



National  
Qualifications  
2024

**X854/76/11**

**Philosophy  
Paper 1**

FRIDAY, 24 MAY

9:00 AM – 11:15 AM

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**Total marks — 60**

**SECTION 1 — KNOWLEDGE AND DOUBT — 30 marks**

Attempt the question.

**SECTION 2 — MORAL PHILOSOPHY — 30 marks**

Attempt ONE question.

Write your answers clearly in the answer booklet provided. In the answer booklet you must clearly identify the question number you are attempting.

Use **blue** or **black** ink.

Before leaving the examination room you must give your answer booklet to the Invigilator; if you do not, you may lose all the marks for this paper.



\* X 8 5 4 7 6 1 1 \*

## SECTION 1 — KNOWLEDGE AND DOUBT — 30 marks

## Attempt the question

1. *The problem with Descartes is that he thinks he can use reason alone as a basis for all knowledge.*

Discuss whether Descartes' reliance on reason as a basis for knowledge is successful.

In your answer you may focus on any part of Descartes' Meditations.

You may wish to discuss one of the following:

- whether the Method of Doubt is effective in establishing reason as a basis for knowledge
- whether the Cogito is an appropriate foundation for knowledge
- whether the clear and distinct rule guarantees certain knowledge through reason alone
- or any other part of the Meditations.

Your essay should do the following:

- describe and explain what Descartes says in this part of the Meditations
- discuss how Descartes uses reason in this part of the Meditations
- evaluate how successful this use of reason is.

30

## SECTION 2 — MORAL PHILOSOPHY — 30 marks

## Attempt ONE question

2. Read the following situation and answer the question that follows.

*A surgeon is about to perform an operation on a ruthless leader of a country who is responsible for the deaths and ongoing suffering of tens of thousands of their own citizens. The operation is risky and during the surgery the surgeon will have an opportunity to cause the death of the leader without appearing responsible.*

Would a utilitarian believe that the surgeon is morally required to cause the death of the leader?

In your answer you could include the following:

- explanation of how utilitarianism says we should make moral decisions
- application of utilitarianism to this situation
- discussion of relevant strengths and weaknesses of utilitarianism in relation to this situation
- evaluation of utilitarianism in relation to this situation.

30

OR

3. Read the following comment on utilitarianism and answer the question that follows.

*Utilitarianism can't work as a moral theory because it sometimes requires people to act against their intuition.*

To what extent is this a fair criticism of utilitarianism?

In your answer you could include the following:

- description of the key features of utilitarianism
- discussion of how the criticism applies to utilitarianism, and how a utilitarian might respond
- discussion of relevant strengths and weaknesses of utilitarianism in relation to this criticism
- evaluation of utilitarianism in relation to this criticism.

30

[END OF QUESTION PAPER]

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