

PHILOSOPHY I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Is there any satisfactory semantics for counterfactuals, and does it matter much whether there is or not?
2. Does everything supervene on the physical?
3. If it is necessary that p, is it necessary that it is necessary that p?
4. Do we need essences?
5. Must there be something?
6. 'The infinite, in so far as it is infinite, is unknowable' [ARISTOTLE]. Is it?
7. Is 'non-conceptual content' a contradiction in terms?
8. Are you identical with a human being?
9. 'The only problem about consciousness is why it should be found problematic.' Discuss.
10. "Freedom" to act out of character, if there were such a thing, would not amount to a kind of freedom but to the disintegration of the personality.' Discuss.
11. Is pride a virtue?
12. If we could make people morally better by some form of compulsion, would it in general be right to do so?
13. How could there possibly be such a thing as moral luck?
14. 'Mathematical proofs are just as much works of art as poems or paintings are.' Are they?
15. Could it ever be a justification for acting in a certain way, that one believed that God wished one to do so?
16. Which philosopher has done most damage to philosophy, and in what ways?

PHILOSOPHY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. What makes a series of events causally connected?
2. If the past can influence the present, does it follow that the past *is* still present?
3. If possible worlds are actual, why call them 'possible'?
4. Does mathematics need foundations?
5. Why should one suppose that a single philosophical account will cover all the different kinds of perception?
6. Are there any successful transcendental arguments?
7. Is there vagueness in the world?
8. What would be a theory of meaning?
9. If Cartesian dualism fails as a theory of the mind-body relation, does it follow that any dualistic theory must fail?
10. Do acts and dispositions have moral properties in the same sort of way as physical objects have colours?
11. Should one be held responsible for one's own character?
12. Could ethics evolve?
13. Are there good reasons for the enduring appeal of contractualism?
14. Do works of art aim to be representations of some reality?
15. Does a religion need a god (or gods)?
16. **EITHER:**
What can ethics learn from Aristotle?

OR:
What can aesthetics learn from Plato?

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1. Is there a useful definition of *a priori* knowledge?
2. How should one draw the internalist/externalist distinction in epistemology?
3. If I can't know that my lottery ticket will lose, then can I know anything about the future?
4. Are there objective probabilities?
5. Is an absolute conception of reality possible?
6. What is introspection? Is it the primary source of self-knowledge?
7. Can conclusions in the philosophy of language answer traditional metaphysical questions?
8. Can anything be made of the idea that one cause contributed more to the effect than another cause?
9. Why is there no subject called 'the philosophy of chemistry'?
10. Do objects have temporal parts?
11. Do individuals have essences?
12. How can we distinguish semantics from pragmatics?
13. Do conditionals have truth conditions?
14. How should reliabilists individuate the causal processes which they refer to in their theory?
15. Can you assert a proposition without being capable of understanding it?
16. What is a concept?
17. What is the importance of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities?
18. Is there a kind of demonstrative thought that you can have about an object only if you perceive that object?
19. What properties does visual experience represent?
20. 'Beliefs cannot be dispositions, because beliefs, unlike dispositions, can be true and false.' Discuss.
21. "'Now' is to time what 'here' is to space.' Discuss.

[OVER]

22. What is the relationship between being the same person and being the same animal?
23. **EITHER:**
Might God have existed?
- OR:**
Might God not have existed?
24. What is desert, and what kind of freedom does it require?
25. Do our obligations to an individual vary depending on how salient to us this person's plight is?
26. What has the analysis of moral language taught us about ethics?
27. It is a fundamental objection to utilitarianism that it undermines the distinction between what we do and what we allow to happen'. Is it?
28. Can virtue ethics stand alone?
29. 'The natural distribution of talent is arbitrary from a moral point of view' [RAWLS]. Is this true? If so, what follows?
30. Can we make any sense of the notion of being forced to be free?
31. When is one state justified in interfering coercively in the affairs of another?

PHILOSOPHY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Can a sceptic allow that we know the premises of sceptical arguments?
2. How should we explain knowledge of modal facts?
3. Is induction justified?
4. Does the fact that some arithmetical truths are known show that no causal theory of knowledge can be correct?
5. Do names contribute only their referents to propositions expressed by sentences containing them?
6. What is logical form?
7. Does vagueness force us to abandon classical logic?
8. What is analyticity?
9. What is a natural kind?
10. Do we need properties?
11. If I stipulate that 'Jones' refers to the tallest spy in London, can I thereby have *de re* thoughts about the tallest spy in London?
12. When does an explanation debunk what it explains?
13. Is language necessary for thinking?
14. Could time's passage be an illusion?
15. 'Numbers exist'; 'there is no greatest prime'. Do these two statements use the same notion of existence?
16. What does 'I' refer to?
17. Does it matter if we are unable to explain how matter gives rise to consciousness?
18. When a nearby car alarm goes off, do you hear the car, the alarm, or both?
19. How successful is the free will response to the problem of evil?
20. 'If we did not eat animals at all, then the animals bred in farms would not have the benefit of a few years' existence. So, eating animals is acceptable.' Discuss.
21. In what sense, if any, are moral considerations overriding?

[OVER]

22. If we do not believe that morality is objective, should we take morality less seriously?
23. What is the relation between reasons and desires?
24. Should we try to develop systematic moral theories?
25. What is weakness of the will?
26. What can moral philosophers learn from any ancient philosopher?
27. What sort of equality should egalitarians favour?
28. Has the theoretical case for socialism collapsed?
29. Is there any sense in which the citizens of a modern democracy can plausibly be said to govern themselves?
30. How does aesthetics differ from ethics?

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Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. If belief can come in degrees, can knowledge?
2. Might whether *S* knows that *p* turn on the importance to *S* of the truth of *p*?
3. Could someone know nothing? If not, how close could they get?
4. Must an account of modality allow that there might have been nothing?
5. Can an object have a property only if it exists?
6. 'There is *one* thing of which one can say neither that it is one metre long, nor that it is not one metre long, and that is the standard metre in Paris' [WITTGENSTEIN]. Really?
7. Do blocks of marble contain statues just waiting to get out?
8. Does tense logic rest on a mistake?
9. What is reference?
10. What are the problems of vagueness and how should they be solved?
11. Are smells particulars or universals?
12. 'The Labour Party believes that we should join the Euro.' Is there any sense in which the Labour Party has beliefs?
13. Why has so little progress been made in understanding consciousness?
14. Must someone with absolute pitch have a different experience of notes from someone without?
15. Could we feel a pain in someone else's body?
16. Can photographs be true or false? If not, why not?
17. What is a person?
18. Can you forgive someone who has done you no harm?
19. If two moral theories deliver different verdicts as to the right course of action should you simply comply with the verdict of the theory you assign the highest credence to?
20. What is the relation between reasons and morality?
21. In what sense, if any, can morality be objective?

[OVER]

22. What sort of equality should egalitarians favour?
23. 'It is a fundamental objection to utilitarianism that it undermines the distinction between what we do and what we allow to happen.' Is it?
24. What should modern philosophers learn from Aristotle's treatment of **EITHER** pleasure **OR** the infinite?
25. Does Kuhn's idea of a paradigm shift have any application within philosophy itself?
26. Are simpler theories more likely to be true?
27. Are philosophers of maths preoccupied with set theory rather than the practice of ordinary mathematicians?
28. What is the importance to political philosophy of the nation state?
29. Should the state be neutral between conceptions of the good?
30. '[A]ll the great philosophical discoveries are discoveries of the obvious' [H.H. PRICE]. Discuss.

PHILOSOPHY II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. What, if anything, is wrong with the following account of a priori knowledge: 'You know p a priori just if you believe p and you could not have believed p falsely.'
2. Can we gain testimonial knowledge that p from someone who doesn't know that p ?
3. What are epistemic reasons?
4. Is there a usable concept of analyticity?
5. Should philosophers of language be interested in animal communication?
6. What has possible worlds semantics taught us that we didn't know already?
7. What does it mean to say that time passes? Does it?
8. 'Has a constellation been there as long as the stars that compose it, or did it come into being only when selected and designated?' [GOODMAN]
9. Why might plurals be thought to be of philosophical significance?
10. Could something be coloured without being any particular colour?
11. If symphonies are abstract objects, how can we experience them, refer to them or know anything about them?
12. 'How many objects are there in this room?' Why do we find this question puzzling?
13. Is the correct account of our knowledge of our own pains, beliefs and moods unified in any interesting way?
14. What is the relation between normative and motivating reasons?
15. Should we think of our experience in pitch darkness as an absence of seeing or as a seeing of absence?
16. What is an intention?
17. Could a person who felt no guilt be a moral person?
18. 'Does a dog have a will capable of the good?' [MIDDLETON] How might we answer Middleton's question?
19. What makes something a perversion?
20. Why is it wrong to kill?

[OVER]

21. What is desert, and what kind of freedom does it require?
22. What is the truth in contractualism?
23. Is the philosophy of music too preoccupied with works in the Western classical tradition?
24. Does all pictorial art rely on illusion?
25. How does aesthetics differ from ethics?
26. 'Plato's use of the dialogue form means that he always has to leave it to the reader to fill in some of the necessary steps in his reasoning.' Discuss with reference to one or more of: *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Republic*, *Sophist*, *Theaetetus*.
27. '[The Everettian interpretation of quantum mechanics] is simple and elegant, and it predicts that there will be observers who see the world just as I see it. Is that not enough?' [CHALMERS]
28. 'The natural distribution of talent is arbitrary from a moral point of view' [RAWLS]. Is this true? If so, what follows?
29. Is it an objection to democracy that it gives no vote to foreigners or to future generations?
30. Which philosopher do you consider unjustifiably neglected and why?

PHILOSOPHY I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Is 'A knows that p' equivalent to 'It is no accident that A truly believes that p'?
2. Does possible world theory make any contribution to the *epistemology* of conditionals? If not, is that an objection to it?
3. What sort of true statements can be known a priori?
4. What is the role of intention in the analysis of meaning?
5. Is there a usable concept of analyticity?
6. Are vague concepts incoherent?
7. Are the paradoxes of self-reference of any real interest?
8. How can we have mathematical knowledge?
9. "'Now" is to time what "here" is to space.' Discuss.
10. What is reductionism?
11. Should we distinguish between persons, human beings, and their bodies?
12. Do objects have temporal parts?
13. Can computers think?
14. What, if anything, can a priori reflection reveal about the relation between the mental and the physical?
15. What is introspection? Is it the primary source of self-knowledge?
16. Could it be indeterminate whether some future pain will be mine?
17. In what sense, if any, are moral considerations overriding?
18. Does any ancient philosopher have something to teach moral philosophers today?
19. Does evolutionary psychology have implications for ethics?
20. If we do not believe that morality is objective, should we take morality less seriously?
21. Has the theoretical case for socialism collapsed?
22. What is the truth in Contractualism?

[OVER]

23. When is it justified for one state to interfere coercively in the affairs of another?
24. Does beauty lie in the eye of the beholder?

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Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Does the idea of a degree of belief help to explain probability?
2. Is modern philosophy too much in the shadow of Kant?
3. If the sceptic cannot be refuted, does this matter?
4. What is a concept?
5. Is 'true' simply a device for disquotation?
6. Can one have *de re* propositional attitudes regarding things that do not yet exist? If so, does this imply the falsity of the causal theory of reference?
7. What is logical form?
8. 'Numbers exist'; 'There is no greatest prime'. Do these two statements use the same notion of existence?
9. What is a natural kind?
10. Does realism about the future entail determinism?
11. What is the importance of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities?
12. Is the problem of evil insuperable?
13. 'I simply move my body – the rest is up to nature.' What is the significance of this for the philosophy of action?
14. What is the relation between thought and language?
15. Does the distinction between first-person and third-person points of view correspond to a distinction between different kinds of fact?
16. Is self-deception a species of deception?
17. What has the analysis of moral language taught us about ethics?
18. What, if anything, could make someone deserve to suffer?
19. What is the truth in Consequentialism?
20. Is the desire for posthumous fame fundamentally irrational?
21. Can we make any sense of the notion of being forced to be free?

[OVER]

22. Why democracy?
23. Is a competition fair only if everyone has an equal chance of winning?
24. 'The legacy of Greece to Western philosophy is Western philosophy' [BERNARD WILLIAMS]. Discuss.

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Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Might there have been nothing?
2. Is it possible to survive death?
3. Are there any good arguments against the view that truth is relative?
4. Are there any good reasons to think that knowledge cannot be analysed?
5. What is the epistemic significance of disagreement?
6. Is there any viable distinction between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori*?
7. Presentism is no more plausible than solipsism. Discuss.
8. 'There is not a philosophy of digestion as there is a philosophy of perception; so what is it, exactly, that the philosophy of perception is supposed to do?' [CRANE] Discuss.
9. Is the distinction between access and phenomenal consciousness a good distinction?
10. Is the notion of a 'concept' an important one for the philosophy of mind or language?
11. How could folk psychology be improved?
12. 'A man is not a good man at all who feels no pleasure in noble actions.' [ARISTOTLE] Really?
13. If someone is fined for committing a crime, someone else may pay the fine. So if someone is jailed for committing a crime, why don't we allow someone else to serve his/her time?
14. Does friendship have a distinctive ethical value?
15. To act, let alone be morally responsible, one must have the power to do otherwise. Discuss.
16. Is aesthetics overly concerned with art?
17. How far should the state restrict the ability of citizens to enter into contracts amongst themselves?
18. Is it desirable for the state to be neutral among certain classes of competing values?
19. What is the point of experimental philosophy?
20. Have scientists ever literally seen the world differently after a scientific revolution?

[OVER]

21. Does quantum mechanics have any philosophical implications?
22. Should we always reject theories from which we can derive contradictions?
23. What do you know when you know who someone is?
24. Is there a kind of thought about myself that only I can have?
25. In what sense, if any, is the fact that tigers are mammals part of the *meaning* of the word 'tiger'?
26. Which philosopher is due a rediscovery?
27. Discuss the changing role of teleological-explanation in the history of philosophy.

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Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Should the all-or-nothing notion of belief be replaced by a graded notion of credence?
2. What, if anything, is wrong with reliabilism?
3. What, if anything, can we know about the future?
4. What does it mean to say, 'It's obvious that p '?
5. Does time travel make sense?
6. Should we distinguish between descriptive and revisionary metaphysics?
7. What sense can be made of the notion of an emergent property?
8. Why would anyone want to be a nominalist?
9. 'Psychology is no nearer related to philosophy than is any other natural science' [WITTGENSTEIN]. Do you agree?
10. 'Much of the so-called "mind-body problem" will be solved in something like the way in which the problem of the motion of the heavenly bodies was solved, by invoking principles that seemed incomprehensible or even abhorrent to the scientific imagination of an earlier generation.' [CHOMSKY] Discuss.
11. Are human minds different in kind from (non-human) animal minds?
12. Can one decide what to desire?
13. Is the difference between intended and foreseen but unintended consequences of moral relevance?
14. What is involved in blaming someone for something?
15. What is a will such that it might or might not be free?
16. What is the relationship of moral and aesthetic judgment?
17. Do citizens have an obligation to obey the law?
18. Does equality of outcome matter more or less than equality of opportunity?
19. Does the use of mathematics in scientific theories provide a reason to believe in the truth of mathematics?
20. Do we have good reason to believe that current scientific theories come close to the truth?

[OVER]

21. Discuss the potential philosophical implications of a technical result in logic or mathematics (e.g. Gödel's incompleteness theorem, the Löwenheim-Skolem theorem).
22. Why should we care about whether a given logic is complete or not?
23. Do we need a notion of direct reference?
24. If I say, 'Bertrand Russell, the Chinese philosopher, co-authored the *Principia Mathematica*' have I said something true or false?
25. The concept of a category mistake is confused and confusing. Discuss.
26. What can contemporary epistemologists learn from pre-Cartesian philosophy?
27. Does the principle of sufficient reason have any place in contemporary philosophy?