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PHILOSOPHY

Higher Level and Standard Level

Paper 1

22 pages

SECTION A

Core Theme: What is a 'human' being?

1. **(a)   Identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue raised by the photograph about the question of the self.**   *[3 marks]*

   Some philosophical concepts or issues might include
   - What is the self and is it possible to know the authentic self?
   - Does the individual often hide the authentic self by means of the 'masks' s/he presents to others?
   - Are the masks we wear necessary to protect our innermost self? If we wear a mask do we become another person or simply take on another identity?
   - Does the individual remain forever hidden from him/herself?
   - Can another person ever achieve knowledge of my self?
   - Are we locked into our own knowledge of our self without ever finding a way of revealing our self to the external world?
   - Is it the case that how others see us is never how we see ourselves?

   (b)   Compare and contrast *two* different philosophical approaches to the philosophical issue or concept you identified in part (a).   *[12 marks]*

   Some possible discussion points might include
   - Existentialism: My self is my project. However, am I able to reveal my self to others? Is my self constantly objectified by my encounter with the other? Do I hide my 'self' in guilt and shame from the glance of others? Is the other as unknown to me as I am to him or her?
   - Substance Dualism: Is my self an immaterial substance different from and hidden by a material substance? Where is my self if it is different from my body? Is there an essential self which others cannot penetrate?
   - Solipsism: Can I ever know any self other than my self? Can I ever define and reveal my self to another? Does nothing exist except what I privately know behind the mask I present to the world?
   - Intersubjectivity: Is my self without definition, form, and meaning until I enter into relationships with others? Am I able to change my 'masks' as my relationships change? Is there a stable, uniform self that endures throughout my life? Do others challenge me to remove my 'mask' and to enter into authentic relationships?
   - Materialism: There is no immaterial inner self masked by a material visible self. My self is completely and exhaustively accounted for and explained by the physical laws of nature.
   - Eastern traditions: the soul/self, its identity, its status, its permanence, its relation to the body
   - Non-traditional approaches: feminism and the impact of gender differences on self understanding, mythical traditions, New Age

(c) **"There are no mental events; there are only brain processes. There is no immaterial mind; there is only the material body." Discuss and evaluate this statement with regard to a philosophical understanding of the person.**   *[15 marks]*

Some possible discussion points might include
- Do minds exist? What is the difference between mind and brain? Do mind and body interact?
- Are mental events and brain states different but simultaneous events, coordinated by some principle of pre-established harmony or by some superior being?
- How would a philosopher analyse a mental event as opposed to a neurobiologist examining a brain state?
- How do various philosophical perspectives handle the implications of the statement regarding mind-brain and mind-body problems (*e.g.* monism, dualism, behaviourism, physicalism, functionalism *etc.*)?
- How do we account for abstract human characteristics (love, faith, trust *etc.*) if everything is approached materialistically?
- The materialist and the immaterialist analysis of human experience.
- The relation between contemporary philosophy and the cognitive sciences.

2.   (a)   Identify a central philosophical concept or philosophical issue raised by the passage about the human condition.   *[3 marks]*

Some philosophical concepts or issues might include
- Can life have a predetermined or preconceived meaning?
- Is it human nature to give meaning to our lives or to the human condition?
- Can we know for certain the outcome of our actions?
- Can we ever avoid making decisions and acting?
- If one's life is unique, can one judge it or pattern it according to the lives of others or according to the values of others?
- Is the human condition characterised by complete unpredictability, uncertainty or absurdity?
- Does the human condition provide us with a stable context in which we can make consistent, coherent choices and decisions?
- Is it possible that life has no meaning, no direction?

(b)   Compare and contrast *two* different philosophical approaches to the philosophical issue or concept you identified in part (a).   *[12 marks]*

Some possible discussion points might include
- What philosophical approaches might offer us insights into viewing the human condition and our lives as meaningful experiences (*e.g.* classic Western traditions, non-Western tradition, non-traditional perspectives)
- Do all philosophical approaches to the consideration of the human condition view life as characterised throughout by anxiety?
- Is the significance of the human condition a matter decided by an individual in isolation or can we depend on the perspectives of a community of individuals?
- How does an individual face and resolve the issues of meaning and meaninglessness?
- Do all individuals find ways of making sense of life? What about those who do not?
- Do we find meaning from within life or from outside life?
- If life has no meaning in the traditional sense does that make life worthless?
- Does life have to contain meaning at all?

(c) **To what degree is a person free to determine the meaning of life? Develop a critical response to this question.** *[15 marks]*

Some possible discussion points might include
- To what extent am I free?
- Do language, social class, ethnic background, gender, biological and social factors influence my freedom to create meaning for my life?
- Is meaning imposed upon me by my social context?
- Am I bound to the conventional expectations of a meaningful life?
- Is the view of a meaningful life imposed upon me by the values that have been generated by anonymous 'others'?
- Is my freedom to create a personal meaning system regarding my life an illusion?
- What do I mean by freedom? A discussion about theoretical, metapysical and practical freedom, and determinism when it comes to determining the meaning of my own life?
- Should I be free to determine the meaning of my own personal life?

SECTION B

Optional Theme 1: Political Philosophy

3.   **Is it justifiable to construct a hierarchy of human rights?**

This question asks for a review of the nature of human rights and explores the justifiability of the ranking of these rights.

Key points
- The nature of rights from a philosophical perspective, the idea of natural rights and pragmatic political rights
- Types of rights that exist, this could involve a listing and how they have come about if they are not seen as natural rights
- Possible criteria that could be used to order, select or limit human rights

Discussion
- The evaluation of different claims of what is good might be considered as an effect upon how to assess the importance of some rights over others.
- The nature of a hierarchy and how value in general is attributed
- Not so much how but who might construct and control the hierarchy?
- The value in a hierarchy so that if necessary some might be given up to maintain others that are more important; examples could come from times of war or the non-bearing of arms so as to achieve a decline in violence and an increase in safety.

4.   **Under what circumstances, if any, is civil disobedience justified?**

This question invites a discussion of both the nature of civil disobedience and its possible enactment. Answers might explore when, where and how such actions might be appropriate or argue the case as to the inappropriateness of civil obedience.

Key points
- Need for definition of civil disobedience, possibly with reference to historical examples and the concept of non-violence
- The issue of an individual's conscience guiding actions
- The complexity of breaching the law yet remaining within the general spirit of the law, hence the clash of individual/group morality and the espoused legal position
- Examples of circumstances both theoretical and practical when such action is justified
- The reasons for such action – Hobbes, Locke and Rawls might be mentioned

Discussion
- The notion that there might be some supra-legal notion that is being appealed to by such action, for example the clash between established legal authority and a religious position
- The degrees of failure and frustration with actual legal processes
- An extraction of the Hobbesian position that such action is reasonable because the legitimate authority has failed to carry out its duty
- The notion that individuals have to take on responsibility for their own actions
- Civil disobedience in the context of democracy or authoritarian regimes
- The absolute authority of established systems of government might be defended. Hence civil disobedience is not justified and could be argued that it is not allowed as those in authority know or have a higher good in mind or are considering the rights and protection of a larger group – that is civil disobedience could endanger indirectly the lives of others.

Optional Theme 2: Knowledge

5.   **"Truth is dependent on the mind that asserts it – it remains a mystery that we must take on faith from others." Critically evaluate this statement about the possibility of knowledge.**

The intention of the question is to allow a response to the problem of knowing and asserting truth. Various accounts of truth will be appropriate in a response to whether certainty can be guaranteed in any sphere of knowledge.

Key points
- Humans share a quest for certain knowledge about the world.
- Common sense leads to unquestioning faith about the reliability, predictability and stability of knowledge, particularly that which is based on empirical observation.
- Analytical certainty is possible but has the limitation of not being able to say anything about the outside world (analytical statements are often dismissed as tautologies since they are about the relation of ideas). Mathematics and logic offer certainty but not much information about the external world.
- Inductive, synthetic statements appear to be making claims about the external world but in fact are strictly descriptions of internal sense experiences.
- Can we bridge the gap between our sensations of the world and what is going on in the world itself?
- Realism asserts that the external world is independent of human conceptualising; Idealism leads us to count as real only that which is in our minds.
- Non-realism demands that we can never understand the world without our thinking being involved in what we are knowing.
- Coherence, correspondence and pragmatism as models of/approaches to how knowledge is sustained and how it progresses – can such accounts do justice to what we mean when we assert the 'truth'?

Discussion
- Different notions of 'truth'
- Knowledge as justified true belief
- Kant's distinction between the world as it appears to us (the phenomenal) and the world as it is (the noumenal)
- Empiricism's admittance of the impossibility of certainty, but its insistence on the primacy of experience
- The relation between reason and perception
- The difference between subjective and objective knowledge – Nagel suggests it is more a difference of distance from the proposition, rather than grounding
- Models of language and meaning, from Logical Positivism to Wittgenstein's language games where understanding truth is context dependent
- Is there a place for extreme scepticism in the twenty-first century?

6.   Is it necessary for a claim to be falsifiable for it to be considered a scientific claim?

This question offers the chance to explore the problem of induction since it was first described by Hume and then developed further by thinkers like Popper and Kuhn. It investigates the epistemological basis of scientific theories and considers if science has a special place in epistemology confirmed by its methodology. Answers might consider the usefulness and extent of scientific knowledge in the whole world of what humans do and can know.

Key points
- Induction – the housing of general laws from a finite number of observations of particular facts/experiences (as opposed to deduction where particular facts are confirmed by reference to general laws)
- Logical problem that no number of finite, singular observations can provide the certainty that allows for a general law, but in the practical world of daily life induction proves successful
- Popper and falsifiability – Popper is criticising the logical foundation of scientific language
- Examples of knowledge claims Popper attacks – *e.g.* Psychology, teleological explanations like those in modern evolutionary theory, where causes are induced from effects
- Relationship of rationality to perception in science
- Limits of science if it is restricted to observation of sense data; it cannot speculate on pre-material origins of the universe; is the universe a 'brute fact'?

Discussion
- Is the order of the world 'mind imposed', as Kant would suggest, or is it knowable in some sense independent of the structure of human thinking?
- Problems with Popper – his falsifiability 'test' works on the same principle of induction as that which he is criticizing
- Kuhn and the idea of dominating 'paradigms' – can knowledge be thought to progress by improvement of our working 'model'? Could such a subjective account of the progress of scientific knowledge give a satisfactory account of science?
- Modern scientific attempts to provide GUTs (grand unifying theories) and TOEs (theories of everything) – can falsifiability be of help in assessing these?
- Must science be predictive to be good science?
- Modern sociological objections to the practice and method of science, where traditional male domination or capitalistic speculation can be deemed to influence knowledge claims

Optional Theme 3: Philosophy of Culture

7.   From the point of view of culture to what extent is world citizenship a desirable aim? Critically discuss.

The question, deliberately open to the development of many different lines of argument, refers to world citizenship as a matter of globalization and to its impact at different cultural levels.

Key points
- An interpretation of the concept of culture involved should be examined. Features of a freely chosen conception of culture might be identified and developed, to the necessary extent, within the context of their argument. Cultural activity may be described in many diverse ways *e.g.* as bodily-mental activity or as system of symbolic interaction.
- If citizenship of the world means global culture, global culture is not necessarily to be understood as the domination of one 'super' culture over diverse particular cultures.
- Every culture comprises relevant inner structures and mechanisms responsible for the selection, transformation and adaptation of the phenomena from other cultures, and due to them a culture does not become a combination of diverse elements, and preserves its wholeness and individuality. This could apply to the relation between particular and global culture.
- Various elements or aspects of culture they analyse *e.g.* language; taboos; rituals; beliefs and traditions, media.

Discussion
- Any reflection upon 'a global culture' is possible always from the perspective of a definite particular culture: the global culture is seen as refracted through the prism of our particular world-understanding.
- A global culture tends to be a developed culture. It is a culture which looks forward to expanding its potentialities, it is an open culture. Such a culture is able to enter into a dialogue with particular cultures, because culture is capable of translating into its language or constructing the phenomena of another culture by new and common means.
- The existence of a global culture is at least an historical, economic and social fact. A relevant question is whether it makes any sense to reflect on it.
- Is this phenomenon dangerous and threatening to human well-being? Could we rise above local concerns and preoccupations and develop a world culture? Would this be desirable?
- Does citizenship of the world mean rising above local concerns and preoccupations? Is it progress?
- Would it be desirable to converge in only one human culture?

8. **"We are all confronted, at one time or another, with choices as to what sort of life we could lead." Do cultural institutions contribute to the sort of life we as individuals would like to pursue? Critically discuss.**

The main aim of the question is to discuss what the roles of cultural institutions such as family, schools, churches and the law are as to individual choices and life projects.

Key points
- 'Institutions' can be understood in a broad sense including the elements that make up culture *e.g.* language; taboos; rituals; beliefs and traditions; that which organizes everyday life.
- Different positions think that cultural institutions are opposed to the realization of individual goals.
- Far from forming ourselves into self-sufficient entities, we are born, live, and die in a state of incompleteness, with a deep need for others. Cultural institutions have their origin in this need.
- An individual life based on self–realization is one which develops to the fullest the inherent capacities of each person. It would also insist that any attempt to restrain the full development of such capacities by outside control would necessarily be wrong.
- The opposition between the 'state of nature' and the civilization can serve as a guide to analyze the question.

Discussion
- Do cultural institutions leave room to the persistent hope for human happiness? Should they be concerned with it?
- By insisting too much on the individual's autonomy, do we not risk ending up as a collection of 'monads', of self-sufficient entities, of beings who do not really live in society?
- What sort of life we can live in modern times?
- Different approaches can be discussed *e.g.* Rousseau, Kant, Marx, Nietzsche.
- Is there an inherent conflict between individual aims and cultural institutions?

Optional Theme 4: World Philosophies

9.   **Discuss the concept of suffering in the philosophical traditions of Buddhism and Islam.**

This question invites a philosophical investigation of the concept of suffering in two world philosophies that reflect different world-views. An answer could describe and analyse the metaphysical assumptions made by the traditions in relation to suffering. Answers might explain similarities and point out contrasts.

Key points
(a)   Buddhism
- Suffering (*Dukkha* – literally 'bad'-'wheel', or 'ill-fare' as opposed to 'welfare') is one of the Three Marks of Existence and the first Noble Truth; it comes in different types: plain suffering (pain, unhappiness *etc.*); the unsatisfactoriness of the impermanence of pleasure and the unsatisfactoriness of life until one achieves enlightenment
- Suffering is related to *anicca* (nothing is fixed) and *anatta* in that all things, including the self – which is not separate – is impermanent and always subject to change; all beings are interdependent, unable to exist separately from others and are thus unfixed and changing
- The world is a place of impermanence, change and decay and humans cannot escape physical disease or personal insecurity; humans cannot discover in the world the permanent happiness they seek – all things we crave are bound to cease to exist even after we have acquired them; this is the human origin of suffering
- Some humans invent a 'being' who can console them and offer immortality (see Islam); but for Buddhists humans cause suffering and the law of *karma* shows how craving and suffering are caused
- The 'cure' is to overcome selfishness by egolessness and the ceasing of craving for worldly things – the path to enlightenment.
- *Karma* as a law of cause and effect where the consequences of good and evil have an effect on one's rebirth and 'cure' for suffering; the grip of *karma* is overcome by an understanding of the human situation and a journey towards enlightenment (see *The Three Marks of Existence, The Four Noble Truths* and *The Noble Eightfold Path*).
- Ultimate salvation is in extinguishing self and escaping the cycle of life (*samsara*) to *nirvana*.

(b)   Islam
- The Islamic world-view is dualistic with a contrast between the purity and absolute good of Allah's realm and the transient, flawed realm of man 'below'.
- Suffering is a natural consequence of life lived freely – and apart from absolute obedience to Allah.
- Man does not experience suffering through a fall – rather suffering originates if man, who is born innocent, exercises freedom not to obey Allah.
- Satan is the angel who refused to accept Allah appointing man as ruler over the world. Man should show Allah as right to have given man responsibility – Satan tries to prove Allah was wrong – thus suffering and temptation to personal sin can be used against the faithful.
- Allah communicates with man through prophecy (*Risalah*) and offers a route to knowledge of good; man is not a puppet and is free to obey Allah as he chooses.

Discussion
- Buddhism and Islam have contrasts in conceptions of the cause, origin and purpose of suffering.
- Islam's conception of Allah as the Higher Being allows suffering to be used by a divine agency as a punishment for sin or a means of improvement; for Buddhism, any reference outside of this world for the existence of suffering is denying reality.
- In Islam, the dualism of good and evil, which stem from Allah and Satan respectively, allows suffering to be directly attributed to a personal source; in Buddhism, the source is the (impersonal) nature of the universe where impermanence and decay are natural features
- Buddhism's cyclical view of life's progress, with rounds of existence dependent on the law of *Karma*, contrasts with the Islamic view of life as a fixed test, where the correct response to suffering is obedience to Allah resulting in paradise in the after-life
- Buddhism and Islam offer contrasting pictures of redemption and the hope of a future free from suffering
- In Buddhism it is possible to eliminate suffering by extinguishing desires; in Islam suffering is eliminated by the will of Allah

10. **Critically evaluate the nature of personal responsibility in *two* of the philosophical traditions you have studied.**

This question invites an explanation of both ethical issues, and relationships between the individual and the community. Answers might relate the ethical emphasis of the tradition to its metaphysical basis. Answers might tackle questions of moral/social authority and any incentives offered by that tradition to individuals to act in the way they do.

Key points
(a) Buddhism
- The question of the existence of a Higher Being as it relates to personal responsibility
- The interdependence of all things and the consequence for this of personal responsibility in the universe
- The Buddhist emphasis on the importance of 'egolessness' – no substantial self, or *anatta*;
- Buddhist emphasis on wisdom and compassion as a basis for one's duty
- Respect to all living things and persons is demanded and a sense of social order (including division) is expected.
- Attitude to dogma or religious authority on personal matters of responsibility

(b) Hinduism
- Ultimate reality rests in the concept of Brahman, which has consequences for personal responsibility.
- God's nature (*Brahman*) necessarily demands that one lives life according to duties which will unite the self with God (*Brahman*).
- Hinduism demands an ethic of personal duty; life is lived according to law, the acquisition of merit through the *karma* system and a general sense of order (*dharma*).
- Salvation is offered as a reward and the liberation (*moksha*) of the soul (*atman*), which allows the breaking of the cycle of carnal rebirth (*samsara*), is dependent on one's response to one's duty.

- Personal responsibility is demanded in the community, which is ordered through the caste system into which one is born.
- Social order (*dharma*) is encouraged.

(c) Islam
- The conceptual background of dualism with Allah and the material world are rigorously separated.
- The basis of Islam is in personal submission, expressed through the individual's obedience to Allah and adherence to the Five Pillars.
- All action, whether in public or private, is recorded and will be judged.
- Social awareness is sponsored even in private celebrations (like marriage or birth rites).
- Importance of awareness of the Muslim worldwide community (*ummah*)
- Reliance on strict scriptural codes for guidance on personal responsibility; the lack of interpretation in the modern setting

Discussion
- The different concepts of self in the traditions
- The relationship between concepts of the individual self and the possibility of a Higher Being
- The impact of the religion's metaphysical conception on the ethical lives of adherents
- The relationship between the individual person and the community
- The differing notion of redemption and how this relates to personal responsibility
- Duty-based ethical system in all religions, but can observation of religious codes of conduct be followed for selfish reasons/personal gain in attaining salvation/redemption?
- Is reason used in formulating personal responsibility or is moral teaching based purely on authority (either of scripture or religious instruction)?
- Is there a role for interpretation in the modern world?

Optional Theme 5: Nature, Work and Technology

11. **"Trade Unions are a necessary component of an industrialised society." Discuss the philosophical implications of this statement.**

This question invites a philosophical explanation of the purpose of Trade Unions and also to judge, for example whether industrialised societies could do without them and the possible effect of this on workers.

Key points
- The definition of the function of a Trade Union and the relationship of this to workers' rights and conditions of work
- The changing nature of industrialised societies and the changing nature of organised labour
- The concept of sides in labour relationship of employee and employer with possible perceived differing objectives
- The right of labour to organise and speak with a collective voice and perhaps be part of a wider political scene
- The working environment: workers' rights/obligations

Discussion
- The changing nature of economies and whether Trade Unions are outdated
- The notion of the possible benefits or not of polar positions in industrialised societies
- The idea that Trade Unions are change agents within a society
- The impact of the type of work activity on the organization of labour (*e.g.* service industry versus manufacturing industry)
- The condition of workers in non unionised activities might be raised as a justification, for example of sweat shops and near slave labour
- A contrast to Marxist ideas, that might be brought out, that Trade unions may be a safety valve that averts all-out revolutionary change
- Do trade unions diminish exploitation/alienation?
- Is there a need for labour to be organised to exercise power to reach certain ends? Do workers need a collective voice?

12. **Assess the claim that with the increase in the application of technology the quality of people's lives has improved.**

The question asks for definitions of how we measure quality and improvement in relationship to the human condition and the impact of increased technology on these factors on the human condition.

Key points
- The changing nature of technology from the stone age to the computer
- An exploration of the concept of quality and improvement in relationship to humans
- An evaluation of the claim that there are at least two sides to the impact of technology on people's lives; the end to drudgery, the monotony of certain tasks, the replacement of people by machines with the consequences, the equation of the standard of living and quality of life, and whether the increase in the former directly increases the latter

Discussion
- The positive and negative effects of technology and the inability to generalise concerning the impact of technology
- The issue of improvement being a relative notion and that what is improvement for one may not be for another
- Examples of the progression of the application of technology in that at first it may be seen as positive and then later realised to have negative effects or vice versa
- The issue of control may be raised; that decisions may be made relating to negative affects being outweighed by the positive affects and who makes these judgments, *e.g.* the use of nuclear power or wide spread motor transportation
- Increased quality might not be an ultimate goal. The simple hard life might be seen as better, which reverts back to concepts of betterment.

Optional Theme 6: Philosophy of The Arts

13. **Genius, craftsman, moralist, visionary, beauty-seeker, worker, producer? What should be the predominant role of the artist in society?**

    The question asks for an assessment of the relationship between the artist and society and the role of art in society. It might draw examples from music, painting, literature, photography, film, drama, and from different historical periods or cultural situations.

    Key points
    - The work of the artist reflects society. People can look at themselves and at the ideas of their society in the artist's mirror. The artist makes clear what people do not ordinarily see.
    - Art as a social construct is dependent on a variety of contexts: historical, cultural, political, economic. All arts are produced and appreciated within the context of a particular society and historical period.
    - The status of the artist is determined twofold. The first is a matter of the artist's individual choice; the second is a condition imposed upon the artist from outside.
    - Artists have sometimes been outcasts and were sometimes ostrocized. Sometimes they have simply been lone individuals asserting the autonomy of the creative act in opposition to the standards set by society.

    Discussion
    - Some topics which might be discussed, (a) freedom: obedience to rules; social conformity; respect of censorship; (b) responsibility: to self; to a cause; to moral, political or social ends; (c) the artist as an agent of stability or change.
    - The distinction between art and morality – is such a distinction real? What is the relation of an artist's moral commitment to his/her art?
    - Although art has in fact always both celebrated and challenged the community, it seeks to utilize the changes in contemporary society to nourish reflection on the conditions of artistic creation. For instance, the use of new technologies in artistic creation has changed the relationship between the artist and society.
    - Relation of the arts to contemporary political regimes. Responsibility of artists in liberal democracies, totalitarian regimes and others. Effect of those regimes on the arts, the subjects and forms as well as the audiences
    - The artist is never content to do what has been done before. He is always exploring new ground, new ideas. The artist uses his/her imagination to see new possibilities.
    - Some questions regarding the context: To what extent do power relationships determine what art or whose art is valued? Is all art essentially a product of a particular place and time in terms of its subject matter and conventions of expression? Is art best seen as anthropological or historical documentation, bringing to life a remote society or era?

14. **"Only art discloses truth that really matters for human life." Critically evaluate this statement.**

This question mainly refers to an interpretation of art which is focused on its relevance as a means to self-knowledge, to knowledge about others and, in general, to reality. The discussion can be developed from a variety of perspectives.

Key points
- Art is a selective recreation of reality according to the artist's value-judgments. Artists recreate those aspects of reality which represent their fundamental view of human nature.
- Artists, or at least great artists, show us how to look at the world, how to understand ourselves, who we are, and what our world is like. Art as a cognitive domain looks for truth.
- The neoclassical theory of art: art is connected to truth via its triple features of (a) mimesis, (b) beauty and (c) moral significance.
- The romantic theory of art: (a) art reveals metaphysical truth (has metaphysical content, plays a metaphysical role); (b) metaphysical theory is necessary to elucidate art; and (c) art reveals metaphysical truth which is inaccessible to rational analysis.

Discussion
- Is it the function of art to disclose truths, or is truth the result of knowledge?
- Who creates truth – the beholder or the artist?
- Why would only art disclose truth that really matters? Why not other human activities *e.g.* science and religion?
- The search for truth can be one aspect of the artistic process, but it has many different dimensions such as transformation and creation. The artistic process can be a means of expression, communication, propaganda, and indoctrination as well.
- The search for truth does not clearly identify the main traits of the aesthetic experience such as being non-utilitarian and detached from ordinary self-interested pursuits.
- Works of art are made to be viewed aesthetically and just to be enjoyed for no other purpose.

Optional Theme 7: Philosophy of Religion

15.   Assess the validity of the arguments from design as a proof of the existence of God.

This question asks for an explanation of the design argument (the teleological argument) and then to judge in what ways or not it is a sound position of proof.

Key points
- The order and perceived purpose seen in the universe gives rise to belief in the existence of God
- Chance occurrences are not possible and therefore there must be a designer, God
- The counter position to design that refutes this proof such as, insufficient evidence, contradictions, that randomness over time may form patterns
- Mention of other proofs of God's existence, although the focus of the question should not be on the other proofs, more the worthwhileness over the design argument
- Mention of methods of judging the proof of something through a process of inference

Discussion
- The nature of God and the application of the notion of 'proof' of God; can you, should you apply perceived scientific methods to something that might not be scientific?
- The origins of the design argument – classical theism and the everyday perception of the flawed benevolence of God
- The problem of deciding or attributing purpose based only upon a partial picture of the universe
- The position that if creation is an expression of God's love, not all of creation seems to be pleasant, and this may contradict the loving nature of God
- Humans, by their nature, see what they want to see so they see evidence of God because they want to; human desire for the proof creates the proof. Humans being a part of the universe are bound to infer design.
- If the argument is accepted it may not prove the notion of a Christian God
- Kant's argument may be raised in that such a proof goes beyond reason, in addition reference might be made to Aquinas, Paley and Hume.
- A modern physics approach in that we as conscious beings can understand the complexities in the universe and that our purpose is to comprehend the implicit values in nature placed there by God. For example, our conscious ability to comprehend beauty in nature is evidence in itself of design.

16.   If God is all powerful and all loving, how is it possible that Evil can exist?

The focus of this question is on the nature of evil, a distinction between moral and natural evil, and its compatibility or otherwise with our perception of God as all powerful and all loving.

Key points
- The separation of actions of man and the action of nature that seem to constitute evil
- The idea that an all powerful God could stop evil, and a loving God would stop evil
- Does the existence of evil challenge the assumption of an all powerful and all loving God
- The fact that the problem seems only to relate to the God of classical theism
- Is it a problem of suffering or a problem of evil?

Discussion
- The idea that humans cannot necessarily understand the purposes of God, and evil actually has a purpose
- It may be that humans are wrong to see God as all powerful but is that then a contradiction in our concept of God (for some religious positions it may not be). The problem of the argument from an analogy might be raised.
- The notion of human free will and human responsibility, which may be God given, allows the existence of evil as a consequence of human action not fundamentally God's actions. Humans are separate from God.
- Possible exploration of Augustine's argument in that the Fall produces disorder hence natural evil and man's separation from God allows the existence of moral evil. Evil as a privation releasing God from responsibility.
- Irenaeus's concept of evil as a means to perfect man.
- Process theology: God shares in human suffering and is thus not all powerful
- Whether the actual existence of evil logically negates the existence of God

Optional Theme 8: Theories and Problems of Ethics

17. **"Everybody to count for one, and nobody to count for more than one." With reference to an issue from Applied Ethics, discuss the ways in which this statement could be applied as a normative ethical approach.**

This question provides an opportunity to examine normative ethical approaches, in the light of the Enlightenment, democratic, rational, egalitarian 'project'. Examples of classical schools of ethical theory can be explored. An analysis and criticism of ethical theories might place equality at the heart of ethical considerations. It should illustrate the difficulties and advantages of such theorising in the light of an applied ethical issue.

Key points
- Normative ethics as a rational approach to ethical theory, emerging in the Enlightenment as a response to authoritarian approaches to morality
- Utilitarianism as a consequentialist, empirical school based on observation and egalitarianism – the problem of special interests to utilitarianism
- Kant's categorical imperative maintained that duty must be based on universalisable action and action which treats all people as ends in themselves
- Possible counter examples from Darwinian applications, egoism or social convention theories
- The notion of equality in an appropriately worked through applied ethical example

Discussion
- The importance of the public realm for ethical theories and the difficulties of morality being developed and practised entirely privately
- Maintaining absolute equality can cause a hindrance to moral actions – 'as I cannot help everyone I need help no-one'; the impossibility of maintaining fairness acts as a disincentive to moral behaviour.
- The problem of assessing consequences for other people; can we properly predict pleasure in others? Can we universalise actions adequately?
- Use of an applied ethical problem, like bio-medical ethics, where limited resources encourage a cost/benefit analysis; universal rights as a problem – how limited should our demand for rights be? Can we justify the use humans make of nature and the environment, and can different models of the world (like *Gaia*) limit the scope we give man in his use of natural resources? What place do we give to animal sentience in making our ethical decisions?
- Different psychological approaches to morality (like Nietzsche or evolutionary biology) which encourage competition and self-realisation above communitarian approaches

18. **In what ways can an ethical approach, which concentrates on man's natural characteristics, be a help or hindrance when dealing with moral problems?**

This question invites an exploration of naturalistic approaches to ethics. Theories which have their grounding in natural features of the world have appeal in societies influenced by empiricism. However problems of definition and proof arise – as in Moore's attack on the 'naturalistic fallacy'. The question also gives candidates a chance to contrast natural theories with non-natural ones.

Key points
- The origins and nature of moral values; morality as grounded in natural features of the world: for example, pleasure and utilitarianism
- Psychological or biological approaches to ethics: for example, egoism and theories based on self-interest
- The fact/value distinction and moral language – are ethical approaches really linguistic attempts to describe natural/factual experience? For example, Hume and emotivism
- Can/should moral problems be approached from a rational perspective *e.g.* deontology?
- Approaches to ethics which focus on design features of the world *e.g.* Virtue Ethics or Natural Law

Discussion
- The problem of defining moral terms like 'good' and 'right' in terms of natural properties; G E Moore's 'naturalistic fallacy'; descriptive and prescriptive approaches
- Darwinian accounts of morality – are they predictive enough? Do they offer a suitable moral vocabulary to humans which enable judgments to be made?
- Morality as social convention and the relationship between law and ethics
- Is moral sense acquired or innate? Does a naturalistic account, like that offered by Virtue ethics, enable the human to resolve moral problems adequately?
- Are approaches dependent on rationality, like those which focus on duty or metaphysical features of the world, persuasive and adequate in our complex world of difference and human experience?
- Can we argue from what man **is** to what man **ought** to do?