A-level
PHILOSOPHY
7172/1

Paper 1 Epistemology and moral philosophy

Mark scheme

June 2024

Version: 1.0 Final

Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

No student should be disadvantaged on the basis of their gender identity and/or how they refer to the gender identity of others in their exam responses.

A consistent use of 'they/them' as a singular and pronouns beyond 'she/her' or 'he/him' will be credited in exam responses in line with existing mark scheme criteria.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the performance at the mid-point of the level. There are marks in each level. For the 3 and 5 mark questions that have only 1 mark in each level you need only apply step 1 below.

To support you in your marking, you will have standardisation scripts. These have been marked by the Lead Examiner at the correct standard. Generally, you will have a standardisation script to exemplify the standard for each level of the mark scheme for a particular item.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start by reading the whole of the student's response and then, using the mark scheme level descriptors and the standardisation scripts, place the response in the level which it matches or best fits.
When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. Start with the middle mark of the level and then look at the student's response in comparison with the level descriptor and the standardisation script. If the student's response is better than the standardisation script, award a mark above the mid-point of the level. If the student's response is weaker than the standardisation script, award a mark below the mid-point of the level.

For the 25 mark questions examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. This will be exemplified and reinforced as part of examiner training.

Guidance

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other appropriate points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded zero marks.

Section A – Epistemology

0 1 What is meant by (a) a necessary condition and (b) a sufficient condition?

[3 marks]

AO1 = 3

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
3	A full and correct answer, given precisely, with little or no redundancy.
2	The substantive content of the answer is correct, but there may be some redundancy or minor imprecision.
1	Relevant, but fragmented, points.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Necessary condition:

A necessary condition for X is a condition which must be true/the case for X to be true/the case (eg in order for John to be a bachelor it must be true/the case that John is unmarried).

If the necessary condition for X is not fulfilled, X will not be true/the case.

Sufficient condition:

A sufficient condition (or a set of jointly sufficient conditions) for X is a condition (or set of jointly sufficient conditions) which, if it is true/the case, means that X is true/the case (eg if it is true/the case that John is a bachelor it is true/the case that he is a man).

If the sufficient condition(s) for X are fulfilled, X is true/the case.

The sufficient conditions guarantee X.

Examples for 3 marks

Answers that gain 3 marks will be clear and precise on both conditions although they can express how the conditions work in a variety of ways (eg epistemologically, metaphysically, logically, etc). Below are 2 examples, but any legitimate way of explaining the conditions should be credited as long as students demonstrate that they understand the key points (see Notes).

- Example 1: 'A necessary condition is one that must be satisfied in order for something to be the case. A sufficient condition is one that, if satisfied, is enough for something to be the case'.

- Example 2: 'A is a necessary condition for B if (and only if) B cannot be true unless A is true. A is a sufficient condition for B if A being true means that B will be true'.

Examples for 2 marks

Answers that gain 2 marks will typically demonstrate a clear understanding of one of the conditions and a partial or less precise understanding of the other condition (example 1) or there might be a lack

of detail on both (example 2) or there might be some imprecision in the answer, eg as a result of an intrusive example which compromises the accuracy of the answer overall (example 3).

- Example 1: 'A necessary condition is one that is needed for something to be the case whereas a sufficient condition shows something to be the case but is not needed'.

- Example 2: 'Necessary conditions are needed whilst sufficient conditions are enough'.

- Example 3: 'A necessary condition is one that is needed for something to be the case, whilst a sufficient condition is one that is enough for something to be the case. For example, having a horn is a sufficient but not a necessary condition for being a unicorn.'

Examples for 1 mark

Answers that gain 1 mark might be clear on one of the conditions only (example 1) or demonstrate a partial or imprecise understanding of both conditions (example 2).

- Example 1: 'A necessary condition is one that must be true in all possible worlds. A sufficient condition is one that is enough for something to be the case.'

- Example 2: 'A necessary condition is necessary for something to be the case and a sufficient condition is sufficient for something to be the case.'

Notes:

- Students can explain the conditions in numerous ways – eg in terms of truth, being the case, being satisfied, fulfilling X, guaranteeing X, etc. Any legitimate way of explaining how a condition operates should be credited as long as students demonstrate that they understand the key points – ie that a necessary condition of X is one that is *needed/required* in order for X to be the case, whereas a sufficient condition of X is one that is *enough* if satisfied.
- It should not count as a redundancy if students go on to clarify what is a necessary and sufficient condition by showing how they are different.
    - Eg students may go on to explain (by example) that an individually necessary condition need not by itself be sufficient for X (eg John being unmarried is a necessary condition for John being a bachelor but it is not by itself sufficient, since John must also be male to be a bachelor).
    - Similarly, students may explain (by example) that a sufficient condition for X (or a set of sufficient conditions) need not be necessary for X (eg getting 80% is a sufficient condition for getting an A-grade but it is not a necessary condition, as you can also get an A grade by getting a different percentage (eg by getting 81%)).
- However, students are not expected to show the difference between a necessary and a sufficient condition and can still get full marks if they do not do show it.
- Some students may illustrate what is a necessary condition and what is a sufficient condition by referring to the tripartite account (or another attempt to define propositional knowledge). That is fine and should not count as a redundancy as long as the focus is clearly on explaining the terms of the question and not the tripartite account (or another attempted definition of propositional knowledge).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 2 How does the argument from perceptual variation present an issue for direct realism?

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Direct realism:

- The theory that 'the immediate objects of perception are mind-independent objects and their properties' (AQA Specification).
- By 'mind-independent objects' are meant objects which exist whether or not they are perceived or conceived of.
- Direct realism claims that my perception is constituted by the (physical) processes which take place between the perceiving subject and the perceived object. Because the (physical) processes constitute perception they do not mediate perception (eg by causing sense-data).
- The direct realist claim of directness and immediacy is not a claim of temporal directness or immediacy, but of epistemological directness and immediacy (there are no mediating objects, sense-data/'ideas', to make my perception indirect. Facts about the external world are therefore not inferred).

The argument from perceptual variation:

Students can account for perceptual variation in a number of ways, eg by referring to the first wave of doubt in Descartes' *Meditations* (a tower which appears round from a distance appears square from up close) or Russell's account in *The Problems of Philosophy* (the apparent distribution of colour on a table changes as a spectator moves around it). There are also numerous examples of perceptual variation to be found in Berkeley's *Dialogues,* which students can draw on. Students are also welcome to construct their own examples.

The logic of the argument can be outlined as follows:

P1) When I walk around the table, what I directly perceive changes colour.

P2) The (physical/mind-independent/ordinary) table doesn't change colour (it doesn't change at all) when I walk around it.

C1) Therefore, the object I directly perceive is not the (physical/mind-independent/ordinary) table.

C2) Therefore, direct realism as defined above is false.

The logic of the issue can also be expressed using the phenomenal principle: 'if it appears that there is an object x which has the perceptible quality *f* then there is an object x which possesses the perceptible quality *f*'.

P1) When I walk around the table, what I directly perceive appears to change colour.

P2) By the phenomenal principle, if it appears that there is something which changes colour, then there is something which changes colour.

P3) The (physical/mind-independent/ordinary) table doesn't change colour (it doesn't change at all) when I walk around it.

C1) Therefore, direct realism as defined above is false.

Notes:

- A distinction may be made between 'naïve direct realism' (that we directly perceive mind independent objects, and that those objects are always as they appear in our perceptions), and other forms of direct realism (that we do *directly* perceive mind independent objects, but this does not entail that the world of mind independent objects always is as it appears).
- There are a number of ways that students can formulate or explain the argument from perceptual variation. The above arguments are examples.
- Students need to be careful not to conflate the argument from perceptual variation with the argument from illusion and/or the argument from hallucination.
- If students use an example from another argument to illustrate their answer - eg a crooked pencil from the argument from illusion, then this will constitute imprecision and/or redundancy. However, if the example does not disrupt the logic of their response, then students can gain up to 4 marks as long as the rest of the answer is clear.
- Students can specify what the direct realist takes to be the direct objects of perception in a number of ways, eg 'physical', 'mind-independent', 'external'.
- Students may, but need not, elaborate that if what we directly perceive is not a physical object, it is likely to be a sense-datum (or a collection of sense data). Some students may use the term 'idea' (ie a sensory idea) or 'sense-impression' instead of sense-data and this is fine.
- Students may, but need not, go on to argue that if we directly perceive sense-data in situations of perceptual variation, it is likely that we always directly perceive sense-data either (a) because there is always some degree of perceptual variation in our perception (perceptual variation is ubiquitous) or (b) because situations of perceptual variation and perceptions which do not present us with perceptual variations are 'phenomenally indistinguishable' or 'experientially similar' to those that present us with such variation.
- Students may then go on to argue that the easiest way to explain the phenomenal indistinguishability (or experiential similarity) is by an ontological similarity between the objects of perception. Therefore, since the objects we perceive in situations of perceptual variation are most likely sense-data, it follows that the objects we perceive in any other situation are also most likely sense-data.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 3 Explain how Bertrand Russell responds to scepticism by arguing that the external world is the 'best hypothesis'.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students may begin by giving a brief explanation of 'scepticism', although it is possible for them to demonstrate their understanding of the relevant form of 'scepticism' through their explanation of Russell's response that the external world is the 'best hypothesis'.

Scepticism:

- Students should explain 'scepticism' in terms of the (philosophical) scepticism of the external world, which arises from Russell's sense-data theory/indirect realism.
- If, as Russell (and indirect realism in general) suggests, each of us never directly perceives the public, mind-independent, physical objects of the physical/external world, but only directly perceives our own private, mind-dependent sense-data, how can any of us know that a world of public mind-independent, physical objects exist 'beyond the sense-data'?
- This problem might be phrased in term of being 'trapped behind a veil of perception' or 'me being trapped in my own mind' (although students should not conflate 'scepticism' with 'solipsism', they could reasonably suggest that the former could lead to the latter).
- Students may draw on examples from Descartes (eg the dream argument or the evil demon argument), Putnam (brains-in-vats), or popular films (eg *The Matrix*, *Inception*, *Vanilla Sky*) to explain scepticism of the external world.
- Russell makes the point that it doesn't help to ask anyone else if their experiences corroborate Russell's own since the ontological status of (Russell's experience of) 'anyone else' is part of what has been brought into question.

The 'best hypothesis' argument:

- Students must be clear that Russell does not take 'the best hypothesis' to be a deductive proof of the existence of an external world. They may identify 'the best hypothesis' inference as an inductive or abductive argument as opposed to a deductive argument.
    - Students may draw a distinction between inductive/abductive inferences to the most probable explanation from deductive, valid, and truth-preserving arguments where the conclusion follows from the premises with certainty.

- Students might then go on to note that there are a number of hypotheses which can explain our sense-data (eg dreams and evil demons, see above) before explaining why Russell thinks that the existence of the external world is the best one.
- Students may follow Russell's own wording from *The Problems of Philosophy* and explain why the inference is best in his term of 'simplicity' ('…every principle of simplicity urges us to adopt the natural view, that there really are objects other than ourselves and our sense-data which have an existence not dependent upon our perceiving them').
    - Students might use Russell's own examples of a cat moving through a room or becoming hungry as an illustration of how the existence of the external world provides the simplest explanation of the coherence and consistency of our sense-data.
    - However, students must take very great care not to take 'simplicity' to mean 'ontological simplicity' or take Russell's inference to invoke 'Ockham's razor', since Russell's theory is ontologically complex and not parsimonious.
- Students may mention that Russell supports his argument by pointing out that the belief in the existence of an external world is 'instinctive' and that we have no good reason to reject it, therefore we should conserve it, since, according to Russell, a philosopher should never reject an instinctive belief unless other instinctive beliefs clash with it.

Notes:

- Some students may try to link the notion of epistemological simplicity (as expressed by Russell) with an imprecise/incorrect understanding of 'Ockham's razor' as expressing (something along the following lines) – "the simplest explanation is the best". This constitutes imprecision and/or redundancy. However, if students refer to Ockham's razor but it does not disrupt the logic of their answer, then they can gain up to 4 marks as long as the rest of the answer is clear and correct.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 4 Explain Descartes' cogito **and** an empiricist response to it.

[12 marks]

AO1 = 12

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
10–12	The answer is set out in a precise, fully-integrated and logical form. The content is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. Points are made clearly and precisely. Relevance is sustained, with very little or no redundancy. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
7–9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. The content is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. Any lack of clarity with respect to particular points is not sufficient to detract from the answer. Relevance is largely sustained. There may be some redundancy, though not sufficient to detract from the answer. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
4–6	The answer is clear and set out in a coherent form, with logical/causal links identified. The content of the answer is largely correct and most points are made clearly. Relevance is not always sustained and there is some redundancy. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the response.
1–3	There are some relevant points made, but no integration. Some points are clear, but there is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

<u>Descartes' cogito:</u>

- Students might contextualise Descartes' cogito by explaining it as a response to the third wave of doubt (the 'evil demon') and the first foundational truth (his 'Archimedean' point) in his infallibilist quest for certainty using intuition and deduction.
- Students may characterise Descartes' cogito as an a priori or rational intuition.
    - An a priori or rational intuition is a non-inferential grasp of a self-evident truth by the intellect or reason.
    - Students should not be penalised if they explain Descartes' cogito as an argument as opposed to a non-inferential grasp, since Descartes himself presents 'the cogito' as a line of reasoning in the Second Meditation (see below), and only insists that 'the cogito' is not an argument in a response to one of his critics.
- Descartes' cogito can be outlined in a number of ways and may be taken to refer to Descartes' conclusion (a) that he exists because he thinks (cogito ergo sum) and/or that (b) he exists as a thinking thing (sum res cogitans).
    - (a) Students may refer to Descartes' initial line of reasoning from the Second Meditation that "Even then, if he [the evil demon] is deceiving me I undoubtedly exist. Let him deceive me all that he can, he can never bring it about that I am nothing while I think that I am something. So after thoroughly thinking the matter through I conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist, must be true whenever I assert it or think it."

- (b) From which Descartes goes on to conclude that he exists as a thinking thing ('res cogitans') "…I am a real, existing thing. What kind of a thing? I have answered that: a thinking thing."
- Students may also refer to the better-known phrase, 'I think, therefore I am', from Descartes' *Principles of Philosophy* and *Discourse on the Method* in their explanation of 'the cogito'.
- Students may legitimately contrast 'res cogitans' (a thinking thing/the mind) with 'res extensa' (an extended thing/the body), eg by pointing out how 'the mind' is better known than 'the body,' and refer to Descartes' substance dualism. Students may relate to this the example of the wax and/or the example of 'hats and coats'.

<u>An empiricist response to it:</u>

- Students are most likely to draw on either Hume's or Russell's criticism of Descartes: none of us have any empirical evidence of him/herself as a thing (res), ie as a substance which persists through property change, since all we are aware of empirically are our perceptions and not of anything underlying and persisting through those perceptions.
  - Hume: "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I can never catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and can never observe anything but the perception. When my perceptions are remov'd for any time, as by sound sleep; so long am I insensible of *myself*, and may truly be said not to exist." (*A Treatise of Human Nature*, I.IV.VI).
  - Russell: "Some care is needed in using Descartes' argument. '*I* think, therefore *I* am' says rather more than is strictly certain. It might seem as though we were quite sure of being the same person today as we were yesterday, and this is no doubt true in some sense. But the real Self is as hard to arrive at as the real table and does not seem to have that absolute, convincing certainty that belongs to particular experiences. When I look at my table and see a certain brown colour, what is quite certain at once is not '*I* am seeing a brown colour', but rather, 'a brown colour is being seen'. This of course involves something (or somebody) which (or who) sees the brown colour; but it does not of itself involve that more or less permanent person whom we call 'I'. So far as immediate certainty goes, it might be that the something which sees the brown colour is quite momentary, and not the same as the something which has some different experience the next moment." (*The Problems of Philosophy*, Chapter II).
- As part of their response, students may refer to Hume's fork, eg by explaining that any knowledge of existence must be of 'matters of fact' (synthetic a posteriori) and cannot be of 'relations of ideas' (analytic a priori). Since we have no 'internal perceptions' of a separate/underlying, persisting self, and thereby no synthetic a posteriori knowledge or evidence of a separate/underlying, persisting self – and since we could never have any analytic a priori knowledge/evidence of the existence of anything either, it follows that we have no knowledge/evidence of the existence of a separate/underlying, persisting self.
- As part of their response, students may refer to Hume's fork as being a possible methodological response to Descartes' cogito – ie to the cogito as part of his intuition and deduction thesis. Students may link this to the status of the cogito as a synthetic a priori truth and explain that, because this would contravene Hume's fork (being neither a relation of ideas nor a matter of fact), some empiricists could object. They might link this to Hume's objection (above) that the cogito cannot be a matter of fact because we have no impression of a substantial self.
- Students can, but are less likely to, draw on Locke's view of 'the self' as a reflective relationship which doesn't reveal an underlying self (but rather constitutes it).
- Students can, but are less likely to, draw on later empiricist responses, which typically derive from Locke, Hume, or Russell (eg logical positivism and the verification principle).

Notes:

- Students who interpret Descartes' cogito modestly as only establishing his own existence (cogito ergo sum) and see the inference to his existence as a thinking thing (sum res cogitans) as a separate step (as eg Anthony Kenny does in his study of Descartes) should not be penalised as long as they are clear that the empiricist response to the cogito is that it includes an illegitimate implication of a persisting substance.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 5 Is there a successful way in which propositional knowledge can be defined?

[25 marks]

AO1 = 5, AO2 = 20

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
21–25	The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is sustained. The student demonstrates detailed and precise understanding throughout. The conclusion is clear, with the arguments in support of it stated precisely, integrated coherently and robustly defended. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Reasoned judgements are made, on an ongoing basis and overall, about the weight to be given to each argument. Crucial arguments are clearly identified against less crucial ones. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
16–20	The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is largely sustained. The content is correct and detailed – though not always consistently. The conclusion is clear, with a range of appropriate arguments supporting it. Arguments are generally stated in their strongest forms. There is a balancing of arguments, with weight being given to each – so crucial arguments are noted against less crucial ones. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated clearly, integrated coherently and defended. There may be trivial mistakes, as long as they do not detract from the argument. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
11–15	A clear response to the question, in the form of an argument, demonstrating intent. The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated. A conclusion and reasons are given and those reasons clearly support the conclusion. There might be a lack of clarity/precision about the logic of the argument as a whole. Arguments and counter-arguments are given, but there may be a lack of balance. Not all arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Stronger and weaker arguments are noted and there are attempts to identify the weight to be given to different arguments, but not necessarily those which are crucial to the conclusion. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the argument.
6–10	The response to the question is given in the form of an argument, but not fully coherently. The content is largely correct, though there are some gaps and a lack of detail. Relevant points are recognised/identified, but not integrated. Alternative positions are identified, but not precisely. Counter-arguments might be stated in weak forms or even slightly misrepresented. Arguments and counter-arguments are juxtaposed, so similarities and contrasts identified, rather than their impact being clear. Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always fully correctly and/or consistently.

1–5	There is little evidence of an argument. There may be missing content, substantial gaps in the content or the content may be one-sided. There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made. There may be some connections between the points, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion. There is some basic use of philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students may begin by explaining what is *propositional* knowledge as a distinct type/kind of knowledge (eg knowledge *that* some claim/proposition is true) as opposed to acquaintance knowledge and/or know-how (ability knowledge)

Students may begin by explaining what makes a (good) definition (eg non-circularity, being informative, stating the individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions) and distinguish 'real' from 'contingent' definitions (Zagzebski).

Likely conclusions include:

<u>Yes, there is a successful way in which propositional knowledge can be defined:</u>

Students may argue this by either (a) showing that a current (type of) definition is successful or (b) by showing that although no current (type of) definition is wholly successful it is nevertheless likely to be successful in the future pending more work.

- Yes, we can successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified, true belief (eg A. J. Ayer's account in *The Problems of Knowledge* and Socrates' account in *The Meno*).
    - Yes, although we have yet to successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified, true belief, we have good reason to believe that we will be able to do so in the future (eg because we will be able to respond to Gettier's original objections and/or Getter-style objections to the JTB account).

- Yes, we can successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified true belief by **strengthening** the justification condition (eg infallibilism).
    - Yes, although we have yet to successfully define propositional knowledge by strengthening the justification condition, we have good reason to believe that we will be able to do so in the future (eg because progress has been made or because a particular way of strengthening the justification condition has proved to be especially promising).

- Yes, we can successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified true belief by **adding** a carefully specified condition to the tripartite account (eg by adding a 'no false lemmas' condition (J+T+B+N), formulating a suitable 'indefeasibility' condition to add to the justification requirement, or adding a causal/reliabilist/subjunctive condition to specify the justification requirement (ie reliabilism about justification).
    - Yes, although we have yet to successfully define propositional knowledge as a type of justified true belief by adding a carefully specified condition to the tripartite account we have good reason to believe that we will be able to do so in the future (eg because progress has been made or because a particular addition to the JTB account is especially promising).

- Yes, we can successfully define propositional knowledge by **replacing** the justification condition (eg by replacing 'justified' with 'reliably formed' (R+T+B) (ie reliabilism about knowledge) or with an account of epistemic virtue (V+T+B)).
    - Yes, although we have yet to successfully define propositional knowledge as a type of belief we have good reason to believe that we will be able to do so in the future (eg because progress has been made or because a particular replacement of the justification condition is especially promising).

- Yes, we can successfully define propositional knowledge but not as a kind of belief, eg because belief is not a necessary condition for knowledge (Radford) or belief and knowledge have different objects (Plato's account of knowledge in *The Republic*). Propositional knowledge is a different mental state to a belief state but propositional knowledge can nevertheless be cogently analysed.

- Yes, although we have yet to successfully define propositional knowledge without classifying it as a type of (justified, true) belief, we have good reason to believe that we will be able to do so in the future.

<u>No, there is not a successful way in which propositional knowledge can be defined:</u>

Students may argue this by showing how previous attempts at definitions have all failed (typically because of some Gettier-style example) and are likely to fail in the future.

- No, we cannot successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified, true belief – eg because of the persuasiveness of Gettier's original two counter-examples and/or Gettier-style counter examples.

- No, we cannot successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified true belief by **strengthening** the justification condition (ie infallibilism) – eg because to do so would be to raise the standard for 'knowledge' artificially high and infallibilism will therefore never be able to define 'knowledge' as an everyday concept.

- No, we cannot successfully define propositional knowledge as a justified true belief by **adding** a carefully specified condition to the tripartite account:
    - It is possible to construct Gettier-style cases where a proposition isn't inferred from a false lemma but nevertheless does not count as propositional knowledge despite being both true and justified (eg the 'somebody in the office owns a Ford' example by Feldman, and Chisholm's sheep case (which is a case where the proposition isn't based on a lemma at all and hence not a false lemma)).
    - It is possible for there to be a reliable/appropriate/causal connection between S's justification for having the true belief *p* and yet for the truth of S's belief to be somehow 'accidental' (eg Goldman's 'fake barn' example).
    - It is possible for S's justification to fulfil the subjunctive conditions of truth-tracking and for S still not to have propositional knowledge (eg Kripke's 'red-barn' example and Lehrer's example of Mr Truetemp).
    - It will never be possible to define knowledge by adding another condition to the tripartite account because Gettier cases are unavoidable (as argued by Zagzebski).
    - It will never be possible to define knowledge in terms of justification, since it is never clear that we are justified in believing anything (Agrippa's trilemma).

- No, we cannot successfully define propositional knowledge by **replacing** the justification condition:
    - It is possible for there to be a reliable/appropriate/causal connection between S's true belief that *p* and yet for the truth of S's belief to be somehow 'accidental' (eg Goldman's 'fake barn' example, sometimes attributed to Carl Ginet).

  - It is possible for S's true belief to fulfil the subjunctive conditions of truth-tracking and for S still not to have propositional knowledge (eg Kripke's 'red-barn' example).
  - It is possible for a person to be 'a virtuous knower' (eg on Sosa's AAA model) and yet lack propositional knowledge (eg Goldman's 'fake barn' example applied to Sosa's theory).

- No, we cannot successfully define propositional knowledge:
  - Knowledge is a 'basic' concept which cannot be broken up and analysed (as any sort of belief) (eg Timothy Williamson).
  - Propositional knowledge is indefinable because it is not a kind/in an ontological category for which a (real) definition is possible, eg because the meaning of 'knowledge' varies from context to context (Wittgenstein, contextualism).
  - Propositional knowledge is indefinable because any definition of propositional knowledge is either (a) an internalist account or (b) an externalist account. However, (a) every internalist account of knowledge fails for reasons given by externalism (eg internalist accounts open a gap between the truth and the belief which always can be filled with a Gettier-style example (arguably a point made by Zagzebski)) or any internalist account will lead to an infinite regress of knowing that you know that you know etc) AND (b) every externalist account of knowledge fails for reasons given by internalism (eg we cannot know anything unless we have some kind of grasp that we know it – to know that *p* demands that we know that we know that *p*).

Notes:

- Students might approach this question by selecting for discussion a number of definitions of propositional knowledge or by selecting only one particular definition for discussion (eg because this definition is 'the most promising'). The best responses will take care to avoid merely juxtaposing the definitions of propositional knowledge listed by the specification.
- Students should not be unduly penalised for misattributing arguments/views (where it does not confuse the point they are trying to make): the primary focus is on understanding the arguments (AO1) and evaluating the arguments (AO2). Persistent misattribution of arguments/views would be an imprecision that would justify not awarding an answer full marks, but it should not be regarded as a reason for excluding it from the top band (assuming everything else meets the requirements of the level descriptors).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

Section B – Moral philosophy

0 6 State Ayer's verification principle.

[3 marks]

AO1 = 3

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
3	A full and correct answer, given precisely, with little or no redundancy.
2	The substantive content of the answer is correct, but there may be some redundancy or minor imprecision.
1	Relevant, but fragmented, points.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Ayer discusses various ways of formulating the verification principle (or the principle of verification) in *Language, Truth and Logic* and in *The Problems of Knowledge.*

A simple way of stating the verification principle is:

- A sentence has (literal) meaning if and only if the proposition it expresses is either analytic or (directly or indirectly) empirically verifiable.
    - A statement is directly empirically verifiable if it is either an observation statement or if it, in conjunction with one or more observation statements, entails an observation statement.
    - A statement is indirectly empirically verifiable if it, in conjunction with certain other premises, entails one or more directly verifiable statements (where those premises are neither analytic nor directly verifiable themselves).
    - Ayer defines a statement as analytic 'when its validity depends solely on the definitions of the symbols it contains' (*Language, Truth and Logic*). This includes the statements of logic and mathematics. However, students may define 'analytic' in other ways, eg as a proposition that is true in virtue of the meanings of the terms involved.

<u>Examples for 3 marks</u>

There are 3 key aspects to this question: (1) the verification principle as a theory of meaning/literal significance (2) the notion of empirical verifiability and (3) the notion of the analytical (or tautological). To get 3 marks, students will need to address each of these 3 aspects clearly and precisely (although they do not have to use Ayer's exact phrasing/terminology).

- Example 1: 'Ayer's verification principle states that a sentence/statement/proposition is meaningful/literally significant/cognitively meaningful, if and only if, it is empirically verifiable or tautological'.

- Example 2: 'Ayer's verification principle is a theory of meaning which states that a sentence is only meaningful if it can be shown to be true through experience or is logically true/true by definition'.

Examples for 2 marks

Answers that gain 2 marks might include all 3 aspects but do so imprecisely (example 1) or miss out a key element (example 2).

- Example 1: 'Ayer's verification principle states that a sentence must be verifiable or analytic in order to make sense'.

- Example 2: 'Ayer's verification principle is the claim that statements must be empirically verifiable or tautological'.

Examples for 1 mark

Answers that gain 1 mark might be clear on one aspect only (example 1) or demonstrate a partial or imprecise understanding of more than one aspect (example 2). In both cases, the answer will be fragmented.

- Example 1: 'Ayer's verification principle states that meaningful statements are either relations of ideas or matters of fact'.

- Example 2: 'Ayer claims that sentences must be verifiable or logical in order to be true or false'.

Notes:

- Students need not draw a distinction between a sentence/proposition/statement in order to get full marks (but doing so does not count as a redundancy).
- Students may phrase the concept of meaning in a different way – eg as literal significance – and this is acceptable.
- Given the topic is Moral Philosophy, students who only state the principle in terms of ethical statements (eg an ethical statement is meaningful if, and only if, it is empirically verifiable or analytic) should be credited.
- Students may distinguish between literal significance (ie a statement being meaningful or having a 'sense') and factual significance (ie a statement being a genuine empirical hypothesis).
- Students should take care not to associate verifiability with demonstrating something is false (ie falsification).
- Students need not specify or note the distinction between directly verifiable/indirectly verifiable in order to get full marks (but doing so does not count as a redundancy).
- Students may give some examples of how Ayer applies the verification principle (eg on religious or moral propositions). This should not count as a redundancy.
- Students may draw upon Ayer's distinction between 'practical verifiability' and 'verifiability in principle'. To explain the distinction, students may refer to Ayer's own examples and/or to similar examples.
- Students may draw upon Ayer's distinction between 'that which is verifiable in principle' and 'that which is not verifiable in principle'. To explain the distinction, students may refer to Ayer's own example and/or to similar examples.
- Students may draw upon Ayer's distinction between the 'strong' and the 'weak' sense of the term 'verifiable'.
- Some students may explain that if a sentence/proposition/statement is neither empirically verifiable nor analytic or tautological, then it is meaningless. Students need not draw this distinction but, if they do, this should not count as a redundancy.
- Students do not need to use the biconditional 'if and only if' to gain 3 marks as long as it is clear that a meaningful statement must be either empirically verifiable or analytic.

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 7 Explain Aristotle's function argument.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students may contextualise the question within Aristotle's teleological/eudaimonistic ethics:

- The final/ultimate/supreme end (*telos*) for a human being is 'to live well and do well' throughout a long lived life.
- Living well and doing well constitute *eudaimonia* (happiness/flourishing).
- Aristotle defines *eudaimonia* in terms of humans fulfilling/executing/realising their 'function' (*ergon*) well.
- A human's virtue or excellence (*arete*) is determined by how well they fulfil/execute/realise their function.
- A human's *eudaimonia* is thereby determined by how 'virtuously' or 'excellently' they fulfil/execute/realise their function.
- The purpose of the function argument is to clarify what is a human's function (*ergon*) in order to clarify what a human being must fulfil/execute/realise well in order to be living well and doing well (ie in order to be happy/in order to flourish). The function argument thus seeks to clarify the concept of *eudaimonia*.
- Students may contextualise the question by explaining the notion of 'function' (eg in terms of the function of a knife).
- Students may connect the concept of 'function' to the concept of being 'good' and to the qualities/excellences/virtues which make something good (eg the quality/excellence/virtue of 'being sharp' makes a knife a good knife) in order to explain how the function argument is supposed to explain to us what it is to be a (morally) good human and what qualities make us (morally) good humans.

<u>The function argument</u>

(P1) The function of X is what is 'peculiar' to X.

(P2) To find the function of a human, we must find the life that is peculiar to humans.

(P3) There are three kinds of lives: the life of nutrition and growth, the life of perception, and the life in accordance with a rational principle.

(P4) The 'life of nutrition and growth' is common to plants and humans, so it is not peculiar to humans.

(P5) The 'life of perception' is common to (non-human) animals and humans, so it is not peculiar to humans.

(P6) The 'life in accordance with a rational principle' is not common to other (living) beings but is peculiar to humans.

(C1) Therefore, the function of humans is to live 'a life in accordance with a rational principle.'

(P7) To live well and do well is to fulfil/execute/realise your function well, ie 'virtuously'/'excellently' (*kat' areten*: in accordance with virtue).

(C2) For humans to live well and do well is therefore to live 'the life in accordance with a rational principle' well, ie 'virtuously'/'excellently'.

Students may elaborate on the function argument and specify what it means to live 'the life in accordance with a rational principle' well/virtuously/excellently in terms of a life lived in accordance with practical wisdom (*phronesis*) and/or contemplation/theoretical wisdom (*theoria*).

Students may elaborate on how some of the other 'virtues' (eg courage and moderation/temperance) are guided by practical wisdom in order to explain how they are connected to the function argument.

The formulation above is just an example of how the function argument could be formulated, and students may formulate it differently and in less detail.

Notes:

- Students must take care not to overstate the case when it comes to things having a function as to do so could constitute imprecision. In the *Ethics*, Aristotle's claim is that for all things *that have* a function, the good is thought to be that which resides in the function, rather than the claim 'everything has a function'.
- Students may answer in terms of 'man', 'woman', 'person', or 'human'/'human being'. All of these are fine.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 8 Explain Mackie's argument from relativity against moral realism.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

The argument from relativity (sometimes called the argument from disagreement) sees "variation [and disagreement] in moral codes from one society to another and from one period to another, and also the differences in moral beliefs between different groups and classes within a complex community" (Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*, Part 1, 1.8) as constituting evidence against the moral realist hypothesis that there are mind-independent/objective moral facts (and therefore supporting the moral anti-realist hypothesis that there are no mind-independent/objective moral facts).

There are several different ways in which students can formulate Mackie's argument. The formulation below merely serves as an example.

P1) According to moral realism, there are mind-independent moral facts (and according to moral anti-realism, there are no mind-independent moral facts).

P2) As a matter of sociological/historical/anthropological/empirical fact, there are variations in and disagreements between people's moral beliefs (students may give some of their favourite examples here).

P3) There are (at least) two ways of explaining such variations in and disagreements between people's moral beliefs:

> (1) They can arise because of inadequate evidence of the mind-independent facts and/or because some people perceive the mind-independent facts in a distorted way.
>
> (2) They can arise because people live their lives in varied and different ways and form/base their beliefs relative to those ways of life and *not* relative to mind-independent facts.

P4) The variations in and disagreements between people's moral beliefs – as opposed to their beliefs about mind-independent scientific facts – are best explained in the second way (Mackie himself gives the example of how people seem to approve of monogamy because they participate in a monogamous way of life).

P5) This suggests that the variations in and disagreement between people's moral beliefs is not to be explained relative to mind-independent moral facts.

P6) This suggests that there are no mind-independent moral facts, and that moral realism therefore is false (and that moral anti-realism is true).

- The argument from relativity is an abductive argument – an argument to the best explanation – and Mackie doesn't give it as much weight as he gives to 'the argument from queerness'.
- Students should be careful not to infer that moral realism is false from the fact alone that there are variations in and disagreement between moral codes. Mackie is explicit that there are variations in and disagreements between scientific theories too, and that this does not entail that there are no mind-independent scientific facts.
- Mackie gives little justification of his claim that variations of and disagreement between people's moral beliefs are best explained by the different ways in which people live their lives and not by inadequate evidence/distorted perceptions. Students may want to supply further justification for this claim, eg by pointing out that:
    - Moral beliefs unlike scientific beliefs are not based on hypotheses which we attempt to test.
    - We don't seek any 'evidence' for our moral beliefs (*prima facie* our moral beliefs can therefore not be based on 'inadequate evidence').
    - We do not seek to 'perceive' (or understand) moral facts in the same way in which we seek to perceive (or understand) mind-independent scientific facts (*prima facie*, our moral beliefs can therefore not be based on 'distorted perceptions' (understandings) in the way in which faulty scientific theories can).
    - The history and progress of our scientific beliefs is very different from the history and progress of our moral beliefs.
    - The way we acquire our moral beliefs is very different from the way we acquire our scientific beliefs.
- Students may explain Mackie's response that people in general hold their moral beliefs due to an 'intuition' and not because they apply a 'general principle' to the objection that there are underlying ethical principles – mind-independent moral facts – behind the varied and different moral beliefs.
- Care should be taken not to conflate Mackie's position with any intuitionist theory (eg Moore's theory).
- Students may link the conclusion of the argument of relativity to the anti-realist part of Mackie's own moral theory, error theory.
- Students may link the argument from relativity to the cognitivist element of Mackie's error theory by pointing out that, according to Mackie, moral disagreement/variation is a genuine disagreement of/variation in moral *beliefs* and therefore not a mere clash of non-cognitive, conative attitudes (albeit, according to Mackie, all such beliefs are false since – as the argument from relativity seeks to justify – there are no mind-independent moral facts).

Notes:

- Students may treat moral realism in terms of the 'objectivity' of morality or moral truths and this is fine.
- Students should be careful not to make Ockham's razor a central feature of Mackie's argument. Mackie does not refer to Ockham's razor in his formulation of the argument in *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*. However, students should not penalised if they make use of Ockham's razor as a way of explaining why Mackie's anti-realist position might constitute a better explanation (in the sense of ontologically parsimonious) of moral relativity than the realist alternative.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 9 Explain how Kantian deontological ethics might be applied to the issue of simulated killing.
[12 marks]

AO1 = 12

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
10–12	The answer is set out in a precise, fully-integrated and logical form. The content is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. Points are made clearly and precisely. Relevance is sustained, with very little or no redundancy. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
7–9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. The content is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. Any lack of clarity with respect to particular points is not sufficient to detract from the answer. Relevance is largely sustained. There may be some redundancy, though not sufficient to detract from the answer. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
4–6	The answer is clear and set out in a coherent form, with logical/causal links identified. The content of the answer is largely correct and most points are made clearly. Relevance is not always sustained and there is some redundancy. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the response.
1–3	There are some relevant points made, but no integration. Some points are clear, but there is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students may begin by giving an exposition of Kantian deontological ethics before they apply it to the question of simulated killing. However, students need not give a separate exposition of Kant's ethics but may develop the points of it that they find most salient as they discuss the issue of simulated killings.

Expect some of the following points:

Deontological ethics is a normative theory of ethics based on duty as opposed to consequences (utilitarianism) or happiness/flourishing/*eudaimonia* (virtue ethics).

- Kant argues that we have duties to do (or not do) certain things which are right (or wrong) in themselves.
- Kant argues that our moral duties are discoverable by reason and that only those who possess adequate rational capacities have such duties.
- Only the good will is good without qualification and to have a good will is to do your duty because it is your duty (other motivations are irrelevant).
- Moral duties are categorical and not hypothetical, because they are your duty regardless of what you want and are not a means to a further end.
- Kant gives two formulations of the Categorical Imperative.

  - Kant's first formulation of the Categorical Imperative (the Formula of Universal Law) is: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law [or "universal law of nature"]" (*Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*):
    - Acting on a maxim which does not pass the test is morally wrong.
    - A maxim fails the test of the first formulation of the Categorical Imperative if it cannot be consistently universalised.
    - Students may give one or more examples to explain this, eg lying/false promises.
  - Kant's second formulation of the Categorical Imperative (the Formula of Humanity): "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end" (*Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*):
    - To treat persons merely/simply/only as a means is to treat them in a way that undermines their power of making rational choices themselves.
    - To treat persons merely/simply/only as a means is to treat them in a way that undermines their autonomy.
    - To treat persons as ends is to acknowledge that they have incomparable worth as rational beings who are able to set their own aims and goals in life and to support/allow them to pursue it.
    - To treat persons as ends is to acknowledge their inalienable dignity.
    - Students may give one or more examples to explain this, eg lying/false promises.
- Kant draws a distinction between duties which arise as a consequence of a 'contradiction in conception' – perfect duties – and duties which arise as a consequence of a 'contradiction in will' – imperfect duties.
  - Perfect duties must always be done.
  - Imperfect duties must be done a) unless they conflict with perfect duties and b) in a way that leaves open how/when they are fulfilled.
- Kant draws a distinction between the duties we have to ourselves and the duties we have to others.
  - An example of a perfect duty we have to ourselves is never to commit suicide.
  - An example of a perfect duty we have to others is to refrain from making false promises.
  - An example of an imperfect duty we have to ourselves is to develop our talents.
  - An example of an imperfect duty we have to others is to contribute to their happiness.
- Kant draws a distinction between acting out of duty (doing your duty because it is your duty) and acting in accordance with duty (doing your duty from other motives than doing it because it is your duty).
  - It is only acting out of duty which has any moral worth.
  - Students may give an example of this (the shopkeeper).

<u>…application to the issue of simulated killing.</u>

- Students might define 'simulated killing' as the dramatisation of killing in a fictional context such as a film, play or video game.
- Students may distinguish between the act of observing simulated killing (as in a film or play), the act of playing the killer (as in a video game) or the act of producing works that involve simulated killing. They might then go on to address the different moral issues that could arise from each of these three types of act. Equally, they might choose to focus on one aspect and develop that in relation to Kant.
- Kant did not write about simulated killing and students are therefore free to make their own cases for how Kant would have responded to the issue.
- Students may begin by specifying/exemplifying what is simulated killing and how simulated killing differs from actual killing.
- Students may compare and contrast how the first and second formulation of the Categorical Imperative deal with simulated and actual killing in order to clarify what could be Kant's position on

simulated killing. It is, however, important that the focus of the response remain on simulated killing rather than on actual killing.

- Students may discuss the issue of simulated killing in terms of perfect duties we have to ourselves and others, eg in terms of how it is not a contradiction in conception/does not violate an actual person's humanity/autonomy to kill a computer representation of a person.
- Students may discuss the issue of simulated killing in terms of imperfect duties we have to ourselves, eg in terms of how simulated killing might develop or impede self-development and our talents (are we, perhaps, hardening ourselves and denigrating our own humanity if we partake in simulated killings).
- Students may draw a comparison between 'simulated killing' and with what Kant says about killing animals, eg if one who harms animals may go on to harm humans, then one who simulates killing may go on to real killing.
- Students may discuss the issue of simulated killing in terms of imperfect duties to others, eg in terms of how we simulate killing might contribute to or impede other people's happiness (are we, perhaps, more likely to treat other people 'merely as means' and less as 'ends in themselves' if we partake in simulated killings).
- The question doesn't specify whether the simulated killing is simulated killing of humans or other living beings: eg non-rational animals, aliens (rational or non-rational), fictional monsters (rational or non-rational) etc. Students are most likely to focus exclusively on the simulated killing of humans, which is fine, but they may also discuss simulated killings of other living beings, and may draw a distinction between the simulated killing of rational and non-rational beings (or deny that a distinction should be drawn).

Notes:

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

1 0 Can utilitarianism be successfully defended?

[25 marks]

AO1 = 5, AO2 = 20

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
21–25	The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is sustained. The student demonstrates detailed and precise understanding throughout. The conclusion is clear, with the arguments in support of it stated precisely, integrated coherently and robustly defended. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Reasoned judgements are made, on an ongoing basis and overall, about the weight to be given to each argument. Crucial arguments are clearly identified against less crucial ones. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
16–20	The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is largely sustained. The content is correct and detailed – though not always consistently. The conclusion is clear, with a range of appropriate arguments supporting it. Arguments are generally stated in their strongest forms. There is a balancing of arguments, with weight being given to each – so crucial arguments are noted against less crucial ones. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated clearly, integrated coherently and defended. There may be trivial mistakes, as long as they do not detract from the argument. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
11–15	A clear response to the question, in the form of an argument, demonstrating intent. The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated. A conclusion and reasons are given and those reasons clearly support the conclusion. There might be a lack of clarity/precision about the logic of the argument as a whole. Arguments and counter-arguments are given, but there may be a lack of balance. Not all arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Stronger and weaker arguments are noted and there are attempts to identify the weight to be given to different arguments, but not necessarily those which are crucial to the conclusion. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the argument.
6–10	The response to the question is given in the form of an argument, but not fully coherently. The content is largely correct, though there are some gaps and a lack of detail. Relevant points are recognised/identified, but not integrated. Alternative positions are identified, but not precisely. Counter-arguments might be stated in weak forms or even slightly misrepresented. Arguments and counter-arguments are juxtaposed, so similarities and contrasts identified, rather than their impact being clear. Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always fully correctly and/or consistently.

1–5	There is little evidence of an argument. There may be missing content, substantial gaps in the content or the content may be one-sided. There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made. There may be some connections between the points, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion. There is some basic use of philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students might argue for a number of positions:

- that utilitarianism can be successfully defended
- that utilitarianism cannot be successfully defended
- that there is a *form* of utilitarianism that can be successfully defended (although other forms of utilitarianism cannot be successfully defended).

Students may focus their response on:

- whether the arguments in favour of (a particular form of) utilitarianism can be successfully defended against objections
- whether (a particular form of) utilitarianism can be successfully defended against the issues and problems which utilitarianism faces
- or a mixture of the two previous points.

Expect students to discuss some of the following points.

Utilitarianism (or a particular utilitarian theory) cannot be successfully defended:

<u>General issues</u>

- Classical (hedonistic) utilitarianism is ‘an ethical theory for swine’. Pleasure (eg) for alcohol, licentious sex, and gluttony are obviously not good.
- Classical (hedonistic) utilitarianism relies on psychological hedonism, but this only goes to show that we cannot be motivated to act for the sake of the greater good but only for the sake of our own good. This makes utilitarianism impossible.
- Mill’s proof of utilitarianism is not persuasive and cannot be successfully defended against standard objections:
    - The proof commits the fallacy of equivocation (equivocating on ‘desirable’ as ‘capable of being desired’ and ‘worthy of being desired’).
    - The proof commits the fallacy of composition (inferring that because each person desires his own happiness then everybody desires the general happiness of everyone).
    - The proof unjustifiably identifies every other good or goal as either a part of happiness (constitutive means) or an (external, instrumental) means to happiness.
- What we as a matter of fact desire has nothing to do with what is morally worthy (Kant). The proof is irrelevant to moral philosophy.
- It is the character of a person which explains the worthiness of the desire. To look at what people desire to establish what is worthy of being desired without first establishing what makes a person good is procedurally the wrong way around (Aristotle).
- Hedonistic utilitarianism (and arguably other kinds of utilitarianism too) is either positive (ie aiming to generate as much happiness as possible) or negative (aiming to minimise as much pain as

possible). However, neither kind of utilitarianism is defensible. Therefore, utilitarianism cannot be successfully defended:
  - Eg positive utilitarianism entails that we should grow the population even though the current citizens will be more unhappy if the level of utility of the total population becomes greater due to the population growth. This is counterintuitive.
  - Eg negative utilitarianism entails that we should kill the entire population of human beings (and perhaps aim for a world populated by pleased animals). This is counterintuitive.

- It is impossible to calculate the consequences of your actions (see below). Therefore, utilitarianism cannot be defended against the objection that it leads to moral scepticism.
- We are not likely to maximise utility if we, on a case-by-case basis, attempt to calculate what is the right action as we are more likely to miscalculate than not. Therefore, (act) utilitarianism is somewhat self-defeating since (act) utilitarianism will lead to less overall utility.
- Utilitarianism cannot be successfully defended against the objection that many pleasures/preferences are in themselves morally abhorrent, frivolous, or simply misinformed.
- Ideal utilitarianism (eg Sidgwick and Moore's) cannot be successfully defended against the objection that a pluralistic theory of value is incompatible with consequentialism but collapses into a kind of Aristotelian eudaimonistic ethical theory.
- Meta-ethical arguments show that the moral realism of utilitarianism cannot successfully be defended against objections:
  - Eg Moore's open question argument/the naturalistic fallacy.
  - Eg Hume's arguments that moral judgements (eg about the greatest good) cannot motivate us.
  - Eg John Mackie's arguments from relativity and from queerness.
  - Eg Ayer's verification principle.

<u>Issues, including whether pleasure is the only good (Nozick's experience machine).</u>

Nozick's outlines the following thought experiment*: "Imagine a machine that could give you any experience (or sequence of experiences) you might desire. When connected to this experience machine, you can have the experience of writing a great poem or bringing about world peace or loving someone and being loved in return. You can experience the felt pleasures of these things, how they feel "from the inside". You can program your experiences for tomorrow, or this week, or this year, or even for the rest of your life."* (The Examined Life, p104).

- The thought experiment is used as an argument against (Bentham and Mill's) hedonistic utilitarianism, both of which presuppose psychological hedonism. The objection can be expressed as follows:
  - P1: Hedonistic utilitarianism claims that as a matter of fact all we desire is happiness/pleasure.
  - P2: If as a matter of fact all we desire is happiness/pleasure, then we would have no good reason not to plug into the experience machine (assuming it increased the quantity of pleasure experienced).
  - P3: However, we do have good reasons not to plug into the experience machine, such as that we care about what actually is the case, not just how things seem.
    - We want to be connected to reality, to be able to change reality, and to share reality with other people and to affect them.
  - Therefore, the claim of hedonistic utilitarianism that as a matter of fact all we desire is happiness/pleasure is not true.

<u>Issues, including fairness and individual liberty/rights (including the risk of the 'tyranny of the majority').</u>

- Utilitarianism denies that anything has intrinsic moral value/significance except utility (pleasure/preferences). This means that we (humans/sentient beings) do not have any inalienable 'rights' and that individual liberty is not ethically significant in itself. 'Justice,' 'integrity,' 'courage',

'temperance' and all other 'moral virtues' are not valuable in themselves/ends in themselves but are only valuable (if valuable at all) as instrumental means for pleasure/preference satisfaction. This has generated a high number of counter examples to utilitarianism (two of the most common ones are listed below).
    - Scapegoating: In a town the sheriff decides to hang an innocent man to avoid a riot. His action maximises the general utility. According to utilitarianism, persecuting the innocent man is therefore morally right. However, it is obviously not morally right to persecute an innocent man. Utilitarianism is therefore wrong.
    - Organ transplant: A doctor has five patients who each will need an organ transplant to survive. He has another patient whose organs will be a perfect match for each of the other five patients. Also, no one will miss him if he dies, but the other five patients are much loved. According to utilitarianism, it seems that the doctor should kill the 'unwanted' patient and save the lives of the other five patients. But to kill an innocent man is not morally right. Utilitarianism must therefore be wrong.
- 'Tyranny of the majority.' The problem of a majority or people 'tyrannising' (eg by oppressing, mistreating, neglecting, enslaving etc) a minority. A popular thought experiment gives the example of how a town of a thousand citizens might flourish if it employs a hundred slaves. The pleasure of the thousand citizens will outbalance the pain of the hundred slaves. If that is the case, it seems that utilitarianism is committed to slavery. But slavery is morally abhorrent. Utilitarianism must therefore be wrong.
    - There are many other examples of 'the tyranny of the majority' which are less extreme.

<u>Issues, including problems with calculation (including which beings to include).</u>

- It is practically impossible to calculate utility because even if 'utility' is specified as 'pleasure and the absence of pain', the 'Felicific calculus' (Bentham) needs to take into account the following variables: (with respect to the value of the pleasure) the intensity, the duration, the certainty that it will occur, the propinquity (how soon it will occur), (with respect to the likely after-effects of the action which caused the initial pleasure) the fecundity, the purity, and, finally, the extent (the number of people/sentient beings affected).
- Even if we, in principle, could accurately account for the variables mentioned above, there is the additional problem of having the time/means to discover the values of the relevant values.
- 'Utility', however defined, is immensurable (impossible to measure).
- The commensurability issue: there isn't a single scale to use as a measurement (eg Bentham ignores the distinction between higher and lower pleasure).
- There is at least one problem of partiality: Utilitarianism aims to be impartial. However, it is a psychological fact that we have unconscious biases. This suggests that it is impossible to make the calculations impartial.
- If the utilitarian calculation is also to take into account other creatures than human beings, eg animals, not only will the utilitarian be faced with the epistemological problem of accurately assessing the utility (pleasure) of those creatures but they will also be biased towards anthropocentric calculations.
- The utilitarian is faced with the problem of knowing when to stop considering the consequences (eg how much of the future does my calculation need to apply to).
- Problems of calculating actual vs expected utility.
- The problem of what takes priority: maximising the absence of suffering (minimising pain) or maximising pleasure (negative versus positive utilitarianism)?
- The problem of knowing your own mind and/or the minds of others (including whether they have a mind at all).
- Mill's qualitative hedonistic utilitarianism shares most of the problems outlined above and faces the further problem of how to weigh up the relative value of higher and lower pleasures (eg does one higher pleasure outweigh four lower pleasures?)

- Preference utilitarianism does not face many of the problems with calculation which hedonistic utilitarianism does, but it faces other problems of calculation such as the problem of determining the interpersonal preferences' relative strengths and weaknesses.

Issues, including issues around partiality:

Utilitarianism is generally advocating strict impartiality.

"every man to count for one, nobody for more than one" (Bentham). "...I must again repeat, what the assailants of utilitarianism seldom have the justice to acknowledge, that the happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct, is not the agent's own happiness, but that of all concerned. As between his own happiness and that of others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as a disinterested and benevolent spectator" (Mill, Utilitarianism, Chapter 2).

- The strict impartiality leaves utilitarianism unable to explain the ethical importance of special relations such as friendship relations and/or family relations.
    - Eg as a husband I have a special duty to take care of my partner. On a cruise, my partner and a brilliant scientist specialising in the study and treatment of cancer, both fall overboard at the same time. I can only save one of them. Saving the famous cancer scientist will 'bring about more pleasure.' According to utilitarianism, I should therefore save the scientist. However, this seems to be wrong, as I have a special relation and hence a special moral duty to my partner.
    - Eg 'friendship' relations are special kinds of relations in which friends 'look out for each other' to a greater extent than they look out for people with whom they are not friends (eg strangers). The strict impartiality clause of utilitarianism makes it impossible for there to be friendship relations as I have as it disallows such partiality.

Issues, including whether utilitarianism ignores both the moral integrity and the intentions of the individual.

- The demands of utilitarianism do not take into account *who* is doing the action. It is only the consequences that matter. Utilitarianism thereby neglects the importance of 'life projects,' and of moral concepts such as 'integrity'/'courage of convictions' etc, which (arguably) ground morality (Williams).
    - Expect a discussion of Williams' examples of Jim who is asked to murder one Amazonian villager to prevent twenty villagers being murdered (often referred to in the literature as 'Jim and the Indians'), or George who is asked to take a job making weapons of mass destruction.
- The demands of utilitarianism are absurdly/impossibly high (expect examples of having to donate most of one's money/possessions to unknown strangers or most of one's time working for a charity). It demands that a person has continuously to sacrifice their own 'self,' their happiness/flourishing/projects/personal development for other people (as opposed to Aristotelian virtue ethics).
- The demands of utilitarianism means that a person is just a 'conduit' for the pleasures/preferences of the majority. This makes a mockery out of what it means to be a person.
- Kant argues convincingly that only the 'good will' is good in itself. Utilitarianism disregards (or does not put sufficient ethical importance on) intentions and motives and thereby fails as a moral theory.
    - Expect examples of persons with murderous intentions accidentally saving the intended victim(s) and persons with good intentions accidentally killing.

Utilitarianism (or a particular utilitarian theory) can be successfully defended:

General points which make utilitarianism defensible:

- Ethics is about how my actions impact other people, ie the consequences of my actions, and a particular version of utilitarianism is the most defensible consequentialist theory.
- Moral philosophy should be a theory that can form the basis of personal and political decision making and action, and utilitarian cost/benefit calculi are, as a matter of fact, how personal and political decisions are reached. This shows that we already subscribe to utilitarianism. It is, prima facie, the best available ethical theory.
- Bentham's purely quantitative hedonistic utilitarianism is defensible against the objection that it is 'an ethical theory for swine'. 'Swinish' pleasures such as those for alcohol, licentious sex, and gluttony only lead to pain, whereas more 'sophisticated' pleasures which rely on education and culture (eg doing philosophy, playing Mozart, or appreciating Michelangelo) are unlikely to lead to pain (they are 'pure' pleasure), more durable, and more likely to lead to other 'sophisticated' pleasures (they are 'fecund'). By Bentham's own criteria, the more sophisticated pleasures are thus 'more pleasurable'.
- Although Bentham's purely quantitative hedonistic theory is too simplistic and doesn't consider the fact that various pleasures are more valuable than others, Mill's qualitative hedonistic theory overcomes this problem by drawing a distinction between higher and lower pleasures. This strengthens the defence of (Mill's) qualitative hedonism and yields a defensible account of pleasures being the only good.
- Utilitarianism is a defensible (the only defensible) ethical theory from a meta-ethical standpoint; it yields a credible, naturalistic ethics anchored in natural psychological properties.
- Classical (hedonistic) utilitarianism relies on psychological hedonism, which we know (from introspection and empirical evidence) to be true.
- Mill's 'proof' of utilitarianism is persuasive and can successfully be defended against the standard objections of it (listed above).
    - Eg only the empirical fact that people are capable of finding x desirable is able to serve as (inductive/abductive) evidence for x being worthy of being desired, and Mill is therefore justified in his line of reasoning. His reasoning is not deductively valid/sound, but his proof is not meant to be anything but inductive/abductive.
    - Eg Mill is not drawing an inference but is justifiably assuming that ethical reasoning must be universalizable and impartial. This assumption is common sense.
    - Eg Mill is allowing that other goods/goals are valuable in themselves and therefore components of – not merely instrumental means to – happiness.
- Arguments for preference utilitarianism (eg the arguments put forward by Singer) successfully show that 'preferences' are a more 'basic' foundation of ethics than 'pleasure/pain' (it entails fewer philosophical presumptions) and therefore the most solid foundation upon which to build an ethics.

Responses to the issue of pleasure not being the only good (Nozick's experience machine):

- Hedonistic utilitarianism can be successfully defended against Nozick's experience machine objection by drawing a distinction between 'pleasure as sensations' and 'propositional pleasure', which only occurs when the relevant states of affairs in which pleasure is being taken actually exist.
- Although (both Bentham and Mill's versions of) hedonistic utilitarianism is not defensible against Nozick's experience machine objection, preference utilitarianism overcomes this objection (what is important is not merely the pleasure we get from the experiences, but it also matters that we prefer the experiences to be genuine).

Responses to the issue of fairness and individual liberty/rights (including the risk of the 'tyranny of the majority')

- Utilitarianism can respond to the 'tyranny of majority' objection by arguing that a state without *any* tyranny is better than a state with some tyranny. This gives the utilitarian a reason – and moral obligation – to avoid the majority imposing themselves on the minority. Utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against this objection (eg Mill *On Liberty*).
- Although particular versions of act utilitarianism cannot account for the value of fairness and individual liberty/rights, rule utilitarianism (and/or Mill's formulation of 'secondary principles') is able to explain how fairness and individual/liberty/rights are valuable as these, in general, maximise utility (pleasure/happiness/preference).
    - Expect students to explain how rules against eg scapegoating and killing innocent patients for their organs are, in the long run, likely to lead to more utility.
- Utilitarianism is right to suggest that moral virtues such as justice, integrity, courage and temperance are (merely) instrumental means to pleasure/preference satisfaction. If these moral virtues did not result in overall pleasure/preference satisfaction, it would be hard to see why we should value them at all. If 'moral virtues' lead to overall pain and misery, they could not be valuable.
- Some utilitarians argue that moral virtues are valuable in themselves (eg the ideal utilitarianism of Sidgwick and Moore).

Responses to the issue of problems with calculation (including which beings to include)

- Utilitarianism can as a theory accept that the agent need not calculate all the consequences for his actions precisely by permitting that the agent need only calculate what we can reasonably expect the consequences to be. Utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against (some of) the problems with calculation.
- Utilitarianism can as a theory accept that the agent need not calculate all the consequences for his actions by supposing that the principle of utility is a criterion or standard of what is morally right rather than a decision procedure or guide. Utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against (some of) the problems with calculation.
- Utilitarianism can as a theory accept that the agent can rely on his moral intuitions (which have evolved over the time of humanity) and need not attempt to calculate the consequences for his actions (Hare). Utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against (some of) the problems with calculation.
- Rule utilitarianism can argue that the agent need not calculate his actions on a case-by-case basis but can avail himself of rules which have been established (historically/empirically) to maximise happiness and minimise pain. Utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against (some of) the problems with calculation.
- By including non-human animals in its moral deliberation, utilitarianism (Bentham and Singer's versions in particular) is (the only) defensible ethical theory. It is the only theory which is not speciesist.

Responses to the issue of around partiality

- A rule utilitarian can argue that special relations are particularly utility-conferring and we can therefore make general rules which imbue special relations with particular ethical importance. Rule utilitarianism can therefore be successfully defended against the objection that it cannot take partiality into account (and that it neglects the ethical importance of friendship/family relations etc).
- A utilitarian might argue that acting impartially is what is required of us morally. Partiality is arguably the cause of nepotism, cliquism, racism, speciesism, and other forms of discrimination. An ethical theory has to be impartial.

Responses to the issue of whether utilitarianism ignores both the moral integrity and the intentions of the individual

- Rather than ignoring 'life projects' and neglecting moral concepts such as 'integrity'/'courage of convictions,' utilitarianism did – and continues to – lay the foundation for ethical projects for the 'betterment of humankind' (and now also non-human animals). Utilitarianism is at its heart a moral theory which espouses social justice and social reform and many utilitarians are known for their integrity and courage of convictions despite receiving death-threats and being banned from speaking up (eg Singer).
- The demands of utilitarianism are high, but they are not absurdly high, and, as the world becomes more equal, they will become less high.
- If the demands of utilitarianism seem to be too high now, it is only because people have not been acting in accordance with utilitarianism so far. This can therefore hardly be a point which can be used to criticise utilitarianism.
- The person who identifies with the utilitarian project will not merely be a 'conduit' for the pleasures/preferences of the majority. They will be working towards the same goals.

Notes:

- Students should not be unduly penalised for misattributing arguments/views (where it does not confuse the point they are trying to make): the primary focus is on understanding the arguments (AO1) and evaluating the arguments (AO2). Persistent misattribution of arguments/views would be an imprecision that would justify not awarding an answer full marks, but it should not be regarded as a reason for excluding it from the top band (assuming everything else meets the requirements of the level descriptors).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.