



MARKSCHEME

November 2011

PHILOSOPHY

Higher Level

Paper 3

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Note to examiners

This markscheme outlines what members of the paper setting team had in mind when they devised the question. The topics listed in the bullet points indicate possible areas candidates might cover in their answers. They are not compulsory points and not necessarily the best possible points. They are only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Examiners should be responsive to any other valid points or any other valid approaches.

Using the assessment criteria

Answers on Paper 3 are assessed according to the assessment criteria set out in the Subject guide.

Unseen text – exploring philosophical activity

This paper consists of a response to an unseen text. The purpose of the exercise is to allow candidates to reflect upon and explore the nature, function, methodology and meaning of philosophical activity as presented in the text, relating this to the candidate's experience of doing philosophy throughout the whole course. Responses might reflect this in very different ways, giving examples which draw from the candidate's experience of exploring philosophical activity throughout the whole course. The following points – referring to the text extract – might be included in a response, but they are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive.

Key Points

- Philosophy as a body of beliefs about ourselves and about the world in which we live
- Doing philosophy is an activity of exploring those sets of beliefs
- Philosophy as an activity delves into the words and ideas we profess to accept and believe in order to work out implications and connections
- Doing philosophy invites a consideration of what great philosophers have believed
- Philosophy challenges us to appreciate differences of opinion and invites a critical examination of our ideas
- Philosophy asks about the meaning of key words and concepts and challenges us to identify what it is in our lives or in the world to which the key words and concepts refer
- Critical reflection is a central activity of doing philosophy
- Coherent articulation is another activity of doing philosophy that demands that we offer clear explanations and justifications for our ideas and views
- Discussion as a route to articulate ideas
- Argumentation is a central task of philosophical activity
- Analysis and synthesis help us bring our thoughts, views and ideas together into a philosophical perspective
- We should do philosophy with ingenuity, insight and persuasive style
- Philosophy can work out common views in uncommon ways
- Philosophy should become personal and have a relationship to the ways in which we live our lives

Discussion

- Is it possible to identify the specific tasks which essentially describe philosophical activity?
 - Do different cultures understand philosophical activity in ways that diverge from the view presented in the text?
 - How were the skills of critical reflection, coherent articulation and convincing argumentation encountered in the course?
 - Are there other skills that might characterize philosophical activity?
 - Is it possible to identify a specifically philosophical style of writing, speaking and thinking?
 - Why should doing philosophy be a personal project and not just a classroom experience?
 - Why should the meaning of the words we use be of concern to doing philosophy?
 - How can philosophical activity help us appreciate the views of others?
 - Is philosophy about more than just our beliefs about ourselves and the world?
 - Is the perspective presented in the text focused far too exclusively on critical reflection and analytical argumentation? What alternatives might be suggested?
 - How might coherency and pragmatism fit into the arguments of the text?
 - Are any of the central statements of the text able to be challenged? Which statements? How might they be challenged?
 - Issues raised in the text in the light of doing philosophy throughout the whole course *e.g.* stating what we believe in or outside the classroom, critical reflection through personal reading or textual study, coherent articulation through writing ideas or debate
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