

# Philosophy & Ethics

## Practice Questions

AS / A Level  
2016 OCR Linear Syllabus



# Instructions

## Individual, exam-style questions

The questions contained in this booklet match the style of questions that are typically asked in exams. This booklet is not however, a practice exam. Elevate's research with top students identified that top students do more practice questions than anyone else. They begin the process of testing their knowledge early in the year.

Therefore, we have provided exam-format questions that are sorted by topic so that you can answer them as you learn the information, rather than waiting until the very end of the year to complete exams.

## Comments, questions?

Let us know if you need any further advice by visiting [www.elevateeducation.com](http://www.elevateeducation.com). You can comment on any of our material, or head to the FAQ section and ask us a question. Also, you can find us on social media so you can stay up to date on any brand new tips we release throughout the year.

## Other information

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# Philosophy

## The Existence of God

1. To what extent is the cosmological argument successful in proving the existence of God?
2. To what extent is the teleological argument successful in proving the existence of God?
3. 'Evolution is the most damaging criticism of the design argument.' Discuss.
4. 'William Paley's Watch analogy is the most convincing argument for design.' Discuss.
5. Evaluate whether a posteriori or a priori arguments are more convincing for the existence of God.
6. Evaluate whether Kant's criticisms of the ontological argument are more convincing than Gaunilo's.
7. 'The logical fallacies in the ontological arguments cannot be overcome.' Discuss.
8. To what extent do ontological arguments fail to prove the existence of God?

## God & the world

1. 'Religious Experiences are all the product of a physiological effect.' Discuss.
2. To what extent does individual testimony provide sufficient evidence for the validity of religious experiences?
3. 'Religious experiences provide conclusive evidence for the existence of God.' Discuss.
4. To what extent can monotheism be defended in the face of evil and suffering?
5. 'The logical aspects of the problem of evil pose a greater challenge to belief than the evidential aspects.' Discuss
6. Evaluate Hick's success in resolving the problem of evil.
7. 'Evil and suffering in the world suggests that the God of Classical Theism does not exist.' Discuss.

## Philosophical language and thought

1. Evaluate Plato's reliance on reason in an attempt to make sense of reality.
2. To what extent is the concept of a 'soul' best understood as a reality?
3. 'The soul is a spiritual substance.' Discuss

## Philosophical and Theological Developments (A Level only)

1. Evaluate the success of Anselm in resolving the apparent conflicts between divine attributes?
2. 'Human free will can reasonably coexist with an omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent and eternal God.' Discuss.
3. To what extent is it necessary to resolve the apparent conflicts between divine attributes?

## Religious Language (A Level only)

1. 'Theological language is best approached by negation.' Discuss.
2. To what extent is religious language comprehensible if it is understood as symbolic?
3. 'Religious language is best understood in analogical terms.' Discuss.
4. 'Religious language is meaningless.' Discuss.
5. To what extent does Wittgenstein's non-cognitive approach present a better way of making sense of religious language than Aquinas' non-cognitive approach?
6. 'The participants in the falsification symposium present ineffective approaches to understanding religious language.' Discuss.

# Ethics

## Normative Ethical Theories: Religious Approaches

1. 'Human nature has an orientation towards the good.' Discuss.
2. Assess the view that natural law is not a useful method of moral decision-making.
3. 'Something can only be good if it achieves its telos.' Discuss.
4. To what extent does the doctrine of double effect justify an action?
5. Assess the view that situation ethics makes moral decision-making entirely individualistic.
6. Assess the view that love justifies any means to achieve a goal.
7. 'The strengths of situation ethics outweigh the weaknesses.' Discuss.
8. Evaluate how Fletcher's understanding of agape shapes situation ethics.

## Normative Ethical Theories

1. Assess the view that the impracticality of Kantian ethics makes them a useless method of moral decision-making.
2. 'Kant's categorical imperative creates more problems for ethical decision making than it solves.' Discuss.
3. Assess the view that Kantian ethics provide the best approach to business ethics.
4. Assess the view that act utilitarianism provides a more helpful method of moral decision-making than rule utilitarianism.
5. 'It is impossible to measure good or pleasure and then reach a moral decision.' Discuss.
6. The term 'pleasure' causes problems in the practical application of utilitarianism.' Discuss.



## Applied Ethics

1. 'Non-voluntary euthanasia is morally wrong in all circumstances' Discuss.
2. Assess the view that natural law is of no help with regard to the issue of euthanasia.
3. 'The religious concept of sanctity of life still has an impact on 21<sup>st</sup> century medical ethics.' Discuss.
4. Assess the view that medical intervention and medical non-intervention to end a patient's life are the same moral decision.
5. Critically assess the application of Kantian ethics and utilitarianism to business ethics.
6. 'Human beings cannot flourish in a capitalist society.' Discuss.
7. Assess the view that whistle-blowing is morally wrong.
8. 'The concept of corporate social responsibility is hypocritical.' Discuss.

## Meta-ethics (A Level only)

1. Assess the view that ethical terms are objectively factual.
2. 'Ethical language is meaningless.' Discuss.
3. 'Intuitionism provides the best definition for the word 'good'.' Discuss.

## Significant Ideas (A Level only)

1. Assess the view that conscience does not exist.
2. 'Freud's psychological approach to conscience is more convincing than Aquinas' theological approach'. Discuss.

## Developments in Ethical Thought (A Level only)

1. 'Sexual behaviour should be subject to legislation and societal norms.' Discuss.
2. Assess the issues raised in the application of Kantian ethics and natural law to sexual ethics.
3. 'Extramarital sex can be morally justified.' Discuss.



# Mark Scheme

The top bands of the mark scheme from the Latest OCR specimen paper state a top answer will show:

An excellent demonstration of knowledge and understanding in response to the question:

- fully comprehends the demands of, and focusses on, the question throughout
- excellent selection of relevant material which is skillfully used
- accurate and highly detailed knowledge which demonstrates deep understanding through a complex and nuanced approach to the material used
- thorough, accurate and precise use of technical terms and vocabulary in context
- extensive range of scholarly views, academic approaches, and/or sources of wisdom and authority are used to demonstrate knowledge and understanding

An excellent demonstration of analysis and evaluation in response to the question:

- excellent, clear and successful argument
- confident and insightful critical analysis and detailed evaluation of the issue
- views skilfully and clearly stated, coherently developed and justified
- answers the question set precisely throughout
- thorough, accurate and precise use of technical terms and vocabulary in context
- extensive range of scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority used to support analysis and evaluation

Assessment of Extended Response: There is an excellent line of reasoning, well-developed and sustained, which is coherent, relevant and logically structured

# Marking Tips

## Mark it yourself and then get your teacher to check it

Go onto the exam board website and find the specimen paper mark scheme for the new syllabus and have a go at marking it yourself. It takes 5-10 minutes and it'll help you to see where you are and aren't hitting the assessment objectives. Get a teacher to remark it for you to get an accurate idea of how you've done.

## Define your terms

Make sure to define every key philosophical term and opinion based term (e.g. better, useless, successful) in your introduction to get a lot of knowledge/understanding marks in the bag and give your answer clarity and focus. Check out our Philosophy and Ethics A level blog for more tips.