

**UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

**577 0010**

**MA Examination**  
for Internal Students

**PHILOSOPHY**

**General Philosophy**

Monday 19 May 2008: 10.00 – 1.00pm

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions. Questions should be chosen from **AT LEAST TWO** sections. Avoid overlap in your answers.

Candidates may **NOT** take questions from an area which is the subject of either of your other two papers. Please write the titles of your other two papers at the top of your answer paper.

## **SECTION A: EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY**

1. What does Descartes hope to achieve by casting doubt on all his existing beliefs? What are the limits to such skepticism?
2. 'It is a short step from recognizing that a justified belief can be false to concluding that justified true belief is not sufficient for knowledge.'
3. What, in your view, are the strongest objections to epistemological internalism? Does the internalist have a response?
4. Explain and assess Humean skepticism regarding induction.
5. Explain and assess Goodman's argument that all the evidence we have for the hypothesis that 'all emeralds are green' is equally evidence for the hypothesis that 'all emeralds are grue'?

## **SECTION B: ETHICS**

6. Explain Mackie's 'error theory' of value. How convincing is it?
7. Is there a plausible response to the criticism of utilitarianism that it permits morally unacceptable outcomes such as victimization of the innocent?
8. If the fetus is a person, does it follow that abortion is morally unacceptable?
9. Explain Kant's distinction between categorical and hypothetical imperatives.
10. If I could not have done anything except P, does it follow that I am not morally responsible for doing P?

## **SECTION C: LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS**

11. What does Frege mean by 'mode of presentation'? To what use does he put this idea?
12. 'It is a contingent fact that Aristotle was the teacher of Alexander the Great. Therefore not all identities are necessary.' Discuss.
13. What are Quine's 'two dogmas of empiricism'? Is there good reason for calling one or both a 'dogma'?
14. What, if anything, makes you the same person you were ten years ago?
15. Is a cause a sufficient condition for the occurrence of another event?

## **SECTION D: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

16. 'The rational choice in Rawls' Original Position is utilitarian'. Discuss.
17. Assess the objection to Rawls that hypothetical contracts have no morally binding force.
18. What, if anything, does Nozick's 'Wilt Chamberlain argument' show?
19. What is the role of the 'enough and as good' proviso in Locke's theory of property? Is it a strength or weakness of his theory?
20. Does it follow from Mill's liberty principle (harm principle) that governments have no right to pass paternalistic legislation, such as making the use of seatbelts compulsory when driving ?

## **SECTION E: SYMBOLIC LOGIC**

21. Answer all parts of this question. The maximum mark for each part is indicated in square brackets.

Part I.

- (a) Can an invalid argument have a logically true conclusion? If it can, why, if it cannot, why not?
- (b) If an argument is valid but unsound, what can you conclude about its premises and conclusion?
- (c) Can two logically indeterminate sentences be logically equivalent? If so, give an example, if not, why not?
- (d) Define 'scope of a quantifier'.

[4 marks]

Part II.

Give definitions of the following

- (a) Logically inconsistent set of sentences.
- (b) Bound variable.

[2 marks]

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Part III.

Use a formal method to show that the following argument is valid:

Even though Socrates was a great philosopher, Plato and Aristotle weren't both his students. But if Socrates was a great philosopher, Plato was his student. Therefore, Aristotle was not Socrates' student.

[4 marks]

Part IV.

- (i) Translate the following into the language of first-order predicate logic (PLE). In each case, provide a key or interpretation for your use of symbols.
- (a) Nothing is both blue and red all over. Therefore, whatever is red is not blue.
  - (b) If someone is taller than everyone, then that person is taller than himself. But no person is taller than himself. Therefore, no one is taller than everyone.
  - (c) John loves neither Mary nor Lucy. But Lucy was his last date, and
  - (d) John always loves his last date. Therefore, John loves Sally.
  - (d) There are at most two great philosophers of antiquity.

[8 marks]

- (ii) Show that each of (i)(a), (i)(b) and (i)(c) are valid.

[6 marks]

- (iii) Briefly discuss each of the following.
- (a) The relationship between logical validity and truth-functional validity.
  - (b) The relationship between inconsistent sets of sentences and valid arguments.
  - (c) The translation of English 'If-then' by the material conditional.

[9 marks]

**END OF PAPER**