

STUDENT NUMBER Letter

PHILOSOPHY

Written examination

Friday 10 November 2023

Reading time: 11.45 am to 12.00 noon (15 minutes)

Writing time: 12.00 noon to 2.00 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	7	7	30
B	2	2	20
C	2	1	20
			Total 70

- 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 correction fluid/tape.
- No calculator is allowed in this examination.

Materials supplied

- Question and answer book of 24 pages, including **assessment criteria for Section C** on page 24
- Additional space is available at the end of the book if you need extra space to complete an answer.

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.

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SECTION A

Instructions for Section A

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

Question 1 (3 marks)

How does doubt lead Descartes to dualism?

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Question 2 (5 marks)

- a. Why does Nagel specifically choose the example of bats to argue that we lack strong reasons to accept physicalism? 2 marks

- b. Nagel uses the example of bats to argue that physicalism cannot account for consciousness. To what extent do you agree with Nagel that this is a strong challenge to physicalism? 3 marks

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Question 3 (7 marks)

Hume writes:

‘For how few of our past actions are there, of which we have any memory? Who can tell me, for instance, what were his thoughts and actions on the first of *January* 1715, the 11th of *March* 1719, and the 3rd of *August* 1733? Or will he affirm, because he has entirely forgot the incidents of these days, that the present self is not the same person with the self of that time; and by that means overturn all the most establish’d notions of personal identity?’

- a. Explain the objection that Hume is making in the passage above to Locke’s ‘most establish’d’ view of the role of memory in personal identity. 2 marks

- b. Hume points out in the passage above that we lack detailed memories of huge parts of our lives.
How does this support his own view of the role of memory in producing a ‘fictitious’ personal identity? 2 marks

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c. Whose view on the relationship between memory and personal identity do you find more plausible – Locke’s or Hume’s? Justify your response.

3 marks

Question 4 (2 marks)

Aristotle says that we should not expect absolute precision in ethical inquiry.

Outline **one** reason he gives to support this view.

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Question 5 (5 marks)

- a. Aristotle argues that a virtuous life aims for the mean between the vices of excess and deficiency.

How might Callicles respond to this idea and what reason might he give?

2 marks

- b. Evaluate Aristotle’s view that a virtuous life is characterised by seeking the mean between vices of excess and deficiency. Use an example of a virtue discussed by Aristotle (for example, courage) in your answer.

3 marks

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Question 6 (2 marks)

Nietzsche claims that ‘what is right for one cannot by any means therefore be right for another’.

Outline **one** reason he provides for this claim.

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Question 7 (6 marks)

- a. According to Wolf's view of meaningfulness, interests to be considered meaningful are subjectively attractive and objectively worthy. However, she notes the potential criticism that such interests are 'of concern only to persons from a certain place, time, and social class'.

Using an example, outline how this criticism might challenge Wolf's view of meaningfulness. 3 marks

- b. Is this criticism of Wolf a fair one? Justify your thinking. 3 marks

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SECTION B

Instructions for Section B

Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

Question 1 (10 marks)

How can consciousness occur when the body has died? This is a question challenging neuropsychiatrists who study near-death experiences (NDEs). These are intense mental and sensory experiences that people report in vivid detail, after being revived from a state of clinical death. Of particular interest are so-called vertical NDEs, in which hospital patients report experiences containing verifiable information they could not have obtained except by being conscious (for example, overhearing conversations on the operating table), despite doctors certifying that they could not have had any brain activity at that time. These include numerous resuscitated cases of cardiac arrest, where the body has died for a recorded period of time: with no heartbeat, no breathing and no electrical impulses detected in the brain.

NDEs have many neuroscientists convinced that consciousness must be able to occur while the brain is dead. But if consciousness isn't a function of the body, it must be a function of something else separate from the body. NDEs surely lead us to conclude that mind-body dualism must be true.

To what extent does the existence of near-death experiences support the idea that mind and body are distinct?

In answering this question, you should:

- consider the argument presented in the passage above
- consider Smart's discussion of the relationship between mind and body
- consider Descartes's discussion of the relationship between mind and body
- give your own justified response to this question.

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Question 2 (10 marks)

Experimenters at the Nematode University of Technology recently uploaded the brain of an individual roundworm of the species *C. elegans*. The process of uploading led to the complete destruction of the brain and body of the individual roundworm. The experimenters then used the uploaded brain to run an autonomous android roundworm. Even though the body of the original biological roundworm was destroyed, the individual roundworm lived on as an android roundworm. There is no limit to the number of times that the body of the android roundworm can be replaced without affecting the roundworm's identity. So, the individual roundworm is now immortal.

The brain of a member of the species *C. elegans* is significantly smaller than the brain of a human. While the brain of *C. elegans* contains only 300 neurons, the brain of a human contains about 86 billion neurons. Nonetheless, it is just a matter of time before we will be able to upload the brain of an individual human and use it to run an autonomous android human. When we can do this, every human being will be able to choose to upload to an immortal android phase. If it is good enough for roundworms, then it is certainly good enough for people.

Would an android running on an upload of your brain be you?

In answering this question, you should:

- consider the argument in the passage above, including the assumptions it makes about personal identity
- consider Locke's discussion of the self
- consider Michaels's discussion of the self
- give your own justified response to this question.

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SECTION C

Instructions for Section C

Write an essay on **one** of the following questions in the space provided.

Your response will be assessed according to the assessment criteria set out on page 24.

Question 1 (20 marks)

... So why haven't we developed happiness on demand? We've seen more technological growth in the last 10 years than we saw in the 100 years before that, and it seems we've only grown less happy. What gives? If technology has the potential to solve almost every other logistical problem inherent to the human condition, shouldn't we be able to wield it to become happy?

...

... [O]ne of the key things that happiness studies find is that people have a hard time being content with what they have, especially in comparison to others. Technology's constant 'newness' is awesome, but the never-ending churn of annual improvements means that a year or two after you buy something (if that), it's 'old' or 'outdated' and everybody longs for the newest model.

...

Think about it this way: Does the thought of indoor guidance systems¹ akin to GPS sound new and exciting? Precision tracking down to the step sounds awesome – but at one point before 1995, so did standard GPS. Nowadays, though, every phone is capable of standard GPS to the point that the technology is taken for granted. The same could be said of cellular/smartphones in general. Indeed, the psychological term 'hedonic treadmill' is applied to the human tendency to experience a rise in desires and expectations in tandem with material gain such as innovative new products or a raise in salary, meaning there is no permanent or net gain in happiness.

Source: A Heikkila, 'Technology, happiness on demand and the absurd human condition', *TechCrunch*, 23 March 2017, <techcrunch.com>

¹**indoor guidance systems** – apps that show a user's real-time indoor location

Critically discuss this perspective on the interplay between technological development and the nature of human happiness. In your response, draw on viewpoints and arguments from **either** Plato's *Gorgias* **or** Aristotle. You may also draw on other philosophical concepts and sources.

OR

Question 2 (20 marks)

... For those who came late: At the start of the month, San Francisco research group OpenAI released a free preview of its artificial intelligence platform, ChatGPT. Users who register at <chat.openai.com> type in a request about almost anything and receive a written answer seconds later.

When asked, it wrote instructions on how to remove peanut butter from a VCR ... It created a dairy-free recipe for macaroni cheese and an essay comparing and contrasting the nationalism of political scientist Benedict Anderson and philosopher Ernest Gellner. It refused to write about the benefits of eating glass, declaring 'there are none' ...

The list of potential ChatGPT content opportunities is endless – thank-you notes, Christmas cards, staff memos, press releases, exams, speeches.

In fact, it has already happened. One mate proudly revealed that he had used an AI program to write the thank-you notes to his wedding guests. The written word was once the highest form of human expression, but the digital age has turned us lazy. Why order takeaway when you can get home delivery?

Emily Bell, former director of digital content for Guardian News and Media, and founder and director of the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at the Columbia Journalism School, wrote that ChatGPT proved her greatest fears about AI and journalism. 'Not that bona fide journalists will be replaced in their work – but that these capabilities will be used by bad actors to autogenerate the most astounding amount of misleading bilge, smothering reality.'

Source: S Brook, 'This month the world changed and you barely noticed', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 December 2022, <smh.com.au>

Critically discuss this perspective on the interplay between technological development and the good life. In your response, draw on viewpoints and arguments from **either** Wolf **or** Nietzsche. You may also draw on other philosophical concepts and sources.

Question no.

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**END OF SECTION C
TURN OVER**

Assessment criteria for Section C

The essay in Section C will be assessed against the following criteria:

- knowledge and understanding of philosophical concepts, viewpoints, arguments and debates relevant to the topic
- critical evaluation of ideas and arguments relevant to the topic
- selection and use of relevant material and appropriate examples to support the response
- development of a coherent and well-reasoned response that addresses the specific demands of the topic
- use of clear and precise language appropriate to philosophy

END OF QUESTION AND ANSWER BOOK