment between two people who love each other, so there shouldn't even be a debate about whether gay marriage should be legal in our country.

For the above argument:

(a) Circle the inference indicator. (1 mark)

(b) Name the fallacy. (1 mark)

Question 3 **(3 marks)**

I know a little boy who was perfectly normal and healthy before he got his four-year-old Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccinations, but he was diagnosed with autism a month later. If he hadn't had that MMR vaccination, he would never have developed autism.

For the above argument:

(a) Underline the conclusion (1 mark)

(b) Bracket and number the separable statements. (1 mark)

(c) Name the fallacy. (1 mark)

Question 4 **(2 marks)**

Are the following statements analytic or synthetic?

(a) Male polar bears eat their young. (1 mark)

_____

(b) Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. (1 mark)

_____

Question 5 **(2 marks)**

We should reframe the way we define staff reductions, so it isn't simply viewed as a foregrounding of cost saving, but instead takes account of a much more complex interplay of influences and drivers that facilitate opportunities for enhancing the ways in which we manage the movement of our workforce.

Give **two** concise reasons for why the sentence above is an example of 'weasel' words.

One: _____

_____

Two: _____

_____

Question 6 **(2 marks)**

(a) Red wine contains a powerful antioxidant, but too much red wine is bad for your health.

Underline the sentence that means the same as the above sentence. (1 mark)

(i) Red wine contains a powerful antioxidant and too much red wine is bad for your health.

(ii) Either too much red wine is bad for your health or red wine contains a powerful antioxidant.

(b) You cannot join Mensa unless you have an IQ of more than 150 points.

Underline the sentence that means the same as the above sentence. (1 mark)

(i) If you can join Mensa, then you have an IQ of more than 150 points.

(ii) If you have an IQ of more than 150 points, then you can join Mensa.

Question 7 **(4 marks)**

Construct a deductively-valid argument that uses **all** and **only** the following statements once. Use a diagram to represent the argument you construct.

(1) I am essentially a thinking thing.
(2) I cannot doubt that I am thinking.
(3) If I cannot doubt that I am thinking but I can doubt the existence of my body, I must be essentially a thinking thing.
(4) I can doubt the existence of my body.
(5) If I am doubting, then I am thinking.

Question 8 **(6 marks)**

The environments that people live or work in should be free from all forms of discrimination. This is because, firstly, living and working in environments that are free from discrimination promotes equality and human dignity, and, secondly, discrimination in all its forms whether racial, sexual, religious, etc. does not belong in our workplaces or in our society, more broadly.

For the above argument:

(a) Bracket and number the separable statements. (1 mark)

(b) Using the numbers you have given each proposition, draw a diagram of the argument. (2 marks)

(c) Evaluate the cogency of the argument. Circle the correct answer. (1 mark)

Cogent Not cogent

(d) Give **two** reasons that could justify your evaluation of the cogency of the argument. (2 marks)

One: _____

_____

Two: _____

_____

Question 9 **(7 marks)**

If we had allowed the Federal Government to pass their new labour legislation, then ordinary Australians would have lost their rights at work and our living standards would have dramatically declined. But we didn't allow it to pass, so we won't lose our rights at work or suffer a dramatic decline in living standards.

For the above argument:

(a) Bracket and number the separable statements. (1 mark)

(b) Write in full and number the separable statements in the order in which they occur. (3 marks)

(c) Using the numbers you have given each proposition, draw a diagram of the argument. (1 mark)

Question 9 (continued)

(d) Circle the word that best describes the strength of the inference. (1 mark)

Weak Moderate Strong

(e) Give **one** reason that justifies your evaluation of the inferential strength of the argument. (1 mark)

_____

_____

End of Section One

This page has been left blank intentionally

Section Two: Philosophical analysis and evaluation **40% (40 Marks)**

This section contains **two (2)** questions. Answer **both** questions.

Write your answers on the lined pages following Question 10 and Question 11.

Additional working space pages at the end of this Question/Answer booklet are for planning or continuing an answer. If you use these pages, indicate at the original answer, the page number it is planned/continued on and write the question number being planned/continued on the additional working space page.

Suggested working time: 80 minutes.

Question 10 **(20 marks)**

The following dialogue is an excerpt from a community of inquiry.
You are required to:

- summarise the contributions of each participant (2 marks)
- clarify these contributions (6 marks)
- critically evaluate them. (12 marks)

Richard: So, you say that God created the world and is omnipotent, omniscient and perfectly good, but, if that's true, then why is there so much suffering and evil in the world? How could God know all about the suffering, be powerful enough to change it, and loving enough to want to, but still let terrible things occur? It just doesn't make sense.

Desmond: Well, maybe I overstated God's attributes. Maybe God is not exactly all powerful, just the most powerful being in existence. Maybe God knows about the suffering and is willing to help but just can't actually do anything about it.

Richard: That's hardly a solution. That's like solving the problem posed by a car thief, by giving him your keys. And anyway, why would anyone choose to worship a god that was anything less than omnipotent? You'd be better off worshipping nature or science.

Desmond: Ok, but I still think that the existence of evil is compatible with the existence of God. Maybe God didn't actually create the evil; God just created people and gave them free will. The existence of free will in a world of suffering is much more morally significant than the existence of a world free from suffering but where people are like robots.

Richard: But if God is omnipotent, why not create people who would always freely choose to do the right thing? And, even if you think that's not logically possible, surely God could have created people to have far better natures than they do have, less warlike and violent for one thing. Is free will such a 'good' that it would still outweigh the badness of all the evil in the world?

Desmond: Having free will is what allows us to have a meaningful relationship with God. The evil in the world is necessary for this greater good. In fact, what we see and experience on Earth as evil and suffering, might not even be that from God's perspective. God's understanding of good and evil might be totally different from our own.

Richard: That makes even less sense. On the one hand, you say that God created free will so that we can choose to have a relationship with God and, on the other hand, you say that we can't really understand God's goodness, because it might be totally different from our own. Why would anyone chose to believe in a God who did not recognise the terrible and tragic things that happen to human beings as evil? That seems like a callous God, not a perfectly good and loving one.

Question 11 **(20 marks)**

Choose **one (1)** of the following texts and

- summarise the text (2 marks)
- clarify its meaning (8 marks)
- critically evaluate it. (10 marks)

Text one

Social contract theory generally claims that the best way to understand morality and politics is as an agreement between individual members of society who are exclusively self-interested but rational. At their foundation is some version of the 'Liberal Individual', who is depicted as raceless, classless, sexless, and basically disembodied, and is assumed to stand as a generalisation for every individual person. But there is not and could never be such a being as the 'Liberal Individual', and putting it at the foundation of social contract theory ends up doing violence to our conceptions of justice, equity and fairness, by presenting a conception of personhood that is utterly mistaken. The very nature of human beings is that we are, from the moment of our conception, already intimately involved in, and reliant on, social obligations, and always already embedded in cultural contexts that inevitably place us in relationships of class, gender and race. Social contract theory, therefore, fails to give a proper account of our moral and political obligations, because those obligations are endemic to our very nature, not something we can rationally choose or not choose to enter into as purely self-interested, and independent individuals.

Text two

Authenticity is more than just acting freely, it is the idea that an individual's deepest feelings and desires can and should sometimes outweigh the role of rationality, and outweigh the primacy of social norms and values in decision making. The 'authentic self' is, by its very nature, a social being, naturally disposed towards mutually beneficial conduct and the authentic person is willing to criticise the governing social order and is not cowed by public opinion. However, this conception of authenticity, and the 'authentic self' is deeply mistaken. This is, firstly, because it is based on a flawed understanding of human nature as essentially altruistic, when in fact humans are fundamentally self-interested. A consequence of this is that, by valorising[1] a focus on the self, people encouraged to act 'authentically' inevitably end up displaying anti-social characteristics such as narcissism, self-indulgence, and a deficit of empathy. Secondly, this conception of authenticity is morally problematic because it elevates the ethical status of individual desires and feelings above that of social norms and shared values, and thus reduces ethics to subjective relativism.

Text three

The moral concept of honour has no place in liberal democracies, which are marked by their possession of a state that enforces the rule of law, and by their commitment to fundamental principles of fairness, equity, and the notion that all individuals have an intrinsic, inalienable worth. Honour is a moral concept that is derived from 'honour cultures'. Honour cultures tend to be found in societies where it is difficult or impossible to enforce a rule of law either because the state is weak, or the population is somewhat nomadic. Furthermore, honour cultures tend to be masculine, e.g. the military, prisons, boys schools. They are also hierarchical, in the sense that with an increase in honour comes an increase of power and influence. In honour cultures, the worth of a person is derived from that person's reputation, in that a person's honour lies in their ability to repay favours and revenge insults. In such a culture, failing in these moral and social obligations attracts censure and derision from one's social group, and one feels shame and suffers a loss of honour. For all these reasons, the moral concept of honour has no place in a liberal democracy.

---

[1] to valorise – to assign a value to

End of Section Two

Section Three begins on page 22

Section Three: Construction of argument **30% (30 Marks)**

This section contains **five (5)** questions. Answer **one (1)** question. Write your answer on the lined pages provided following Question 16. Argue for or against the statement with clear definitions, examples and reasons.

Marks will be awarded for demonstration of

- philosophical understandings (10 marks)
- philosophical argument (15 marks)
- clarity and structure. (5 marks)

Additional working space pages at the end of this Question/Answer booklet are for planning or continuing an answer. If you use these pages, indicate at the original answer, the page number it is planned/continued on and write the question number being planned/continued on the additional working space page.

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 12 **(30 marks)**

The moral worth of an action is determined by whether it maximises overall utility.

Question 13 **(30 marks)**

To live a meaningful life, one must first understand the meaning of death.

Question 14 **(30 marks)**

Religious experience and scientific ‘experience’ are incompatible as ways of understanding the world.

Question 15 **(30 marks)**

Sceptical doubt is the cornerstone of the philosophical method.

Question 16 **(30 marks)**

A just society has to put limits on tolerance.

End of questions

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Additional working space

Question number: _____

Additional working space

Question number: _____

Additional working space

Question number: _____

Additional working space

Question number: _____

This document – apart from any third party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that it is not changed and that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority's moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. Copying or communication of any third party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Australia licence.

Published by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority of Western Australia
303 Sevenoaks Street
CANNINGTON WA 6107