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Philosophy

Higher level and standard level

Paper 2

14 November 2025

Zone A morning | Zone B morning | Zone C morning

1 hour

Instructions to candidates

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Answer both parts of one question.
- A clean copy of the prescribed text is required for this paper.
- The maximum mark for this examination paper is **[25 marks]**.

Answer **both** parts (a) and (b) of **one** question. Each question is worth [25 marks].

Alfred Jules Ayer: *Language, Truth and Logic*

1. (a) Explain Ayer’s critique of metaphysics. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer’s critique of metaphysics. [15]
2. (a) Explain Ayer’s claim that ethics should give an analysis of ethical terms. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ayer’s claim that ethics should give an analysis of ethical terms. [15]

Simone de Beauvoir: *The Second Sex*, Vol. 1 part 1, Vol. 2 part 1 and Vol. 2 part 4

3. (a) Explain de Beauvoir’s account of the tensions that arise between the girl and her parents. [10]
(b) Evaluate de Beauvoir’s account of the tensions that arise between the girl and her parents. [15]
4. (a) Explain the significance of males assuming active roles and females assuming passive roles according to de Beauvoir. [10]
(b) Evaluate the significance of males assuming active roles and females assuming passive roles according to de Beauvoir. [15]

Confucius: *The Analects*

5. (a) Explain Confucius’s views on humaneness/benevolence (*ren*). [10]
(b) Evaluate Confucius’s views on humaneness/benevolence (*ren*). [15]
6. (a) Explain the Confucian view of knowledge (*zhi*). [10]
(b) Evaluate the Confucian view of knowledge (*zhi*). [15]

René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

7. (a) Explain Descartes’s theory concerning ideas. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes’s theory concerning ideas. [15]
8. (a) Explain Descartes’s ontological proof for the existence of God. [10]
(b) Evaluate Descartes’s ontological proof for the existence of God. [15]

Frantz Fanon: *Black Skin, White Masks*

9. (a) Explain Fanon’s account of how the white gaze affects the lived experience of the black man. [10]
(b) Evaluate Fanon’s account of how the white gaze affects the lived experience of the black man. [15]
10. (a) Explain Fanon’s views of the Hegelian dialectic in his understanding of the recognition of blackness. [10]
(b) Evaluate Fanon’s views of the Hegelian dialectic in his understanding of the recognition of blackness. [15]

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty*

11. (a) Explain Mill’s views on how the freedoms of thought and of action might be threatened. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill’s views on how the freedoms of thought and of action might be threatened. [15]
12. (a) Explain Mill’s understanding of self-regarding actions. [10]
(b) Evaluate Mill’s understanding of self-regarding actions. [15]

Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Genealogy of Morals*

13. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s view about the relationship of bad conscience and suffering. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s view about the relationship of bad conscience and suffering. [15]
14. (a) Explain Nietzsche’s view that the human relationship to nature is one of *hubris* (excessive pride). [10]
(b) Evaluate Nietzsche’s view that the human relationship to nature is one of *hubris* (excessive pride). [15]

Martha C. Nussbaum: *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*

15. (a) Explain Nussbaum’s claim that the central capabilities support one another in many ways. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that the central capabilities support one another in many ways. [15]
16. (a) Explain Nussbaum’s claim that no society that pursues equality can avoid curtailing freedom. [10]
(b) Evaluate Nussbaum’s claim that no society that pursues equality can avoid curtailing freedom. [15]

José Ortega y Gasset: *The Revolt of the Masses*

17. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset’s claim that Europe is suffering from the greatest crisis that can afflict peoples, nations, and civilization. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s claim that Europe is suffering from the greatest crisis that can afflict peoples, nations, and civilization. [15]
18. (a) Explain Ortega y Gasset’s idea of the “barbarism of specialization”. [10]
(b) Evaluate Ortega y Gasset’s idea of the “barbarism of specialization”. [15]

Plato: *The Republic*, Books IV–IX

19. (a) Explain Plato’s theory of knowledge as an ascent from mere opinion to knowledge of the Forms. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Plato’s theory of knowledge as an ascent from mere opinion to knowledge of the Forms. [15]
20. (a) Explain Plato’s claim that the philosopher king bases power and authority on the knowledge of the Form of the Good. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Plato’s claim that the philosopher king bases power and authority on the knowledge of the Form of the Good. [15]

Charles Taylor: *The Ethics of Authenticity*

21. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that the ideal of authenticity incorporates some views of society. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that the ideal of authenticity incorporates some views of society. [15]
22. (a) Explain Taylor’s claim that we will need relationships to fulfil ourselves. [10]
- (b) Evaluate Taylor’s claim that we will need relationships to fulfil ourselves. [15]

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*

23. (a) Explain the characteristics of the sage (*sheng ren*) in the *Tao Te Ching*. [10]
- (b) Evaluate the characteristics of the sage (*sheng ren*) in the *Tao Te Ching*. [15]
24. (a) Explain what Lao Tzu says about the art of government. [10]
- (b) Evaluate what Lao Tzu says about the art of government. [15]
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