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

ATAR course examination, 2018

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.

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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 external examinations are detailed in the *Year 12 Information Handbook 2018*. 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. Supplementary pages for planning/continuing your answers to questions are provided at the end of this Question/Answer booklet. If you use these pages to continue an answer, indicate at the original answer where the answer is continued, i.e. give the page number.

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

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

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 1 **(3 marks)**

Helping people in trouble is a matter of basic justice and definitely the right thing to do. People in trouble really need help, so if you don't help people in trouble, you haven't done the right thing.

For the above argument:

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

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

Cogent Not cogent

(c) Give **one** reason that justifies your evaluation of the cogency. (1 mark)

_____

_____

Question 2 **(3 marks)**

If euthanasia is legal, then terminally-ill people will be able to die with dignity. Euthanasia is not yet legal, hence terminally-ill people are not able to die with dignity.

For the above argument:

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

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

Cogent Not cogent

(c) Give **one** reason that justifies your evaluation of the cogency. (1 mark)

_____

_____

Question 3 **(1 mark)**

If you are reading this, then you are in a Philosophy and Ethics ATAR course examination.

Underline the sentence that means the same as the above sentence.

(i) If you are not reading this, then you are not in a Philosophy and Ethics ATAR course examination.

(ii) If you are in a Philosophy and Ethics ATAR course examination, then you are reading this.

(iii) If you are not in a Philosophy and Ethics ATAR course examination, then you are not reading this.

(iv) You are in a Philosophy and Ethics ATAR course examination only if you are reading this.

Question 4 **(3 marks)**

(a) Name the fallacy committed in the following argument. (1 mark)

The use of birth control methods such as condoms and IUDs is not considered to be morally problematic by most people, so religious institutions should not continue to be opposed to the use of those birth control methods.

_____

(b) Name the fallacy committed in the following argument. (1 mark)

Telecommunication companies that are unable to make a decent profit can't provide efficient, progressive and reliable telecommunication services to the community. This is because no community can be serviced by unprofitable telecommunication companies, which are bound to give inefficient, unprogressive and unreliable services.

_____

(c) Name the fallacy committed in the following argument. (1 mark)

My aging mother had a really badly infected ulcer on the sole of her foot. In church last Sunday, the whole congregation prayed together for my mother to be healed. This week the ulcer has almost cleared up, so the prayers to heal my mother's foot must have worked.

_____

Question 5 **(5 marks)**

If knowledge is not derived entirely from experience, then it must be derived entirely from the innate rational faculties of the mind. It can't be derived entirely from the innate rational faculties, so it must be derived entirely from experience.

For the above argument:

(a) Number and write **in full** the separable statements in their order of occurrence. (2 marks)

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

Weak Moderate Strong

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

Cogent Not cogent

(d) Give **one** reason that justifies your evaluation of the cogency. (1 mark)

Question 6 **(4 marks)**

Studies have shown that speakers of languages without a future tense (such as Finnish or German) are more likely to engage in environmentally-responsible behaviour than speakers of languages with a future tense (such as English or Greek). It follows that languages without a future tense make people more willing to be environmentally responsible, and languages with a future tense make people less likely to be environmentally responsible.

For the above argument:

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

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

Cogent Not cogent

(c) Give **one** reason that justifies your evaluation of the cogency. (1 mark)

_____

_____

(d) Using the numbers given in part (a) above, draw a diagram of the argument. (1 mark)

Question 7 **(5 marks)**

School leavers should not celebrate finishing exams by going to leavers' celebrations in Bali, Rottnest or down South. First, leavers' celebrations are invariably unsupervised and school leavers are too young to act responsibly without supervision. The second reason is that, instead of wreaking havoc on local communities, school leavers should spend a couple of weeks looking after their long-suffering parents or volunteering in a homeless shelter where they might have the opportunity to learn about real hardship.

For the above argument:

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

(b) Circle the inference indicators. (1 mark)

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

(d) Using the numbers given in part (c) above, draw a diagram of the argument. (2 marks)

Question 8 **(2 marks)**

Are the following statements analytic or synthetic?

(a) Mothers are older than their biological children. (1 mark)

(b) It is very difficult to get 100% on a philosophy examination. (1 mark)

Question 9 **(4 marks)**

Use a diagram to represent the strongest possible argument that can be constructed using **all** the following statements only **once**.

(1) My neurological activity occupies physical space.
(2) My thoughts and my neurological activity have different properties.
(3) My thoughts cannot be identical to my neurological activity.
(4) My thoughts are private and only accessible to me.
(5) If two things have different properties, then they cannot be identical.
(6) My thoughts do not occupy physical space.
(7) My neurological activity is public and can be seen by a neuroscientist.

End of Section One

This page has been left blank intentionally

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

This section contains **two** questions. Answer **both** questions.

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

Supplementary pages for planning/continuing your answers to questions are provided at the end of this Question/Answer booklet. If you use these pages to continue an answer, indicate at the original answer where the answer is continued, i.e. give the page number.

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

DAVID: I just returned from a nine-day meditation retreat. I feel so calm and centred. Everyone else there felt the same way. If you don't meditate, then you're wasting your life.

JO: You claim that one should meditate because it gives you access to a higher reality. That's nonsense. Next thing you'll be signing up for Parrot Astrology or Crystal Chakra Therapy. There's nothing scientific about meditation or other religious practices. Meditation is a pointless waste of time.

DAVID: That's not fair! Meditation harnesses genuine spirituality whereas the new-age mumbo-jumbo you mention just trades on popular spiritual trends. That's what I call 'pseudo-spirituality'. You wouldn't dismiss science because of pseudo-science, so you shouldn't dismiss spirituality because of pseudo-spirituality.

JO: Your analogy fails. You can't compare science with spirituality in any way. Science deals with what is real – cold hard facts; while spirituality peddles in what is not real – ethereal new-age nonsense.

DAVID: Science isn't the only way of knowing about reality. Spiritual and religious practices also aim at knowing reality but, unlike science, you can't access the reality by using your five senses, or by rational thinking. You access reality via meditative, thought-free awareness. How could I feel so peaceful if I wasn't accessing a deeper reality?

JO: To say that feeling peaceful proves access to a deeper reality is like arguing that feeling agitated proves that aliens are watching you. It doesn't follow. You only felt peaceful because you heard ahead of time all that mumbo-jumbo about meditating being calming. It's your expectation, not your meditation, which made you feel peaceful.

Question 11 **(20 marks)**

Choose **one** of the following passages and:

- summarise (2 marks)
- clarify (8 marks)
- critically evaluate it. (10 marks)

Text one

We might mistakenly think, as the naturalists and materialists do, that we are just a physical object in a physical world. But this is not so. This is because, if we take ourselves to be mere physical creatures, then we cannot act authentically. But, if we think of ourselves as having two crucial aspects, an *'in itself'* and a *'for itself'*, then we can act authentically. My recognising the '*in itself'* involves me grasping my 'givenness': that I have concrete, given characteristics (a past, a body, a social situation) that constrain my actions. This, the materialists and naturalists recognise. But our being also has a '*for itself'*. Recognising this crucial aspect involves me apprehending, through my capacity for reflection and self-awareness, that I can to some extent transcend my 'givenness' – through affirming my ability to act freely and, thus, authentically. As *'for itself'*, I am always more than I am as *'in itself'* because I stand in front of an open range of future possibilities for how I define myself. So, it is clear that we are much more than mere physical objects in a physical world.

Text two

Thought-experiments should not be used in moral theorising. This is because there is something fundamentally question-begging about the process of designing a thought-experiment to argue for a moral claim. Usually the person coming up with the thought-experiment wishes to demonstrate the intuitive appeal of their favoured claim. In conceiving their thought-experiment, they abstract away from the particular details of the case that make it morally controversial to begin with. They do this so that their thought-experiment can produce intuitions that are more clear-cut than the intuitions one might have had about the original case. However, in this process of abstraction, which requires decision about which aspects of the situation are morally salient and which are not, the person will tend to preselect those very features of the case that are especially relevant to, and which, in turn, favour, their moral theory.

Text three

Utilitarianism is an absurd moral theory, because of its very demanding notion of impartiality and its implausible account of human motivation. The theory requires that the utilitarian decision-maker can occupy, perhaps only temporarily and imperfectly, the 'point of view of the universe', where everything is seen impartially, from the outside. They must adopt this point of view even towards their own dispositions, affections or projects, so that these can be impartially assigned a value. But because these are the very things that provide the basis of life's meaning, and therefore rightly ought to have the most value to that person, it is psychologically impossible, and frankly undesirable, to do this. The kind of factors that give life meaning are so different from the kind of factors that utilitarianism is structurally obliged to prize, that we have every reason to hope that people will not strive to think in the utilitarian way. No ethical theory should oblige someone to act in a way that is psychologically impossible or unpalatable. In other words it will, absurdly, be best even from the utilitarian point of view if no one actually is a utilitarian.

End of Section Two

Section Three begins on page 22

See next page

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

This section contains **five** questions. Answer **one** 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)

Supplementary pages for planning/continuing your answers to questions are provided at the end of this Question/Answer booklet. If you use these pages to continue an answer, indicate at the original answer where the answer is continued, i.e. give the page number.

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 12 **(30 marks)**

There is no such thing as an absolute moral standard, moral value or moral rule.

Question 13 **(30 marks)**

A liberal democracy need not be egalitarian.

Question 14 **(30 marks)**

The sphere of moral obligation cannot include future generations.

Question 15 **(30 marks)**

Without religion, death makes life meaningless.

Question 16 **(30 marks)**

We have good reason to be sceptical of scientific predictions that are based on induction.

End of questions

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Question 6 Introductory text information from: Mavisakalyan, A., Weber, C., & Tarverdi, Y. (2018). Future tense: How the language you speak influences your willingness to take climate action. *The Conversation*. Retrieved May, 2018, from https://theconversation.com/future-tense-how-the-language-you-speak-influences-your-willingness-to-take-climate-action-92587

DRAFT

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