



A-level
PHILOSOPHY
7172/1

Paper 1 Epistemology and moral philosophy

Mark scheme

June 2022

Version: 1.0 Final Mark Scheme



Mark schemes are prepared by the Lead Assessment Writer and considered, together with the relevant questions, by a panel of subject teachers. This mark scheme includes any amendments made at the standardisation events which all associates participate in and is the scheme which was used by them in this examination. The standardisation process ensures that the mark scheme covers the students' responses to questions and that every associate understands and applies it in the same correct way. As preparation for standardisation each associate analyses a number of students' scripts. Alternative answers not already covered by the mark scheme are discussed and legislated for. If, after the standardisation process, associates encounter unusual answers which have not been raised they are required to refer these to the Lead Examiner.

It must be stressed that a mark scheme is a working document, in many cases further developed and expanded on the basis of students' reactions to a particular paper. Assumptions about future mark schemes on the basis of one year's document should be avoided; whilst the guiding principles of assessment remain constant, details will change, depending on the content of a particular examination paper.

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Level of response marking instructions

Level of response mark schemes are broken down into levels, each of which has a descriptor. The descriptor for the level shows the performance at the mid-point of the level. There are marks in each level. For the 3 and 5 mark questions that have only 1 mark in each level you need only apply step 1 below.

To support you in your marking, you will have standardisation scripts. These have been marked by the Lead Examiner at the correct standard. Generally, you will have a standardisation script to exemplify the standard for each level of the mark scheme for a particular item.

Before you apply the mark scheme to a student's answer read through the answer and annotate it (as instructed) to show the qualities that are being looked for. You can then apply the mark scheme.

Step 1 Determine a level

Start by reading the whole of the student's response and then, using the mark scheme level descriptors and the standardisation scripts, place the response in the level which it matches or best fits. When assigning a level you should look at the overall quality of the answer and not look to pick holes in small and specific parts of the answer where the student has not performed quite as well as the rest.

Step 2 Determine a mark

Once you have assigned a level you need to decide on the mark. Start with the middle mark of the level and then look at the student's response in comparison with the level descriptor and the standardisation script. If the student's response is better than the standardisation script, award a mark above the mid-point of the level. If the student's response is weaker than the standardisation script, award a mark below the mid-point of the level.

For the 25 mark questions examiners should bear in mind the relative weightings of the assessment objectives and be careful not to over/under credit a particular skill. This will be exemplified and reinforced as part of examiner training.

Guidance

You may well need to read back through the answer as you apply the mark scheme to clarify points and assure yourself that the level and the mark are appropriate.

Indicative content in the mark scheme is provided as a guide for examiners. It is not intended to be exhaustive and you must credit other appropriate points. Students do not have to cover all of the points mentioned in the Indicative content to reach the highest level of the mark scheme.

An answer which contains nothing of relevance to the question must be awarded zero marks.

Section A – Epistemology

0 1 What is the difference between a necessary truth and a contingent truth?

[3 marks]

AO1 = 3

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
3	A full and correct answer, given precisely, with little or no redundancy.
2	The substantive content of the answer is correct, but there may be some redundancy or minor imprecision.
1	Relevant, but fragmented, points.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Examples for 3 marks:

Necessary truth	Contingent truth
A proposition that is true in all (logically) possible worlds.	A proposition that is true in the actual world but not in all (logically) possible worlds.
A proposition that is true and could not (possibly) have been false.	A proposition is true and/could (possibly) have been false.
A truth that could not be otherwise / must be true.	A truth that could be / could have been otherwise – does not have to be true.
A truth the denial of which would be a contradiction.	A truth the denial of which would not be a contradiction

Examples for 2 marks:

“Contingent truths are capable of being either true or false, but necessary truths are always true / cannot be doubted”.

“Contingent truths could be false whereas necessary truths are always true”

“Necessary truths are true by definition and cannot be denied without contradiction. Contingent truths depend on something else to be true”

Examples for 1 mark:

“Necessary truths must be true in virtue of meaning alone, whereas this is not the case for contingent truths.”

“Contingent truths must be true in every possible world, whereas it is conceivable that necessary truths are false so they are not true in every possible world”

“Contingent truths depend on something else, whereas necessary truths don’t depend on anything else”.

“Necessary truths must be true”

“Contingent truths do not have to be true”

“A necessary truth is a truth such as ‘bachelors are unmarried men’ whereas a contingent truth is a truth such as ‘Boris Johnson is Prime Minister’”

Examples for 0 marks:

“Necessary truths are made true in virtue of the meanings of the terms alone/true by definition, whereas contingent truths cannot be known in virtue of the meanings of the terms alone/true by definition”

Notes:

- Students may link the analytic / synthetic distinction to the necessary / contingent distinction.
 - So long as students clearly differentiate the two, this should not be judged as redundant (for instance, a student may legitimately illustrate what makes a truth necessary by explaining that it is analytic).
 - If students give a definition of analytic/synthetic truth (delete as appropriate) without linking it to the notions of necessity/contingency, then this cannot get any marks.
- Students may conflate necessary/contingent truths with necessary/contingent existence. Again, this can get partial credit – see example for 1 mark above (whether truths depend on something else or not)
- Students may refer to our ability or otherwise to doubt necessary/contingent truths. This is imprecise and cannot be awarded full credit.
- If students only say that it is a proposition whose contrary is a necessary/contingent falsehood (delete as appropriate), this can only get 1 mark.
- It is possible that students may get the terms the wrong way around, but nevertheless have a clear understanding of the distinction. A response which does this should be awarded a maximum of 1 mark.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.

0 2 Explain the reliabilist definition of knowledge.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

- The relevant line in the specification is: “replace ‘justified’ with ‘reliably formed’ (R+T+B) (ie reliabilism)”.
- Students are likely to explain the general view in the following way (or similar)

S knows that p iff (if and only if) (1) p is true.

(2) S believes that p .

(3) S’s belief that p was produced by a reliable cognitive process.

- This may be explained as being the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge, and these terms might be explained. Knowledge is true belief produced by a reliable method.
- This is most likely to be further explained in terms of a reliable cognitive process with a tendency to cause true beliefs. Examples of reliable cognitive processes given by philosophers have included: memory, perception, testimony, introspection.
- Some students may mention implications, eg:
 - This is often seen as an “externalist” view whereby information about the process itself and its reliability need not be introspectively/reflectively accessible to the agent in order for the agent to have knowledge.
 - This may mean that nonhuman animals might be capable of knowledge (presuming that they are capable of having beliefs).
- Some students may give examples of specific reliabilist accounts, eg Goldman’s causal account, Nozick’s truth-tracking account, etc.
- Some students might introduce reliabilism as an attempt to respond to Gettier’s objection to the tripartite view.

Notes:

- Students are free to explain reliabilism in terms of either knowledge or justification (or both). For instance, students may say that knowledge = J+T+B+R.
- A response that only outlines knowledge as justified true belief without making any attempt to explain what is unique about reliabilism/address reliabilism directly can be awarded a maximum of 1 mark for ‘fragmented relevant points’.

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.

0 3 Explain how the argument from hallucination presents an issue for direct realism.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking, but the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Direct realism:

- Direct realism is the position that we always directly or immediately perceive mind-independent physical objects and their properties (inherent or relational). Our perception is therefore not mediated by ‘sense-data’ and therefore not indirect.
- Direct realism claims that my perception is constituted by the physical processes which take place between the perceiving subject and the perceived object. Because the physical processes constitute perception they do not mediate perception (eg by causing sense-data).
- The direct realist claim of directness and immediacy is, however, not a claim of temporal directness or immediacy, but of epistemological/metaphysical directness and immediacy (there are no mediating objects, sense-data, to make my perception indirect).

The argument from hallucination:

- Students may define ‘hallucinations’ in a number of ways (eg a non-veridical perceptual experience that is subjectively indistinguishable/qualitatively indistinguishable from a veridical perception)

The logic of the issue can be outlined as follows:

- P1) In a hallucination, I directly perceive an object (eg a pink elephant).
- P2) When I hallucinate, there is no physical object of my perception (eg the pink elephant I perceive isn’t a physical pink elephant).
- C1) Therefore, the object I directly perceive in a hallucination isn’t a physical object.
- C2) Therefore, direct realism as defined above is false.

The logic of the issue can also be expressed using the phenomenal principle: ‘if it appears that there is an object *x* which has the perceptible quality *f* then there is an object *x* which possesses that quality *f*.’

- P1) In a hallucination, the object I directly perceive appears to be a pink elephant (there is an object *x* which has the perceptible qualities of ‘pinkness’ and ‘elephantness’).
- P2) If the object I directly perceive appears to be a pink elephant, then the object I directly perceive must be a pink elephant (there must be an object which has the perceptible qualities of ‘pinkness’ and ‘elephantness’).

- P3) The pink elephant that I directly perceive isn't a physical object (the object which has the perceptible qualities of 'pinkness' and 'elephantness' is not a physical object).
- C1) Therefore, the object I directly perceive in a hallucination isn't a physical object.
- C2) Therefore, direct realism as defined above is false.

Students may articulate the argument from hallucination as an epistemological point about how/whether direct realists can know/justify their claim that the immediate objects of perception are mind-independent objects, given the possibility of hallucinatory experiences. If taking this approach students may argue:

- that if we directly perceive sense-data in a hallucination, it is likely that we also directly perceive sense-data in veridical perceptions since hallucinations and veridical perceptions are 'phenomenally indistinguishable' or 'experientially similar.'
- The easiest way to explain the phenomenal indistinguishability/experiential similarity of hallucinations and veridical perceptions is to suggest that they are perceptions of the same type of object. And since the object we perceive in a hallucination is most likely a sense-datum, it follows that the object we most likely perceive in a veridical perception is also a sense-datum.
- That, at least, a direct realist cannot know/justify the claim that it is not a sense datum / is a direct experience of mind-independent objects

Notes:

- There are a number of ways that students can formulate or explain the argument from hallucination. The above arguments are examples.
- Students need to be careful not to conflate the argument from hallucination with the argument from illusion (in particular) and perceptual variation.
- Students can specify what the direct realist takes to be the direct objects of perception in a number of ways, eg 'physical,' 'mind-independent,' 'external'.
- Students may, but need not, elaborate that if what we directly perceive is not a physical object, it is likely to be a sense-datum (or a collection of sense data).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 4 Outline indirect realism **and** explain Berkeley’s objection that mind-dependent ideas cannot be like mind-independent objects.

[12 marks]

AO1 = 12

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
10–12	The answer is set out in a precise, fully-integrated and logical form. The content is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. Points are made clearly and precisely. Relevance is sustained, with very little or no redundancy. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
7–9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. The content is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. Any lack of clarity with respect to particular points is not sufficient to detract from the answer. Relevance is largely sustained. There may be some redundancy, though not sufficient to detract from the answer. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
4–6	The answer is clear and set out in a coherent form, with logical/causal links identified. The content of the answer is largely correct and most points are made clearly. Relevance is not always sustained and there is some redundancy. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the response.
1–3	There are some relevant points made, but no integration. Some points are clear, but there is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Outline indirect realism...

- Students will likely begin by explaining indirect realism (IR), which can be most clearly split up into the following claims (especially for the purposes of evaluation):
 1. REALISM claim: Mind-independent objects and their properties (objects which exist whether or not they are perceived or conceived of) do exist.
 2. SENSE-DATA claim: We immediately perceive mind-dependent sense-data and their properties rather than these mind-independent objects and their properties.
 3. REPRESENTATION claim: Our [non-physical] sense-data (normally/can) represent these physical mind-independent objects and their properties (at least to some extent) (meaning that we indirectly perceive them). Students may explain this in terms of the primary/secondary quality distinction, although there is no requirement for them to do so.
 4. CAUSATION claim: Our [non-physical] sense-data are (in the end) caused by these physical mind-dependent objects and their properties (i.e. by their effects on our physical bodies/brains).

...and explain Berkeley's objection that mind-dependent ideas cannot be like mind-independent objects.

- Berkeley is raising an issue relating to the “representation claim”.
- Berkeley understands indirect realists (like Locke) as thinking of representation in terms of resemblance (ie as thinking that sense-data represent the nature of mind-independent physical objects by resembling them). This seems right as Locke claims that primary qualities of objects are those properties of objects that cause ideas that resemble them in those respects.
- Berkeley argues against the indirect realist claim that we can and do perceive reality indirectly via a representation which resembles them at least to some extent.
- Berkeley says: “*I can't conceive or understand how anything but an idea can be like an idea*”. (*Dialogues*)
- His reasoning seems to be that something that is sensed (ie mind-dependent objects/ideas) cannot resemble something that is not, and cannot be, sensed (ie mind-independent objects).
 - Students may also make the following points in relation to Berkeley's criticism: How can sense data, which are ‘perpetually fleeting and variable’ resemble a physical object which is ‘fixed and constant’?
- This interpretation above is what we could call the “impossibility interpretation”:
 - Impossibility interpretation:
 - Mind-dependent ideas being like (ie resembling) mind-independent objects is inconceivable and so impossible...
 - ...and so the indirect realist “representation” claim is false.
 - ...and so indirect realists cannot justify their “representation” claim.
- Here are the relevant passages from Berkeley that support the “impossibility” interpretation”:

Dialogues:

Phil: *There is more. Are material objects in themselves perceptible or imperceptible? Hyl: Properly and immediately nothing can be perceived but ideas. All material things, therefore, are in themselves insensible, and can be perceived only through ideas of them. Phil: Ideas are sensible, then, and their originals—the things they are copies of—are insensible? Hyl: Right. Phil: But how can something that is sensible be like something that is insensible? Can a real thing, in itself invisible, be like a colour? Can a real thing that isn't audible be like a sound? In a word, can anything be like a sensation or idea but another sensation or idea? Hyl: I must admit that I think not. Phil: Can there possibly be any doubt about this? Don't you perfectly know your own ideas? Hyl: Yes, I know them perfectly; for something that I don't perceive or know can't be any part of my idea. Phil: Well, then, examine your ideas, and then tell me if there's anything in them that could exist outside the mind, or if you can conceive anything like them existing outside the mind. Hyl: Upon looking into it I find that I can't conceive or understand how anything but an idea can be like an idea. And it is most evident that no idea can exist outside the mind.”*

Principles:

But say you [ie Locke/the indirect realist], though the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things like them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer, an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a colour or figure can be like nothing but another colour or figure. If we look but never so little into our own thoughts, we shall find it impossible for us to conceive a likeness except only between our ideas. Again, I ask whether those supposed originals or external things, of which our ideas are the pictures or representations, be themselves perceivable or no? If they are, then they are ideas and we have gained our point; but if you say they are not, I appeal to any one whether it be sense to assert a colour is like something which is invisible; hard or soft, like something which is intangible; and so of the rest. (Berkeley: PHK 8)

- Some interpret as making an epistemological point. If students do this it can be credited:
 - Epistemological interpretation:

- The claim that mind-dependent ideas are like (ie resemble) mind-independent objects cannot be justified/known as we can't compare one to the other.
- Here is a relevant passage from Berkeley that supports the “epistemological” interpretation”:

“16 Two things cannot be said to be alike or unlike till they have been compared

17 Comparing is the viewing two ideas together, & marking what they agree in and what they disagree in.

18 The mind can compare nothing but its own ideas.

19 Nothing like an idea can be in an unperceiving thing.”

(Philosophical Commentaries)

Notes:

- Students might refer to some of Berkeley's other arguments relating to perception such as his attack on the primary and secondary qualities distinction and his master argument. If these points are raised, relevant material within them should be credited. However, students should not confuse these points with the one being asked about in the question. If students do this, it may be classed as imprecision or redundancy depending on the details of the response.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 5 To what extent is Descartes' intuition and deduction thesis successful?

[25 marks]

AO1 = 5, AO2 = 20

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
21–25	<p>The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is sustained.</p> <p>The student demonstrates detailed and precise understanding throughout.</p> <p>The conclusion is clear, with the arguments in support of it stated precisely, integrated coherently and robustly defended.</p> <p>Arguments and counter-arguments are stated in their strongest forms.</p> <p>Reasoned judgements are made, on an ongoing basis and overall, about the weight to be given to each argument. Crucial arguments are clearly identified against less crucial ones.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.</p>
16–20	<p>The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is largely sustained.</p> <p>The content is correct and detailed – though not always consistently.</p> <p>The conclusion is clear, with a range of appropriate arguments supporting it.</p> <p>Arguments are generally stated in their strongest forms. There is a balancing of arguments, with weight being given to each – so crucial arguments are noted against less crucial ones. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated clearly, integrated coherently and defended.</p> <p>There may be trivial mistakes, as long as they do not detract from the argument.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.</p>
11–15	<p>A clear response to the question, in the form of an argument, demonstrating intent.</p> <p>The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated.</p> <p>A conclusion and reasons are given and those reasons clearly support the conclusion. There might be a lack of clarity/precision about the logic of the argument as a whole.</p> <p>Arguments and counter-arguments are given, but there may be a lack of balance.</p> <p>Not all arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Stronger and weaker arguments are noted and there are attempts to identify the weight to be given to different arguments, but not necessarily those which are crucial to the conclusion.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the argument.</p>
6–10	<p>The response to the question is given in the form of an argument, but not fully coherently.</p> <p>The content is largely correct, though there are some gaps and a lack of detail.</p> <p>Relevant points are recognised/identified, but not integrated.</p> <p>Alternative positions are identified, but not precisely. Counter-arguments might be stated in weak forms or even slightly misrepresented. Arguments and counter-arguments are juxtaposed, so similarities and contrasts identified, rather than their impact being clear.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always fully correctly and/or consistently.</p>
1–5	<p>There is little evidence of an argument.</p>

	<p>There may be missing content, substantial gaps in the content or the content may be one-sided.</p> <p>There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made. There may be some connections between the points, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion.</p> <p>There is some basic use of philosophical language.</p>
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

What Descartes' meant by 'Intuition and deduction':

- Students might contextualise this by describing this as the constructive/positive phase of Descartes' project in the *Meditations*. Having subjected his beliefs to radical scepticism, Descartes, with his process of intuition and deduction, sees himself as justifying the claims that had been undermined by his methodological scepticism.
- As Descartes understands the terms, intuition and deduction give us a priori knowledge, ie knowledge that is justified independent of experience (other than any experiences required to understand the proposition that is known).
- The **intuition and deduction thesis** (aka the "mathematical" method)
 - All knowledge is either...
 - (a) ...justified by **intuition**: ie non-inferentially justified a priori (*ie justified* independently of experience (other than any experiences required to understand the proposition that is known)).
 - Intuition is not a 'gut feeling' or 'instinct' but is an intellectual capacity to grasp the truth of a self-evident proposition directly and non-inferentially. (Descartes speaks of the 'natural light of reason' and 'clear and distinct ideas').
 - Descartes thinks we can have knowledge of some propositions on the basis that we are clearly and distinctly aware of their truth (we have a clear and distinct idea). Students can use 'intuition' and 'clear and distinct idea' interchangeably as they are used thus by Descartes (so long as 'clear and distinct idea' refers to a known proposition rather than a grasped concept).
 - (b) ... justified by **deduction**: ie is inferentially justified in virtue of being the conclusion of a deductively valid a priori argument (ie one all of whose premises are knowable a priori) - Descartes' own words: "*the inference of something as following necessarily from some other propositions which are known with certainty.*"
- Commitment to the intuition/deduction is associated with rationalism (along with, for many such philosophers, a commitment to some form of innatism).
- Descartes takes himself to have proved that the external world exists in three stages (making three key knowledge-claims, underlined below):
 - (1) Intuition: The 'cogito': I know that I exist
 - (2) Deduction: I deduce that there is a supremely perfect being, God.
 - (3) Deduction: I deduce from God's existence and the nature of my own experience that there is an external world.

Student approaches to the question:

- In arguing that Descartes is successful/unsuccessful students would need to take one or both of the following approaches:
 - Evaluate one or more of the three stages / knowledge-claims above.
 - Evaluate the intuition and deduction thesis/approach in general.
- The indicative content which follows is organised to reflect these two possibilities.

A: Evaluation of the knowledge-claims that Descartes makes based on intuition and deduction:

Gaining a priori knowledge through intuition (the ‘cogito’):

- It is likely that students will focus on the ‘cogito’ in their discussion of what Descartes thinks can be known through intuition. Some students may give alternative examples of intuitions and this is fine but it is the cogito and the subsequent ideas that Descartes discovers within this mind that form the basis of the next stage in his deduction that there is an external world.
- The cogito is Descartes’ claim that he exists (one’s claim that one exists): “I am, I exist”.
- In the cogito Descartes here understands himself as a thinking thing of which he has a clear and distinct idea (and he is therefore not necessarily identical to his body).
- Even if an evil demon is deceiving him about the existence of physical objects (res extensa) and thereby knowledge of the external world/empirical knowledge/knowledge that is justified empirically/synthetic a posteriori knowledge - along with knowledge of mathematical truths (a priori knowledge) the evil demon cannot deceive him about his own existence since, if the evil demon is deceiving him, he must exist to be deceived .
 - *“But there is a supremely powerful and cunning deceiver who deliberately deceives me all the time! Even then, if he is deceiving me I undoubtedly exist: let him deceive me all he can, he will never bring it about that I am nothing while I think I am something.” Meditations.*
 - *“I conclude that this proposition, I am, I exist, must be true whenever I assert it or think it.” ‘Discourse on the method of rightly conducting one’s reason and of seeking truth in the sciences’.*
- It is a true belief that is indubitable / immune to doubt / certain and therefore counts as knowledge.
- It is not known through sense experience / empirical observation.
- It is a direct or non-inferential awareness of a truth which has been discovered by thinking and reasoning alone.
- It is therefore a foundational piece of knowledge (some students might link this to Descartes’ rational foundationalism).
- Students might refer to the ‘cogito’ as a ‘clear and distinct idea’ and go on to define ‘clear and distinct’ in accordance with the definition given in Descartes’ Principles of Philosophy:
 - To be clear an idea must be ‘open and present to the attending mind.’
 - To be distinct it must not only be clear but precise and separated from other ideas so that it ‘plainly contains in itself nothing other than what is clear.’
 - Clear and distinct ideas may be understood as ‘principles of natural light’, ‘self-evident propositions’, ‘eternal truths’, or ‘axioms’.
- Some students might mention that this is arguably an example of synthetic a priori knowledge, given that claims about the actual existence of something are synthetic. For some this is a mark of this being a rationalist position, given that significant non-trivial synthetic a priori knowledge is possible.

Evaluation of the ‘cogito’:

- Descartes fails to establish the cogito: all that is established is that there is a thought now, rather than an enduring self.
 - Relatedly, the cogito is not an intuition but instead an inference/deduction (There is thinking, therefore I exist).
 - Some have then made the point above, namely that the conclusion (I exist) cannot be deductively/validly defended.
- Hume’s empiricist objection that experience provides no evidence of an enduring self, and so we have no good reason to think there is one: *“There are some philosophers who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our SELF... Unluckily all these positive assertions are contrary to...experience.. For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception... I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle*

or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement.” (A Treatise of Human Nature).

- NB: It is important to recognise that, in addition to the ‘cogito’, there are other examples of knowledge by intuition (‘clear and distinct ideas’) that are themselves used within Descartes’ deductions. For this reason, students may discuss (the truth of) these claims:
 - The causal adequacy principle, that *“the total cause of something must contain at least as much reality as does the effect”*, that *“something can’t arise from nothing, and that what is more perfect—that is, contains in itself more reality—can’t arise from what is less perfect.”*
 - The claim that a supremely perfect being has all perfections.

Gaining a priori knowledge through deduction

- Successful deduction is the drawing of conclusions that necessarily follow from the premises, ie deductively valid.
- There are several examples of deductions from Descartes that students may discuss:
 - That God exists (via the ontological, trademark and cosmological arguments) and is no deceiver.
 - That mind and body are distinct substances (via the conceivability and divisibility arguments).
 - That there is a world of physical objects external to mind (via his awareness that his perceptions of such a world are involuntary and God exists and is no deceiver).

Deduction: I deduce that there is a supremely perfect being, God.

- Descartes’ ontological argument:
 - P1: My (or the) idea of God is an idea of a supremely perfect being; P2: A supremely perfect being has all perfections; P3: Existence is a perfection; C: Therefore, God (necessarily) exists.
 - At times Descartes seems to treat this not as an (extended deductive) argument but instead as a self-evident intuition: it starts with an innate concept of God that we may attend to or discover within our minds (expect analogies of triangles and mountains/valleys).
- Evaluation of this might involve some of the following:
 - Hume’s point that nothing necessarily exists, and no synthetic truths (“matters of fact”) can be demonstrated a priori.
 - Kant’s argument that “existence/being” cannot be considered “a (real) predicate”. Descartes’ argument is especially vulnerable to this objection when he is interpreted as advancing an argument of the definitional variety, where existence appears in a list of perfections Descartes insists on using to define God (but one need not be committed to this understanding of Descartes).
 - Leibniz’s argument that there is a missing (or suppressed) premise in Descartes’s presentation of the argument as Descartes had not explicitly demonstrated that the concept of God was coherent.
- Descartes’ cosmological argument(s):
 - Students may discuss either or both of the following arguments (though for Descartes they are two parts of one overall argument):
 - (1) God as cause of my idea of God: I have an idea of a supremely perfect being (ie God): that is, an infinite being. By the ‘causal adequacy principle’ (ie that there must be at least as much (total) reality in the cause as in the effect), I cannot be the cause of this idea as I am finite. Only God could be the cause of this idea and so God must exist. This is the argument often referred to as the “trademark” argument.
 - (2) God as cause of my existence (with an idea of God in my mind): I exist as a being with an idea of a supremely perfect being. The only possible cause of my existence as such is God. I cannot be the cause of myself as I would then be God and I know I am not. No other being(s) could be the cause because either the question would be raised about them (leading to a regress) or they could not account for the idea of God that I have. Nor can I

have no cause, as a cause is needed to sustain anything finite from one moment to the next.

- Evaluation of these arguments might involve some of the following:
 - Challenging the causal adequacy principle.
 - Arguing (as Hume did) that the concept of God is a concept that can be acquired from experience (of finite qualities).
 - Challenging the claim that my continued existence requires a sustaining cause.

Deduction: I deduce from God's existence that there is an external world (as otherwise God would be a deceiver).

- Descartes' argument can be reconstructed in the following way:
 - P1: I have perceptual experiences as if of physical objects.
 - P2: These perceptual experiences must have a cause.
 - P3: This cause must be either my own mind, God, or external physical objects.
 - P4: If the cause were my own mind, those perceptual experiences would be voluntary/under my control.
 - P5: However, they are not voluntary/under my control.
 - P6: If the cause was God, then those perceptual experiences would be deceptive (given that I have a very strong tendency to believe that physical objects exist).
 - P7: However, they cannot be deceptive as God exists and is not a deceiver.
 - C1: Therefore, those perceptual experiences must be caused by external physical objects.
 - C2: Therefore, there is an external world of physical objects.
- Evaluation of this might involve some of the following:
 - God might be the direct cause of my experiences without being a deceiver (a position taken by, eg, Berkeley).
 - I might be causing my own experiences without knowing that I am (as happens within a dream).
 - It would *not* be deceptive of God to give me ideas of an external world not caused by those things themselves (eg Malebranche's position that I perceive material things "in God", ie I immediately perceive ideas in God, and via these ideas, I indirectly perceive corporeal objects).
- The "Cartesian circle" objection: Students might also discuss what has become known as the "Cartesian circle" as a key issue with Descartes' attempted proof, namely that Descartes' claims that (a) our knowledge that our intuitions/clear and distinct ideas are true depends on our knowledge that a non-deceiving God exists and that (b) our knowledge that a non-deceiving God exists depends on our knowledge that particular intuitions/clear and distinct ideas (which are premises in Descartes' arguments for God's existence) are true.

B: Evaluation of the intuition and deduction thesis/approach in general:

- Challenge the possibility of non-inferentially justified "foundational" knowledge from intuition. Perhaps by invoking the claim that everything that can be known must be justified by some other piece of knowledge (and then either (a) embracing the infinite regress of justification that follows, (b) defending an alternative account of the structure of knowledge (eg coherentism) or (c) arguing that this 'regress' should lead us to scepticism about the possibility of knowledge).
- Arguing, in general, that all a priori knowledge is nothing more than knowledge of analytic truths, which are true solely in virtue of the meanings of its constituent terms/concepts (and how they're combined) and not factually significant. Students might make reference here to Hume's 'fork' (the distinction between "matters of fact" and "relations of ideas") or the verification principle.
- It can be argued (à la Berkeley) that mind-dependent ideas being like (ie resembling) mind-independent objects is inconceivable and so impossible and so (Descartes') indirect realist "representation" claim is false and so indirect realists cannot justify their "representation" claim. This would mean that knowledge of the (nature of the) external world is impossible. This could be expressed as the view that indirect realism would necessarily involve deception if we assume, as Descartes does, that we have a very strong tendency to believe that physical objects exist.

- It can be claimed that justifications that involve our experiences should not be regarded as a priori justifications:
 - In relation to the cogito, this might be that it is my *experience* of my own thoughts, and perhaps even my 'self', that grounds my knowledge of my own existence.
 - In relation to the argument for the external world, a key premise (P1, as presented above) can only be known *a posteriori*.

Notes:

- Students should not conflate the intuition and deduction thesis with innatism. Although there may be some overlap with arguments around each of these positions – particularly in relation to proofs for God's existence – the focus of responses should be to assess the intuition and deduction thesis rather than innatism.
- Students should not be unduly penalised for misattributing arguments/views (where it does not confuse the point they are trying to make): Persistent misattribution of arguments/views would be an inaccuracy that would justify not awarding an answer full marks, but it should not be regarded as a reason for excluding it from the top band (assuming everything else meets the requirements of the level descriptors).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

Section B – Moral philosophy

0 6 What does Kant mean by ‘hypothetical imperative’?

[3 marks]

AO1 = 3

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
3	A full and correct answer, given precisely, with little or no redundancy.
2	The substantive content of the answer is correct, but there may be some redundancy or minor imprecision.
1	Relevant, but fragmented, points.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students need to explain **both aspects** below in order to get **full marks** (though we do not expect them to separate it out as we have done---it may be explained all together---and their wording of the points might be different):

Hypothetical imperative:

1. imperative: this is a statement commanding a course of action; it is a statement about what one ought to do; it is a command / an order.
2. hypothetical: a statement which applies to agents on the condition that they have (in Kant’s wording, that they “will”) specific ends/goals, so a statement of the form ‘Do X if you will that Y’. It asserts “the practical necessity of a possible action as means to something else that is willed” (Kant, *Groundwork*)-- Whether such an imperative applies will depend upon an agent’s ends/goals.

Examples for 3 marks:

“Hypothetical imperatives are ‘if... then’...’ statements that tell us what we ought to do to achieve our goals”.

“A hypothetical imperative is a rule that should be followed in order to achieve certain ends / goals”.

“A hypothetical imperative takes the form ‘if you want X then you should do Y’.

Examples for 2 marks:

“Hypothetical imperatives tell us what we should do, but this only applies in certain situations / is dependent on circumstances/ is not universally applicable”.

Examples for 1 mark:

“A hypothetical imperative is an ‘if...then...’ statement”.

“A rule/command/instruction that changes/is changeable (rather than universal)”

“Hypothetical imperatives are those that only apply if a person has certain wants/desires/goals/ends”.

Examples for 0 marks:

“Hypothetical imperatives are duties”.

“Hypothetical imperatives depend on circumstances”.

“These are imperatives that are not categorical”.

Notes:

- Students may frame the ‘hypothetical’ claim in terms of an agent’s ‘wants/desires’ rather than ‘ends/goals’. This is fine and should be credited.
- Students may frame the ‘imperative’ claim using terms such as ‘rules’, ‘instructions’ or ‘prescriptions’. This is fine and should be credited.
- Students may use examples to illustrate, but an example is not necessary to score full marks.
- Students may refer to categorical imperatives and contrast these with hypothetical. Contrasting hypothetical with categorical imperatives to explain/illustrate the nature of hypothetical imperatives is acceptable and should not be deemed redundant. However, students do not need to refer to categorical imperatives to score full marks.
- Students should not refer to hypothetical imperatives as moral statements or duties – this is inaccurate.
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 7 Explain the ‘skill analogy’ that Aristotle uses in his account of virtue.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking. But the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

- The context of the skill analogy is Aristotle’s account of how you acquire the moral virtues/become virtuous. He draws an analogy between acquiring a skill and becoming virtuous.
- He discusses acquiring the skills of building and playing the lyre – although other examples of skill development may be deployed by students.

No-one is born able to play the lyre; rather, we have the capacity to play the lyre.	No-one is born virtuous; rather we have the capacity to become virtuous.
We don’t learn to play the lyre and then play it. We learn by playing.	We don’t learn to be virtuous, then be virtuous. We become virtuous by doing virtuous actions.
To become a lyre player, we need to practise. We do this by playing until playing becomes a fixed disposition – so by habituation.	To become a virtuous person, we need to practise. We do this by doing virtuous actions until being virtuous becomes a fixed disposition – so by habituation.
It is helpful to have a good teacher or at least a good model to help you to acquire the ability to play the lyre.	It is helpful to have a virtuous person to educate you or at least to be a role model to help you become virtuous.

- Students might give examples, such as becoming temperate by repeatedly refusing to indulge yourself, until you start to find abstaining from indulgence pleasant.
- Students might provide an outline of Aristotle’s account of virtue in a number of ways, including:
 - Virtues understood as dispositions
 - Being virtuous involves having certain feelings to the right degree / being guided by reason
 - Virtues are understood in contrast to vices (i.e. Golden mean)
- Students might explain how development of virtue links to eudaimonia.

Notes:

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.

0 8 Explain the criticism that Kant ignores the value of certain motives.

[5 marks]

AO1 = 5

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
5	A full, clear and precise explanation. The student makes logical links between precisely identified points, with no redundancy.
4	A clear explanation, with logical links, but some imprecision/redundancy.
3	The substantive content of the explanation is present and there is an attempt at logical linking. But the explanation is not full and/or precise.
2	One or two relevant points made, but not precisely. The logic is unclear.
1	Fragmented points, with no logical structure.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

- Kant claims that for an action to be morally good it must be motivated by a good will.
- This means that one is motivated by duty alone (by the recognition that doing X is one’s duty). One must therefore act out of duty, not merely in accordance with duty (ie one does not just do what duty demands, but one also does it only because duty demands it).
- To be motivated by one’s desires is to act heteronomously as opposed to autonomously.
- For Kant this is linked to the claim that it is reason that ought to motivate us when it comes to morality (contra Hume, for whom action requires desires/emotions).
- The kinds of motives that Kant allegedly ignores the value of are:
 - the desire to do good
 - the desire to help others (where this is not because this has been identified as a duty)
 - the desire to help those with whom you have a relationship
 - self-interest / the desire to be happy
 - motives relating to emotions such as love, grief, guilt, empathy.
- For this to be a criticism of Kant, as opposed to just a truth about what he claims, the student should emphasise that, according to such an objection, such motives would need to be seen as valuable (morally or otherwise).
- Students may explain the possible value of certain motives such as desires and emotions with reference to the Humean view that “reason is the slave of the passions” –that it is not possible to be motivated by reason alone, and desires / emotions must have value since they are the only things capable of motivating actions.
- Aristotle and the utilitarians might also argue that duty should motivate us but they would specify our duty either eudaimonistically (Aristotle) or with reference to utility (utilitarianisms) and not solely with reference to reason and a good will alone.

Notes:

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

0 9 Explain hedonistic utilitarianism **and** explain the criticism that it ignores the moral integrity of the individual.

[12 marks]

AO1= 12

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
10–12	The answer is set out in a precise, fully-integrated and logical form. The content is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. Points are made clearly and precisely. Relevance is sustained, with very little or no redundancy. Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.
7–9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct and demonstrates detailed understanding. The content is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. Any lack of clarity with respect to particular points is not sufficient to detract from the answer. Relevance is largely sustained. There may be some redundancy, though not sufficient to detract from the answer. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
4–6	The answer is clear and set out in a coherent form, with logical/causal links identified. The content of the answer is largely correct and most points are made clearly. Relevance is not always sustained and there is some redundancy. Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the response.
1–3	There are some relevant points made, but no integration. Some points are clear, but there is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Explain hedonistic utilitarianism...

- Hedonistic (“classical”) utilitarianism:
 - “Utilitarianism”: An act is morally right iff (if and only if) we can reasonably expect / predict that doing it produces at least as much utility as any other act that could be performed.
 - “Hedonistic”: Utility = sensations of pleasure or happiness - ie something that can be experienced by a being.

Other points that students might make within their explanation:

- Utilitarianism is a form of consequentialism – so whether actions are morally right or wrong is determined by their effects.
- Hedonistic utilitarians would consider the pleasures of all those affected equally. This is the impartiality dimension of the position: “every man to count for one, nobody for more than one” (Bentham).
- Students might discuss Bentham, Mill or both in their explanation:
 - For Bentham, the quantity of pleasurable sensations is all that is important (Bentham’s quantitative hedonistic utilitarianism - his utility calculus).
 - For Mill the quality of pleasure [also] matters (Mill’s qualitative hedonistic utilitarianism – his distinction between higher and lower pleasures).

- They may also discuss the application of hedonistic utilitarianism to animals: ie if animals have the appropriate sensations of pleasure and pain, then they should be included in the moral reasoning/calculating, if not they will not.

...and the criticism that it ignores the moral integrity of the individual.

- Here it is argued that utilitarians wrongly ignore moral integrity of the agent: ie their (moral) character and their commitments, projects, convictions, beliefs - the kind of person they are. This objection is associated with Bernard Williams.
- Williams develops the point with two examples/dilemmas:
 - (1) George is a recent doctoral graduate in chemistry who is having difficulty finding work and is in poor health. He has a wife and young children. George is a committed pacifist, what Williams calls an “identity-conferring commitment” (ie one that is part of who he is). George gets a chance to take a well-paid job related to biological and chemical warfare. If George says no, it is likely that the job will go to another chemist, one who is not a pacifist and will work harder than George would have. Should George take the job or not?
 - (2) A group of twenty innocent South American Indians have been chosen at random by the Captain to be killed as a warning to those that might also protest against the government. Jim, an explorer, who has happened upon this village, is told that if he kills one of them (a “guest’s privilege”) then the other nineteen will be spared. Otherwise all twenty will be killed. Should Jim kill the one Indian?
- If hedonistic utilitarianism is true:
 - The right (and, it would appear, obviously right) thing to do is for George to take the job and for Jim to kill the Indian.
 - Moreover, the way in which this decision is reached does not give any special consideration to pertinent facts about the decision-maker/the person who must take the action.
- The utilitarianism decision-making procedure, however, demands that George and Jim act without integrity, abandoning or ignoring their identity as decision-makers and perhaps even their identity-conferring commitments. They must act in such a way that their act has nothing at all to do with who they really are at the most fundamental level. Students may put this in terms of utilitarianism regarding agents as mere utility calculators – which they are not and should not be expected to be.
- Students might also explain this issue by explaining that there is no part of who you are (your integral characteristics) that utilitarianism could not, in principle, demand you to abandon if the circumstances are right.
- As Williams himself puts it: “The point is that [the agent] is identified with his actions as flowing from projects or attitudes which... he takes seriously at the deepest level, as what his life is about... It is absurd to demand of such a man, when the sums come in from the utility network which the projects of others have in part determined, that he should just step aside from his own project and decision and acknowledge the decision which utilitarian calculation requires. It is to alienate him in a real sense from his actions and the source of his action in his own convictions. It is to make him into a channel between the input of everyone’s projects, including his own, and an output of optimific decision; but this is to neglect the extent to which his projects and his decisions have to be seen as the actions and decisions which flow from the projects and attitudes with which he is most closely identified. It is thus, in the most literal sense, an attack on his integrity.”
- It is possible that some students might discuss this objection through the lens of an Aristotelian ethical framework: ie to act morally requires that one has habituated and internalised the virtues, and so one’s moral integrity (and personal integrity) would not be compromised when making (appropriate) moral decisions.

Notes:

- Students must not conflate the issue of integrity with other issues such as individual rights and liberties, partiality and intentions. Students could potentially do this to a greater or lesser extent – ranging from minor imprecision/blurring of issues together through to entirely redundant focus on the wrong issue. Credit should be awarded accordingly.

- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be rewarded with reference to the generic mark scheme.

1 0 Is moral anti-realism the correct metaethical view?

[25 marks]

AO1 = 5, AO2 = 20

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
21–25	<p>The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is sustained.</p> <p>The student demonstrates detailed and precise understanding throughout.</p> <p>The conclusion is clear, with the arguments in support of it stated precisely, integrated coherently and robustly defended.</p> <p>Arguments and counter-arguments are stated in their strongest forms.</p> <p>Reasoned judgements are made, on an ongoing basis and overall, about the weight to be given to each argument. Crucial arguments are clearly identified against less crucial ones.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used precisely throughout.</p>
16–20	<p>The student argues with clear intent throughout and the logic of the argument is largely sustained.</p> <p>The content is correct and detailed – though not always consistently.</p> <p>The conclusion is clear, with a range of appropriate arguments supporting it.</p> <p>Arguments are generally stated in their strongest forms. There is a balancing of arguments, with weight being given to each – so crucial arguments are noted against less crucial ones. Arguments and counter-arguments are stated clearly, integrated coherently and defended.</p> <p>There may be trivial mistakes, as long as they do not detract from the argument.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.</p>
11–15	<p>A clear response to the question, in the form of an argument, demonstrating intent.</p> <p>The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated.</p> <p>A conclusion and reasons are given and those reasons clearly support the conclusion. There might be a lack of clarity/precision about the logic of the argument as a whole.</p> <p>Arguments and counter-arguments are given, but there may be a lack of balance.</p> <p>Not all arguments are stated in their strongest forms. Stronger and weaker arguments are noted and there are attempts to identify the weight to be given to different arguments, but not necessarily those which are crucial to the conclusion.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used correctly, with any minor errors not detracting from the argument.</p>
6–10	<p>The response to the question is given in the form of an argument, but not fully coherently.</p> <p>The content is largely correct, though there are some gaps and a lack of detail.</p> <p>Relevant points are recognised/identified, but not integrated.</p> <p>Alternative positions are identified, but not precisely. Counter-arguments might be stated in weak forms or even slightly misrepresented. Arguments and counter-arguments are juxtaposed, so similarities and contrasts identified, rather than their impact being clear.</p> <p>Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always fully correctly and/or consistently.</p>
1–5	<p>There is little evidence of an argument.</p>

	<p>There may be missing content, substantial gaps in the content or the content may be one-sided.</p> <p>There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made. There may be some connections between the points, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion.</p> <p>There is some basic use of philosophical language.</p>
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

What is meant by anti-realism and what views count as anti-realist?

- Moral anti-realism covers a great many theories, and there are both cognitivist and non-cognitivist theories that have been classified as anti-realist.
- Typically what all moral anti-realists have in common is that they claim...
 - ...either (a) there are no moral properties/facts at all
 - ...or (b) there are moral properties/facts but they are all mind-dependent.
- (Moral) cognitivist moral anti-realism (aka error theory) claims that:
 - There are no mind-independent moral properties/facts...
 - ...but moral predicates/concepts contribute to the descriptive/factual meaning of propositions and so can be used to express cognitive belief states - moral utterances are truth-apt (there can be factually/cognitively meaningful moral propositions/assertions)...
 - ...however all moral propositions that assert or imply the existence of mind-independent moral properties (ie those propositions that are sometimes called “atomic” or “first-order” moral propositions) are false.
- (Moral) non-cognitivist moral anti-realism claims that:
 - There are no mind-independent moral properties/facts...
 - ...and moral predicates/concepts do not contribute to the descriptive/factual meaning of propositions and so cannot be used to express cognitive belief states - moral utterances are not truth-apt (there cannot be factually/cognitively meaningful moral propositions/assertions)...
 - Some moral non-cognitivists then go on to explain what moral utterances are instead doing, what their function in fact is:
 - Emotivism: The inclusion of moral terms in utterances serves to express the emotions of the person (eg. Ayer).
 - Prescriptivism: The inclusion of moral terms in utterances serves to command or commend behaviour so they are imperatives. The claim that ‘x is morally right’ means ‘do x’ (an imperative) and includes the commitment that everyone in the same (/sufficiently similar) situation should do x (universality).

In opposition to this, there are many theories that might be considered to be versions of moral realism, and it is possible that students might argue for, or use, such positions as a way of challenging moral anti-realism:

- moral realism includes naturalist realist views (eg some versions of utilitarianism and virtue ethics) and non-naturalist views (eg intuitionism, divine command theory, Platonism, Kantian Deontology).
- there may also be versions of moral realism that relate to contractarian views.
- **NB:** There is widespread debate about how best to characterise the distinction between realism and anti-realism about X, and ethics is no exception. It is important that the student is clear about their approach and is clear about their understanding of realism.

Conclusions may be drawn from the following:

YES: moral anti-realism is the right account of metaethics – ie the student may support and/or defend the account.

- This may be done by, in the end, supporting/defending a particular version (or some versions) of moral anti-realism...
- ...or by defending it in general but with particular versions being employed as **examples** of how moral anti-realists might fill out their account...
- ...or by defending it in general with no reference to any particular versions of moral anti-realism.

NO: moral anti-realism is not the right account of metaethics – ie the student may argue that it cannot be adequately supported and/or that there are (fatal) issues with the account.

- This may be done by arguing that prominent versions of moral anti-realism fail to adequately respond to issues...
- ...and/or by arguing that a particular version of moral realism succeeds (either a naturalist version or a non-naturalist version)...
- ...and/or by arguing that moral realism in general succeeds for general reasons...
- ...or by arguing that there are general issues that cannot (in general) be responded to by moral anti-realists.

Arguments supporting moral anti-realism:

- Mackie’s argument from relativity: widespread and intractable moral disagreement (and a lack of a procedure by which we can resolve it) is best explained by the falsity of moral realism (and therefore moral realism is (probably) false)
 - in response one might argue that:
 - there is more agreement than Mackie implies
 - the disagreement is about the non-moral facts rather than the moral facts
 - there is disagreement in other areas that we may be realists about (eg scientific disagreement)
 - that disagreement can be explained by people having inferior access to mind-independent moral properties.
- Mackie’s argument/s from queerness: mind-independent moral properties, if they existed, would be metaphysically “queer” (and knowledge of them would therefore require such an epistemologically “queer” faculty) - ie they would be completely different to any other property that we have reason to believe exist – and so it is implausible that they exist (and so implausible that moral realism is true).
 - in response one might argue that:
 - this would also support a non-naturalist realist position (eg Plato’s account in which knowledge of the form of the good would motivate us).
 - this would also support the view that there must be natural moral properties of a “queer” sort that cannot be reduced to non-moral natural properties (ie non-reductive moral naturalism).
 - there are other properties that have similar characteristics, eg painfulness / pleasureableness.
- Hume’s Fork: moral propositions are neither relations of ideas nor matters of fact, therefore moral knowledge is impossible (and so moral realism, which arguably holds that they are matters of fact, is false).
- Ayer’s verification principle: moral sentences are neither analytically true (or false) nor can they be verified by experience, therefore they are not cognitively meaningful and so non-cognitivist moral anti-realism is true.

- Hume’s is-ought gap: propositions about morality (“ought” statements) cannot be legitimately deduced from propositions about what is the case (“is” statements) (and so moral realism, is false, assuming that propositions about facts/properties are all “is” statements).
- Hume’s argument that moral utterances do not express beliefs (moral mental states are not beliefs) since beliefs alone could not motivate us (arguably) supports non-cognitivist moral anti-realism
 - in response, one could be an externalist about moral motivation.

Arguments opposing moral anti-realism:

- Moral realism is the best explanation of the ways in which we use moral language, including moral reasoning, persuading, disagreeing etc. – ie it is unlikely that such widespread commitments and practices would exist if there were no truth to moral claims (eg when people disagree it is because they think there are facts that would settle the disagreement).
- Moral anti-realism is committed to the implausible claim that there can be no such thing as moral progress (eg that it is not better if there is less prejudice against women (as is the case in many, but not all, countries)).
- One might argue (pace Mackie) that there is agreement about moral claims and that this counts in favour of moral realism: very many common basic moral principles across societies.
- Phenomenology: one might argue that we perceive that acts (eg torture) are wrong.

Notes:

- Students should not be unduly penalised for misattributing arguments/views (where it does not confuse the point they are trying to make): Persistent misattribution of arguments/views would be an inaccuracy that would justify not awarding an answer full marks, but it should not be regarded as a reason for excluding it from the top band (assuming everything else meets the requirements of the level descriptors).
- Students can access the full range of marks by focusing on and assessing anti-realist theories in their own right (eg those named on the specification) or may choose to deploy realist theories and issues with these).
- This indicative content is not exhaustive: other creditworthy responses should be awarded marks as appropriate.