



Victorian Certificate of Education 2012

SUPERVISOR TO ATTACH PROCESSING LABEL HERE

STUDENT NUMBER

Figures

Words

Letter

PHILOSOPHY

Written examination

Tuesday 13 November 2012

Reading time: 3.00 pm to 3.15 pm (15 minutes)

Writing time: 3.15 pm to 5.15 pm (2 hours)

QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK

Structure of book

<i>Section</i>	<i>Number of questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>	<i>Number of marks</i>
A	4	4	15
B	3	3	15
C	3	3	15
D	3	1	15
			Total 60

- Students are permitted to bring into the examination room: pens, pencils, highlighters, erasers, sharpeners and rulers.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring into the examination room: blank sheets of paper and/or white out liquid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Question and answer book of 11 pages.

Instructions

- Write your **student number** in the space provided above on this page.
- All written responses must be in English.

Students are NOT permitted to bring mobile phones and/or any other unauthorised electronic devices into the examination room.

SECTION A

Instructions for Section A

Answer **all** four questions.

Question 1

According to Socrates, philosophy is superior to rhetoric.

Outline and evaluate one of his reasons for holding this view.

3 marks

Question 2

Aristotle argues that the good life involves ‘activity of soul exhibiting virtue’.

Outline **two** of the premises or arguments in Aristotle’s case for this claim, and evaluate one of them.

4 marks

SECTION B

Instructions for Section B
Answer **all** three questions.

The following extract is taken from a school’s website.

Our School – Kookaburra College

As an independent school with no particular religious affiliation, we encourage students to live by the enduring values of kindness and compassion.

In a society that places so much emphasis on material self-interest, we guide students to see the broader global picture. In comparison with the needs of the starving, surely the desire to own the latest phone or clothing becomes insignificant. An ethically reflective life does not forbid having fun or enjoying material pleasures, but it may shift our perspective. Kookaburra College aims to develop citizens with a commitment to making the world a better place.

While we emphasise the importance of students’ contributions to their community, we believe this begins with strong self-respect and self-discipline. We provide a safe environment and clear boundaries within which young people are free to explore possibilities and take risks, as they develop a sense of who they are.

Our rigorous academic program is complemented by a broad range of co-curricular and community service activities. We encourage all students to develop their talents whatever these may be. However, we emphasise the goal of a balanced life, in which the essential wellbeing of oneself, one’s family, one’s friends and one’s community is the priority. We provide a caring social context where all efforts are recognised. Leadership and achievement are celebrated, but so too are lives of service and humility.

Question 1

Critically compare the likely responses of Callicles and Weil to Kookaburra College’s critique of the purely self-interested life.

6 marks

Question 2

‘However, we emphasise the goal of a balanced life, in which the essential wellbeing of oneself, one’s family, one’s friends and one’s community is the priority.’

How might Aristotle and Nietzsche each respond to this notion of a balanced life?

4 marks

Question 3

On the basis of the ‘Our School’ statement, would you consider sending a child of yours to Kookaburra College? Justify your answer.

5 marks

**END OF SECTION B
TURN OVER**

SECTION C

Instructions for Section C

Answer **all** three questions.

Question 1

The radical scepticism of Descartes' 'First Meditation' is brought to an end in the 'Second Meditation': 'I must finally conclude that this proposition, *I am, I exist*, is necessarily true whenever it is put forward by me or conceived in my mind.'

Outline and evaluate Descartes' case for this conclusion.

4 marks

Question 2

Armstrong distinguishes two forms of behaviourism, and rejects both.

What are his reasons for rejecting them? How does he see his own position as overcoming these problems?

5 marks

Question 3

- a. Outline **either** an argument for dualism given by Descartes **or** an argument for materialism given by Armstrong.

2 marks

- b. Evaluate the argument you have outlined in **part a.**

2 marks

- c. What implications does the argument you have outlined in **part a.** have for a relevant contemporary debate?

2 marks

SECTION D

Instructions for Section D

Write an essay on **one** of the following topics.

Question 1

‘Attaining absolute certainty is less important than what works in human experience.’

Discuss this claim with reference to at least **two** of the following: Hume, Popper, Kuhn.

15 marks

OR

Question 2

‘The possibility of disproof is the crucial factor in the quest for certainty.’

Discuss this claim with reference to at least **two** of the following: Hume, Popper, Kuhn.

15 marks

OR

Question 3

‘Scientific theories must assume that the future will resemble the past.’

Discuss this claim with reference to at least **two** of the following: Hume, Popper, Kuhn.

15 marks

Question 1, 2 or 3
