2024/12422
Web version of 2023/67864

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

ATAR course examination, 2023

Question/Answer booklet

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Please place your student identification label in this box

WA 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 2023

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	8	8	50	30	30
Section Two Philosophical analysis and evaluation Part A	1	1	40	20	20
Part B	1	1	40	20	20
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 2023: Part II Examinations*. Sitting this examination implies that you agree to abide by these rules.

2. Write your answers in this Question/Answer booklet preferably using a blue/black pen. Do not use erasable or gel pens.

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 **eight** questions. Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 1 **(2 marks)**

Are the following statements analytic or synthetic?

(a) The name 'Dave' is short for 'David'. (1 mark)

(b) To be water-soluble is to have the capacity to dissolve in water. (1 mark)

Question 2 **(3 marks)**

(a) Express the following sentence as a conditional (If X then Y) statement. (1 mark)

Either you climb the mountain or you take a nap.

(b) Unless you are fit, you cannot climb Arunachala. (2 marks)

Underline the **two** sentences that mean the same as the above sentence.

(i) If you can climb Arunachala, then you are fit.

(ii) If you are fit, then you can climb Arunachala.

(iii) Either you cannot climb Arunachala or you are fit.

(iv) You cannot be fit unless you can climb Arunachala.

Question 3 **(3 marks)**

I do not know that I am awake. For if I know anything, then I know it with certainty, and I am not certain that I am awake.

For the above argument:

(a) Circle any inference indicators. (1 mark)

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

(c) Using the numbers from part (b), draw a diagram of the argument. (1 mark)

Question 4 **(4 marks)**

Vegetarianism is a morally dubious practice because Hitler was a vegetarian.

For the above argument:

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

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

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

Cogent Not cogent

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

Question 5 **(4 marks)**

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

Tamara's manager must be guilty of religious discrimination, since Tamara was fired from her job at the supermarket after wearing a crucifix to work.

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

If we allow students to wear casual dress to school every day, they will not learn self-discipline. If they don't learn self-discipline, they will become juvenile delinquents and end up in the prison system.

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

Either we adhere to the moral guidance provided by the Bible or we find ourselves lost in a sea of postmodern relativism, with no objective ethical standards.

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

How can anyone doubt that the web browser I invented is the best one available, when it is so superior to all of the alternatives!

Question 6 **(6 marks)**

Excessive smartphone use is a genuine addiction. An addiction is medically defined as any behaviour characterised by a recurrent failure to control it despite significant negative consequences. Smartphone overuse has been shown to cause decreased cognitive functioning that is connected with sleep problems, and it causes a reduction in grey matter volume in the brain. It also causes a marked decrease in impulse control and it causes an increase in reward seeking behaviours.

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

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

Weak Moderate Strong

(c) Using the numbers from part (a), draw a diagram of the argument. (4 marks)

Question 7 **(3 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) For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document

(2) For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document

(3) For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document

(4) For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document

(5) For copyright reasons this text cannot be reproduced in the online version of this document

Question 8 **(5 marks)**

Widespread acceptance of cultural relativism would corrode the foundations of our society. Why? Well, any behaviour would become acceptable since people would believe, under cultural relativism, that there are no absolute moral standards. Cultural relativism should thus be rejected.

For the above argument:

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

(b) Write out the separable statements from part (a) in full. (2 marks)

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

Cogent Not cogent

(d) Identify **one** reason for your answer to part (c). (1 mark)

_____

_____

End of Section One

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

This section has **two** parts: Part A and Part B. Each part contains **one** question. Answer **both** questions.

Write your answers on the lined pages following Question 9 and Question 10.

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.

Part A **20% (20 Marks)**

Question 9 **(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)
- evaluate them critically. (12 marks)

Lena: Jenna, I hear that you are forbidding your daughter Becky from accessing social media. Parents should allow their children unlimited access to social media, just as I do with my beloved son Bill. Either you do this, or you revert to the pre-internet pen-and-paper age.

Jenna: Parents should ban their children from using social media. Doing this gives the children a much better chance of becoming self-sufficient, well-adjusted individuals. The use of social media has been linked to depression in teens so it is clearly a major cause of their depression. And scientific studies show how with social media use one's sense of individual worth can easily come to depend on flimsy validation such as how many 'likes' they get from people they don't know. Having Becky grow up without social media allows her self-esteem to depend on more stable things like people that she actually knows.

Lena: Get with the times, Jenna! If a child is denied access to social media, then how can they develop any self-esteem? We are social creatures who need to interact and cannot live in isolation. This, together with the modern prevalence of social media as a form of social interaction, implies that our need for social interaction will have to be met entirely through social media. From this, it follows that if children are denied access to social media, they end up isolated with no friends. And if a child grows up isolated with no friends, they cannot develop self-esteem.

Jenna: Well, as her mum I know that Becky has a happy 'in-person' social life. Her friends regularly come over to our house and hang out. It is your son Bill who won't have any friends. He will be glued to his device, demonstrating the definition of unsocial behaviour.

Part B **20% (20 Marks)**

Question 10 **(20 marks)**

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

- summarise the passage (2 marks)
- clarify its argument (8 marks)
- evaluate it critically. (10 marks)

Passage One

In social and political debates, the many appeals we hear to the concept of 'human rights' can safely be ignored by any rational person. Politicians, celebrities, activists and non-government organisations talk as though human rights – such as the right to life and the right to freedom of thought – exist objectively, regardless of what anyone thinks. But the whole concept of human rights is a recent invention of the modern West, so obviously the notion is nothing but a convenient fiction. Moreover, the governments that make the biggest noise about human rights on the international stage are invariably the most flagrant violators of those so-called rights, so we can't take their pronouncements on the matter seriously. Finally, believing in rights is incompatible with the scientific worldview: no physicists, chemists, or biologists have ever discovered anything like human rights in their studies of the natural world. As Jeremy Bentham famously said, talk of rights is nothing but 'nonsense on stilts' and should be replaced with more rigorous and realistic talk of pleasure, pain, and the consequences of actions.

Passage Two

All belief ultimately rests on faith. Philosophers have tried to avoid the sceptical conclusion that we know nothing by arguing that there are obvious truths available to our common sense. But common sense cannot ground knowledge of anything. A textbook example of common sense is that a typical dog has four legs. But what does it mean to say we know this to be true? It means that we can offer evidence for the claim. But we cannot do this, because something which gives evidence must be more certain than that which it supports. Yet nothing can be more certain to us than that dogs have four legs. To appeal to evidence for it, such as what veterinary textbooks or the common man says, is to make the belief shakier than it was in the first place. So we cannot know it. But we obviously cannot doubt it either. We must simply accept the certainty that dogs have four legs and move on.

Passage Three

Advocates of a creationist worldview often claim that evolution by natural selection is just a theory. On these grounds, they argue that evolution by natural selection is on par with their own literal belief in a seven-day creation story. But creationists are wrong about this, for the reason that evolution is not 'just' a theory. In a scientific context, a theory is an explanation of some aspect of the natural world that is well-substantiated by evidence and that has not been falsified. According to the internet, evolution is one of the most robustly supported ideas in all of modern science. On the other hand, as everybody knows, creationism lacks any scrap of scientific evidence whatsoever. Creationism really is just a theory because it is sheer speculation and it is not even falsifiable. So, creationists are simply wrong to make the claim that creationism and natural selection are on par as theories.

End of Section Two
Section Three begins on page 22

See next page

Passage number: _____

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 15. 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 11 **(30 marks)**

Our inability to justify inductive inference means that we have very little knowledge about the world.

Question 12 **(30 marks)**

Deontological theories are superior to utilitarian theories.

Question 13 **(30 marks)**

Each of us has a moral obligation to future generations to minimise our impact on climate change.

Question 14 **(30 marks)**

The killing of domesticated animals for food is morally wrong.

Question 15 **(30 marks)**

The inevitability of death is needed for life to have meaning.

End of questions

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

Supplementary page

Question number: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Question 7 Statements (1)–(5) adapted from: Craig, W. L. (1979). *The […] Argument*. Macmillan Press.

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 (the 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 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 4.0 International (CC BY) licence.

An *Acknowledgements variation* document is available on the Authority website.

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