

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

577 0010

MA Examination
for Internal Students

PHILOSOPHY

General Philosophy

Monday 18 May 2009 : 10.00 – 1.00 pm

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.

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UL09/967

SECTION A: EPISTEMOLOGY AND METHODOLOGY

1. Does Descartes show that it is impossible for me to doubt my own existence?
2. 'Even if Gettier showed that not all justified true beliefs are knowledge, it remains the case that all cases of knowledge are cases of justified true belief.' Discuss.
3. How should the debate between epistemological internalism and epistemological externalism be characterised? Which is to be preferred?
4. Does Hume show that belief in induction is irrational?
5. Explain and assess Goodman's 'new riddle of induction'.

SECTION B: ETHICS

6. Could it be possible that all our moral beliefs are false?
7. What is the strongest argument against utilitarianism? Can it be answered?
8. Is abortion murder?
9. Is Kant right that morality is a system of categorical imperatives?
10. What is the relation between moral responsibility and freedom of the will?

SECTION C: LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS

11. Explain and assess Frege's distinction between sense and reference.
12. Are there necessary truths that can only be discovered by empirical investigation?
13. Does Quine show that it is a mistake to suppose that two sentences can have the same meaning?
14. What is the basis of personal identity?
15. What is it for one thing or event to cause another?

SECTION D: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

16. Would people in Rawls's original position agree to the Difference Principle?
17. Explain and assess the use Rawls makes of the notion of 'reflective equilibrium'.
18. Does Nozick refute all 'patterned' theories of justice?
19. How satisfactory is Locke's justification of individual property rights?
20. 'Mill's liberalism is based on the distinction between self-regarding and other regarding actions. But there is no such distinction, and so Mill's theory collapses.' Discuss.

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 a valid argument have a logically false premise? If it can, why? If it cannot, why not?
- (b) If an argument is valid but has a false conclusion, what can you conclude about its premises? Is it sound or unsound?
- (c) Can a set of sentences containing two logically indeterminate sentences be logically inconsistent? If so, give an example. If not, why not?
- (d) When are two sentences logically equivalent?

[4 marks]

Part II.

Give definitions of the following

- (a) Logically consistent set of sentences.
- (b) Free variable.

[2 marks]

Part III.

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

Neither Plato nor Aristotle was a minor philosopher. If Aristotle was Socrates' student, then Plato's philosophical talents must be negligible. But Socrates corrupted the young only if Aristotle was his student. Hence Socrates did not corrupt the young.

[4 marks]

Part IV.

- (i) Translate the following into the language of first-order predicate logic with equality (PLE). In each case, provide a key or interpretation for your use of symbols.
- (a) There are no round squares. Therefore, every square is not round.
 - (b) Any creature with a kidney has a heart. Therefore, nothing with a kidney lacks a heart.
 - (c) If some moment in time is earlier than every moment, that moment must be earlier than itself. But nothing can be earlier than itself. Therefore, no moment is earlier than every moment.
 - (d) There are at least three cities larger than London.

[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 invalid arguments and consistent sets of sentences.
 - (b) The translation of English 'or' by the disjunction of sentential logic.
 - (c) The relationship between logical truth and truth-functional truth.

[9 marks]

END OF PAPER