

External Assessment 2025

PHILOSOPHY

PHL315118

Pages: 8

Questions: 14

Answer Booklets: 4

Preparation time for this exam: 15 minutes

Suggested working time: 3 hours

Instructions:

- There are **four (4)** sections to this exam paper.
- You must answer **one (1) question only** from **each section** in **essay form**:
 - **Section A** – answer **one (1)** question
 - **Section B** – answer **one (1)** question
 - **Section C** – answer **one (1)** question
 - **Section D** – answer **one (1)** question.
- Write your answers for each section in a **separate answer booklet** and write the question number you are answering on the front cover of each answer booklet.
- The exam is **three (3) hours** in length. The suggested working time for each section is **approximately 45 minutes**.
- All answers must be written in **English**.
- You **must** make sure your answers address the listed criteria.

Guide to Exam Structure

		Questions available	Questions to answer	Suggested working time	Marks available
Section	A	3	1	45 minutes	All criteria are assessed using extended ratings of A+ to z
Section	B	3	1	45 minutes	
Section	C	4	1	45 minutes	
Section	D	4	1	45 minutes	
Totals		14	4	180 minutes (3 hours)	

Criteria

You **must** make sure your answers address:

- Criterion 1 communicate philosophical ideas and concepts
- Criterion 2 use philosophical ideas and concepts in discussing philosophical arguments
- Criterion 3 describe and explain philosophical arguments
- Criterion 4 use evidence to support philosophical arguments
- Criterion 5 apply philosophical ideas and concepts to contemporary issues.

Section A – Mind/Body

- Answer **one (1)** question in this section in **essay** form.
 - Write your answer in a **separate answer booklet**.
 - The suggested working time for this section is **approximately 45 minutes**.
 - This section assesses **Criteria 1, 2 and 3**.
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Question 1

“I have a clear and distinct idea of the mind as a thinking, non-extended thing. I have a clear and distinct idea of body as an extended, non-thinking thing. Therefore, the mind is really distinct from the body and can exist without it.” – René Descartes

Explain Descartes’ response to the Mind/Body problem in this quote and outline at least **one (1)** alternative Dualist **OR** Monist view. Discuss **two (2)** major strengths and **one (1)** major weakness of your chosen position.

OR

Question 2

Outline the reasoning behind **one (1)** thought experiment that relates to the Mind/Body problem. Describe and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of that thought experiment.

Evaluate the extent to which your chosen thought experiment (as a device of the imagination used to investigate our world) helps to provide a ‘resolution’ to the Mind/Body problem.

OR

Question 3

“Materialism is a beautiful and compelling view of the world, but to account for consciousness, we have to go beyond the resources it provides.” – David Chalmers

Respond to the above quote by Chalmers and explain your own view of qualia. Using the views and opinions of philosophers, outline the strengths of your view and counter some of the criticisms.

Section B – Free Will

- Answer **one (1)** question in this section in **essay** form.
 - Write your answer in a **separate answer booklet**.
 - The suggested working time for this section is **approximately 45 minutes**.
 - This section assesses **Criteria 1, 3 and 4**.
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Question 4

Using evidence, and referring to arguments from philosophers, discuss why people believe they have a choice in the decisions they make. Evaluate the strengths and the weaknesses in the arguments for Hard Determinism **OR** Libertarianism.

OR

Question 5

“Free will is our capacity to see probable futures, futures that seem like they're going to happen, in time to take steps so that something else happens instead.” – Daniel Dennett

Explain what Dennett meant by the quote above. How do Dennett and other Compatibilists justify their argument that determinism is compatible with human freedom?

Using evidence, and referring to arguments from philosophers, evaluate the strengths and the weaknesses of the Compatibilist position.

OR

Question 6

How would a Hard Determinist view our current practice of punishing those found guilty of a crime?

Using evidence and referring to arguments from philosophers, explain how either a Libertarian **OR** a Compatibilist would challenge the Hard Determinist view. Discuss the strengths and the weaknesses of their challenge. Include at least **one (1)** real world example of a crime which attracted a legal penalty.

Section C – Contemporary Conflicts in Moral Theory

OR Life, the Universe and Everything

- Answer **one (1)** question in this section in **essay** form.
 - Write your answer in a **separate answer booklet**.
 - The suggested working time for this section is **approximately 45 minutes**.
 - This section assesses **Criteria 1, 4 and 5**.
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Question 7 – Contemporary Conflicts in Moral Theory

Select and outline an ethical issue that is a subject of debate in 2025. Select **two (2)** moral theories and briefly explain the ideas and concepts that underlie them. Apply your selected moral theories to your ethical issue, evaluating the strengths and limitations of those moral theories in showing us the ‘right’ approach to your issue.

OR

Question 8 – Contemporary Conflicts in Moral Theory

Select **two (2)** moral theories that have guided your study of a contested ethical issue in 2025. Critically evaluate your moral theories, referring to at least **one (1)** strength and **one (1)** limitation of each theory. Outline how effective your moral theories have been in providing a clear ‘resolution’ when applied to your chosen contested ethical issue.

OR

Question 9 – Life, the Universe and Everything

Critically evaluate the Big Bang Theory and the scientific evidence used to support this view. How does this impact the contemporary cosmological arguments for the existence of God?

OR

Question 10 – Life, the Universe and Everything

Critically evaluate the theory of evolution and the scientific evidence used to support this view. How does this impact the contemporary teleological arguments for the existence of God?

Section D – The Good Life

- Answer **one (1)** question in this section in **essay** form.
 - Write your answer in a **separate answer booklet**.
 - The suggested working time for this section is **approximately 45 minutes**.
 - This section assesses **Criteria 1, 2 and 5**.
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Question 11

According to Michel de Montaigne, accepting the daily realities of our bodies and using reason and common sense are essential for the good life. Explain the ideas and concepts behind Montaigne’s assertions and discuss what he considered essential for a good life.

Evaluate the extent to which Montaigne’s philosophy is relevant and applicable to the lives of young Tasmanians in 2025.

OR

Question 12

“I think what has to be achieved for women is a total, radical emancipation, which would make them truly equal to men.” – Simone de Beauvoir

According to de Beauvoir, many women are prevented from living the good life. Explain the ideas and concepts behind de Beauvoir’s assertions and discuss her solution of empowering women to live freely and authentically.

Evaluate the extent to which de Beauvoir’s philosophy is relevant and applicable to the lives of young Tasmanians in 2025.

OR

Section D continued

Question 13

“To those human beings who are of any concern to me I wish suffering, desolation, sickness, ill treatment, indignities.” – Friedrich Nietzsche

Why does Nietzsche wish this? Explain the ideas and concepts used by Nietzsche to arrive at his conclusions and view of the good life.

Evaluate the extent to which Nietzsche’s philosophy is relevant and applicable to the lives of young Tasmanians in 2025.

OR

Question 14

According to Henry David Thoreau, the good life involves living simply in a natural setting. Explain the ideas and concepts behind Thoreau’s assertions and discuss his solution of living in solitude surrounded by nature.

Evaluate the extent to which Thoreau’s philosophy is relevant and applicable to the lives of young Tasmanians in 2025.

End of Exam



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