TASMANIAN ASSESSMENT, STANDARDS & CERTIFICATION

External Assessment 2026

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# 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.

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# 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**.

**Question 1**

In response to the Mind/Body problem, philosophers may offer a Dualist or a Monist position. Explain **one (1)** Monist position and the ways in which it differs from a Dualist position. In your answer, you should evaluate specific strengths and weaknesses of **either** a Monist **or** a Dualist position.

**OR**

**Question 2**

*"The purpose of thought experiments is to strip away the things that complicate matters in real life in order to focus clearly on the essence of a problem."* – Julian Baggini

With reference to the stimulus quotation, describe and explain the ways in which **one (1)** or more thought experiments have helped you understand the essence of the Mind/Body problem. In your answer, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of **one (1)** or more thought experiments.

**OR**

**Question 3**

Can physical accounts of consciousness be reconciled with the concept of qualia?

In your answer, you should evaluate the views of a range of philosophers.

# 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**.

**Question 4**

*"I am free in performing an action if I could have done otherwise if I had chosen to do so."* – G.E. Moore (adapted from)

To what extent do you agree with the above statement? In your answer, you should refer to a range of philosophical views on Free Will.

**OR**

**Question 5**

Does accepting Determinism as true mean one must also reject arguments for Free Will?

In your answer, explain how convincingly Soft Determinists justify their view that Determinism and Free Will can be mutually compatible.

**OR**

**Question 6**

*"So is anyone ever responsible for anything? Civil life requires it be so."* – Patricia Churchland

Are we 'required' to punish those who are guilty, as the above quotation suggests?

In your answer, evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of a range of philosophical views.

# 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**.

**Question 7 – Contemporary Conflicts in Moral Theory**

Select and explain an ethical issue of significance in 2026. Outline **two (2)** or more moral theories and apply the theories to your chosen ethical issue. In your answer, critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your moral theories in the context of your ethical issue.

**OR**

**Question 8 – Contemporary Conflicts in Moral Theory**

Using evidence based on at least **two (2)** moral theories, discuss how those theories may be used to help one approach an important ethical issue in 2026. Discuss and evaluate the major strengths and the most significant limitations of the moral theories you have selected in relation to your chosen issue.

**OR**

**Question 9 – Life, the Universe and Everything**

Does the Big Bang Theory offer the best explanation for the origins of our universe, or is there a place for contemporary cosmological arguments? Using evidence, offer an evaluation of your position.

**OR**

**Question 10 – Life, the Universe and Everything**

Does the Theory of Evolution offer the best explanation for the origins of life on earth, or is there a place for contemporary design arguments? Using evidence, offer an evaluation of your position.

# 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**.

**Question 11**

*"The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself."* – Michel de Montaigne

Montaigne's philosophy on the good life emphasises modesty and being comfortable within oneself. Do you believe this is a good prescription for a good life in 2026?

In your answer, refer to the above quotation and your broader understanding of Montaigne's approach to this topic.

**OR**

**Question 12**

*"Man is defined as a human being and a woman as a female – whenever she behaves as a human being, she is said to imitate the male."* – Simone de Beauvoir

Is Simone de Beauvoir's assertion that being a woman impacts one's ability to live a good life still relevant in 2026?

In your answer, refer to the above quotation and your broader understanding of de Beauvoir's approach to this topic.

**OR**

**Question 13**

*“Do you want to have an easy life? Then always stay with the herd and lose yourself in the herd.”* – Friedrich Nietzsche

Nietzsche’s philosophy on the good life emphasises individuality and overcoming difficulties. Do you believe this is a good prescription for a good life in 2026?

In your answer, refer to the above quotation and your broader understanding of Nietzsche’s approach to this topic.

**OR**

**Question 14**

*“Don't waste the years struggling for things that are unimportant. Don't burden yourself with possessions. Keep your needs and wants simple and enjoy what you have.*” – Henry David Thoreau

Thoreau’s philosophy on the good life emphasises simplicity and living in harmony with nature. Do you believe this is a good prescription for a good life in 2026?

In your answer, refer to the above quotation and your broader understanding of Thoreau’s approach to this topic.

End of Exam




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