AS
PHILOSOPHY
7171

PAPER 1 EPISTEMOLOGY AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Mark scheme

SAMs

1.0

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 their Team Leader, who will, if necessary, refer them 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.

Further copies of this mark scheme are available from aqa.org.uk

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 2 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 15 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

Question number	Question	Total marks
01	What is an 'analytic truth'?	2

AO1 = 2

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
2	A clear and correct answer, with no significant redundancy.
1	A partial answer, possibly in the form of fragmented points. Imprecise and/or significant redundancy.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

- A statement which is true by virtue of the meanings of the terms it contains.
- A statement which is true by definition.
- A statement which in which the predicate belongs to the subject / is contained in the subject-concept. (Kant)
- A statement which is a logical truth or which can be turned into a logical truth by appropriate replacement of terms for synonymous terms. (Frege)

Accept: responses in terms of propositions/sentences.

Partial credit for: a tautology
a (trivial) truth of definition.

Do not credit: confusion with a priori knowledge, where the justification is independent of experience.

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

02	Explain what Plato is trying to show about knowledge in his 'slave boy' argument.	5

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

- Students might contextualise the argument: the slave boy demonstration is a response to 'Meno's Paradox' – the challenge that learning about x is impossible because either (1) you already know about x, in which case learning is unnecessary or (2) you do not know about x, in which case you will not know where to begin. Plato tries to show that learning is possible, despite Meno's Paradox, because learning is really 'recollection' of innate knowledge.
- A slave boy has had no education yet discovers a geometrical theorem given only minimal assistance from Socrates. Since his knowledge cannot be explained as gained through experience, it must be innate. In general, Plato is trying to show that everyone has innate knowledge which can be recovered given the right stimuli.

Students might comment on Socrates' arguments that the mind must have existed before birth, but do not need to do so.

Students can gain full marks without necessarily demonstrating a detailed understanding of the geometry, although understanding this is likely to help them to give a clear response.

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

03	Explain how **one** of Gettier's original counter examples attacks the tripartite view of knowledge.	9

AO1 = 9

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
7-9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct. The material is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. There may be some redundancy or lack of clarity in particular points, but 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, though not necessarily well integrated. Some points are made clearly, but relevance is not always sustained. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
1-3	Some relevant points are made, but no integration. There is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. There may be some attempt at using philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students can use either of Gettier's cases (as set out below for ease of reference). The focus is on showing how the Gettier-case attacks the tripartite definition of knowledge. Students do not have to be able to give every detail of the case they select, but should identify the relevant aspects.

The tripartite view defines knowledge as justified true belief. Each condition (justification, truth, belief) is said to be necessary for S to know that p and taken together they are said to be sufficient for S to know that p.

Gettier-cases challenge the sufficiency of the tripartite definition by showing how it is possible for someone to have a justified true belief, but not knowledge.

This is usually because of some lucky/coincidental situation.

The key points in a Gettier-case are:

- Smith justifiably believes that p
- p is false
- Smith correctly deduces that, if p is true, then q is true
- so Smith believes q justifiably
- q is true, but not because of p
- so Smith has a justified true belief that q
- but we would not want to claim that Smith knows that q.

Gettier-cases demonstrate that the belief is only accidentally true. What makes the person's belief true is not related to what justifies it.

Extracts from Gettier's 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?' are set out below:

Gettier-case 1

Smith and Jones have applied for a job. Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

(d) Jones will get the job, and Jones has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith's evidence for (d) is that the president of the company assured him that Jones would get the job and Smith had counted the coins in Jones's pocket ten minutes ago. Proposition (d) entails:

(e) The man who will get the job has ten coins in his pocket.

Smith sees the entailment from (d) to (e), and accepts (e) on the grounds of (d), for which he has strong evidence.

But unknown to Smith, he himself, not Jones, will get the job. And, also, unknown to Smith, he himself has ten coins in his pocket.

Proposition (e) is then true, though proposition (d), from which Smith inferred (e), is false.

So:
- (e) is true – because the man who gets the job (Smith) does have ten coins in his pocket
- Smith believes that (e) is true, and
- Smith is justified in believing that (e) is true – because he has inferred it deductively from justified beliefs.

Smith has a justified true belief that (e). But it is clear that Smith does not know that (e) is true; for (e) is true in virtue of the number of coins in Smith's pocket, while Smith does not know how many coins are in Smith's pocket, and bases his belief in (e) on a count of the coins in Jones's pocket, whom he falsely believes to be the man who will get the job. So justified true belief cannot be knowledge.

Gettier-case 2

Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

(f) Jones owns a Ford.

Smith's evidence is that Jones has always owned a Ford and has just offered Smith a lift, whilst driving a Ford.

Smith has another friend, Brown, but does not know where he is. Smith randomly elects three place names and constructs the following three propositions:

(g) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Boston.
(h) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Barcelona.
(i) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Brest-Litovsk.

Each of these propositions is entailed by (f).

Smith realises the entailment of each of these propositions he has constructed and accepts (g), (h), and (i) on the basis of (f). Smith has correctly inferred (g), (h), and (i) from a proposition for which he has strong evidence. Smith is therefore completely justified in believing each of these three propositions.

Smith actually has no idea where Brown is.

But two further conditions hold.

First, Jones does not own a Ford, but is driving a rented car. Second, by coincidence and unknown to Smith, Brown is actually in Barcelona.

In this example, Smith does not know that (h) is true, even though:

- (h) is true,
- Smith believes that (h) is true, and
- Smith is justified in believing that (h) is true.

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

| | 04 | Explain Descartes' third wave of doubt (the 'evil demon' argument). | 9 |

AO1 = 9

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
7-9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct. The material is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. There may be some redundancy or lack of clarity in particular points, but 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, though not necessarily well integrated. Some points are made clearly, but relevance is not always sustained. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
1-3	Some relevant points are made, but no integration. There is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. There may be some attempt at using philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students might contextualise the third wave of doubt, by explaining that, in the first two waves, Descartes has cast doubt on his senses as a source of knowledge, as they have, in some cases, deceived him; then, in the dreaming argument, cast doubt on even his 'best perceptions'. This is not a requirement but credit should be given if it is linked clearly to and supports/clarifies the explanation of the third wave of doubt.

Key point: the third wave of doubt/evil demon argument establishes global scepticism.

The third wave is a continuation of Descartes' methodological scepticism – a strategy for testing the strength of his beliefs in order to establish whether anything he claimed to know was beyond doubt/infallible.

Descartes talks of *certainty* (rather than *knowledge*) and the argument can also be put in terms of certainty.

1. It is possible that there is a powerful and deceptive being (a 'malignant/malicious demon') who is continuously deceiving me in all my perceptions of the external world and reasoning (eg mathematics) so that everything I take as true is in fact false.

2. In order to know anything I need to rule out this possibility.

3. I cannot rule out this possibility. This is because, regardless of whether it is true or false, my experience/beliefs would stay the same. The grounds for all my beliefs would remain the same.

4. Therefore, Descartes concludes (at the end of Meditation 1 – and later refutes) that he cannot know anything.

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

| | 05 | How convincing is Berkeley's idealism? | 15 |

AO1 = 7, AO2 = 8

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
13-15	The student argues with clear and sustained intent. A complete and coherent argument leads to a clear conclusion. The content is detailed and correct and sufficient material is selected and deployed to answer the question fully. The conclusion is arrived at through a balancing of arguments, with appropriate weight given to each argument and to the argument overall. Where there are crucial arguments, these are distinguished from less crucial ones. There may be trivial mistakes – both relating to the content and to the logic – but they do not detract from the argument. Philosophical language is used consistently and correctly throughout.
10-12	The student argues with intent, though this is not necessarily sustained. A complete and coherent argument leads to a conclusion. The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated. There is a recognition of arguments and counter-arguments, but balance is not always present and the weight to be given to each argument is not always fully clear. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
7-9	There is some evidence that the student is trying to answer the question. An argument to a conclusion is set out, but not fully coherently. The content is largely correct, though there may be some gaps and lack of detail. Relevant points are recognised/identified and mentioned, but not integrated in a coherent way. Alternative positions may be identified and juxtaposed, but not necessarily precisely and their relative weightings may not be clear. Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always correctly.
4-6	There is limited evidence that the student is trying to answer the question. There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion. There may be much that is missing, or the essay may be one-sided. There might be substantial gaps in the content, or evidence of serious misunderstandings. Several reasonable points are made and there are some attempts to make inferences. There is some limited use of philosophical language.

1-3	Simple mention of points, no clear argument.
	Philosophical terms might be mentioned.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students should respond in the form of an argument, to a clear conclusion. They might argue:

- that Berkeley's idealism is convincing
- that Berkeley's idealism is not convincing
- that Berkeley's idealism is convincing in some respects but not in others.

Students do not necessarily have to give a detailed outline/explanation of Berkeley's idealism, but, where they do not, it must be clear from their answer that they understand it.

- Idealism as an approach which rejects realism – it denies the existence of a mind-independent (external) world.
- Idealism as a 'direct' theory of perception – the immediate objects of perception are mind-dependent objects and their properties.

Berkeley's idealism is convincing because:
- Indirect realist theories lead to scepticism about our perceptual knowledge.
- Berkeley argues that all we experience are ideas, so our (empirical) sense experience supports idealism.
- Berkeley rejects the primary/secondary quality distinction – demonstrating that all perceived qualities are mind-dependent.
- Berkeley's Master argument – that it is impossible to conceive a mind-independent (unperceived) object.
- The problem of whether an idea can resemble something which is not an idea.

Berkeley's idealism is not convincing because:
- Russell's objection that Berkeley fails to distinguish between two senses of 'idea' – the thing we are aware of and the actual act of apprehension – with the latter being obviously mental, but the former not.
- Idealism struggles to deal with the distinction between veridical and non-veridical perceptions (ie illusions and hallucinations).
- Idealism leads to solipsism.
- There are problems with the role played by God in Berkeley's idealism;
  o Problems with God experiencing sensations of pain
  o The problem of evil
  o The problem of whether we and God can be said to be perceiving the same objects.
- The Master argument fails: it confuses the act of conceiving with the content of what is conceived.

As the focus of this question is primarily AO2, in dealing with responses to Berkeley, do not penalise students for misattributing arguments.

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

Section B - Moral philosophy

Question number	Question	Total marks

| 06 | According to Hare's prescriptivism, what does 'x is morally right' mean? | 2 |

AO1 = 2

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
2	A clear and correct answer, with no significant redundancy.
1	A partial answer, possibly in the form of fragmented points. Imprecise and/or significant redundancy.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

For 'x is morally right':
- 'do x' (students might phrase this in terms of its being an imperative)...
- the commitment that everyone in the same (/sufficiently similar) situation should do x (universality).

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

07	Explain the criticism that utilitarianism could lead to the 'tyranny of the majority'.	5

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

- Students may focus on utilitarianism in general or on one particular version of utilitarianism. Either approach is fine so long as the explanation is clear in the light of this choice.

- Students might identify/explain the key features of utilitarianism relevant to this question:
    - According to utilitarians (as consequentialists) actions are morally right or wrong based on their effects.
    - The best decision would be the decision that maximises utility (creates the greatest net utility).
    - Utility can be understood in different ways (well-being, happiness, pleasure (hedonism), preference-satisfaction etc).
    - Each (person, being) is to count for one and no-one as more than one.

- The term 'tyranny of the majority' refers to the way in which social pressure and political/legal decisions might both reflect the desires of the majority of the population (and oppose the desires of a minority) and then be imposed upon that unwilling minority.
- In the context of utilitarianism it refers to the idea that the project of maximising happiness may always/often require (or at least permit) the utility of the majority to outweigh any disutility for the minority.
- This issue may be framed by some students in terms of a lack of individual rights within the utilitarian system (rights which would protect us against such 'tyranny').
- Examples may be given of such situations where this leads to pressures/policies that benefit the majority more so than, or to the exclusion of, the minority - eg racism, religious intolerance (whether shown by, or directed against, religious believers).

Students may make reference to Mill's discussion of this problem in 'On Liberty' but this is not required for full credit to be given.

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

| | 08 | Explain Moore's open question argument. | 9 |

AO1 = 9

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
7-9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct. The material is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. There may be some redundancy or lack of clarity in particular points, but 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, though not necessarily well integrated. Some points are made clearly, but relevance is not always sustained. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
1-3	Some relevant points are made, but no integration. There is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. There may be some attempt at using philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

- Moore's open question argument (OQA), if successful, proves (deductively) that 'goodness' is a *sui generis*, irreducible property, ie that 'goodness' cannot be reduced to any non-moral properties.
- (Moore himself focuses on 'goodness' being irreducible to <u>natural</u> non-moral properties – see note below – and it is likely that most students will focus on this as well).
- It disproves, therefore, all reductive metaethical theories.
- 'Good' cannot, says Moore, be defined (he draws a parallel with 'yellow').
- Note: Moore himself focuses on the OQA as disproving reductive naturalism. However, if successful it would also disprove any reductive metaethical theories (any theories that aim to explain goodness in terms of non-moral properties), even non-naturalist ones (ie even those that, for example, reduce goodness to what God wants).

- The 'open question argument':
- Informally, the argument runs as follows. If the predicates (or concepts) X and Y are synonymous, then 'It is X but is it Y?' is a closed question. For any predicate X, 'It is X but is it

good?' is an open question. The predicate 'good' is therefore indefinable and therefore the property of being good cannot be identified with or reduced to any other (natural or non-natural) property P.

- Here is how the argument might be reconstructed formally:
    - P1: If the question 'It is X, but is it Y?' is an open question then 'X' does not have the same meaning as 'Y'.
    - P2: For any predicate X, the question 'It is X, but is it (morally) good?' is an open question.
    - C1: Therefore, for any predicate X, X does not have the same meaning as '(morally) good'. (From P1 and P2)
        - (and so '(morally) good' is indefinable)
    - P3: If the predicates X and Y do not mean the same thing, then the properties they refer to are not identical.
    - C2: Therefore, the property of being good is not identical to any other property (it is a sui generis property). (From C1 and P3)

- Students may explain the argument with reference to the disanalogy between statements like 'things that are X are good' and statements like 'things that are bachelors are unmarried' in order to demonstrate what is and is not meant by 'openness'.

- They may use the examples that Moore uses of theories that the OQA disproves eg, utilitarianism ('goodness is pleasure') or desire-based accounts ('goodness is what we desire to desire').

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

	09	Explain what Aristotle meant by an 'involuntary action'.	9

AO1 = 9

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
7-9	The answer is set out in a clear, integrated and logical form. The content of the answer is correct. The material is clearly relevant and points are made clearly and precisely. There may be some redundancy or lack of clarity in particular points, but 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, though not necessarily well integrated. Some points are made clearly, but relevance is not always sustained. Philosophical language is used, though not always consistently or appropriately.
1-3	Some relevant points are made, but no integration. There is a lack of precision – with possibly insufficient material that is relevant or too much that is irrelevant. There may be some attempt at using philosophical language.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students are not required to use examples, but can do so if it clarifies the point(s) they are making.

- Aristotle claims that someone cannot be blamed for their action if the action is <u>in</u>voluntary (as opposed to voluntary).
- According to Aristotle, an involuntary action has either of the following features:

  - Externally forced: It does not originate in the agent ie it is not under the agent's control whether to perform that action, rather it is compelled externally by force which can include strong psychological pressure, such as the threat of death. (The 'control' condition.)
    - (NB: the 'externality' part of this condition means that actions need not be involuntary just because they are not consciously chosen, so long as they originate within the agent – eg spontaneous action).

  - Ignorance: The agent lacks knowledge of what it is she is doing or what its effects will be. That is, the agent is ignorant of certain features/effects of his/her action. (The 'epistemic' condition.)

- o (NB: ignorance only gives rise to involuntary action if the action causes the agent pain or regret when the ignorance is lifted. If it does not, then the action is non-voluntary. Furthermore for an action to be involuntary the agent must act <u>from</u> ignorance, not <u>in</u> ignorance. Acts are done from ignorance when the agent is ignorant of some particulars in the situation, so does not really know what s/he is doing. Acts are done in ignorance, when the agent is unaware that this is the kind of action which should not be done. Aristotle believes we do rightly blame people for actions which are done in ignorance, since they are responsible for getting into that state).

Note: No more than 4 marks for only force or only ignorance being identified.

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

| 10 | Is it wrong to steal? | 15 |

AO1 = 7, AO2 = 8

Marks	Levels of response mark scheme
13-15	The student argues with clear and sustained intent. A complete and coherent argument leads to a clear conclusion. The content is detailed and correct and sufficient material is selected and deployed to answer the question fully. The conclusion is arrived at through a balancing of arguments, with appropriate weight given to each argument and to the argument overall. Where there are crucial arguments, these are distinguished from less crucial ones. There may be trivial mistakes – both relating to the content and to the logic – but they do not detract from the argument. Philosophical language is used consistently and correctly throughout.
10-12	The student argues with intent, though this is not necessarily sustained. A complete and coherent argument leads to a conclusion. The content is detailed and correct and most of it is integrated. There is a recognition of arguments and counter-arguments, but balance is not always present and the weight to be given to each argument is not always fully clear. Philosophical language is used correctly throughout.
7-9	There is some evidence that the student is trying to answer the question. An argument to a conclusion is set out, but not fully coherently. The content is largely correct, though there may be some gaps and lack of detail. Relevant points are recognised/identified and mentioned, but not integrated in a coherent way. Alternative positions may be identified and juxtaposed, but not necessarily precisely and their relative weightings may not be clear. Philosophical language is used throughout, though not always correctly.
4-6	There is limited evidence that the student is trying to answer the question. There may be a conclusion and several reasonable points may be made, but there is no clear relationship between the points and the conclusion. There may be much that is missing, or the essay may be one-sided. There might be substantial gaps in the content, or evidence of serious misunderstandings. Several reasonable points are made and there are some attempts to make inferences. There is some limited use of philosophical language.

1-3	Simple mention of points, no clear argument. Philosophical terms might be mentioned.
0	Nothing written worthy of credit.

Indicative content

Students should respond in the form of an argument, to a clear conclusion. They might argue:

- that it is wrong to steal
- that it is not wrong to steal
- that it might sometimes be wrong to steal.

- This question can be approached in any (one or more) of the following ways:
  - A consideration of this issue from the perspective of a single normative theory of ethics
  - A consideration of the issue from the perspectives of more than one normative theory of ethics
  - A consideration of this issue from the perspective of metaethics.

- *"A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it"* (legislation.gov.uk). This would include various types of property, physical, intellectual etc.

- **Utilitarianism**:
- For some utilitarians (most likely act utilitarians) stealing might be morally right on occasion if it maximises net utility. This would need to be judged on a case-by-case basis, so there could be no absolute judgement that it is always wrong to steal.
- For other utilitarians (most likely rule utilitarians) stealing might be morally wrong given that it violates the rule 'do not steal'.
  - **Issues**, including:
  - Whether utility is the only good (Nozick's experience machine)
  - Fairness and individual liberty/rights (including the risk of tyranny of the majority) – if one has the right to own (at least some) property then stealing would be a violation of one's rights
  - Problems with calculation (including which beings to include and issues around partiality and duration eg short-term loss to victim vs long-term gain to robber?)
  - Whether utilitarianism ignores both the moral integrity and the intentions of the individual
  - Whether following a rule, 'Do not steal', would not produce the greatest happiness.

- **Kantian deontological ethics:**
- Stealing is always wrong since
  - Categorical imperatives are (most readily) derivable from the first formulation of the Categorical Imperative: 'Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.'
  - Acting on a maxim which does not pass this test is morally wrong. Stealing is not universalisable without a "contradiction in conception" (a world in which everyone stole would be a world in which stealing was impossible since there would be no such thing as property).

- o The second formulation of the Categorical Imperative (the Formula of Humanity): 'Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end'.
- o Violating this maxim is morally wrong and stealing would do so because it would involve treating someone merely as a means to an end given their lack of consent. (Of course if there was consent it would not be an instance of stealing).
- o Some might give his shopkeeper example to explain this (ie the question of whether to short-change a customer).

- o **Issues**, including:
- o Clashing/competing duties: eg what if stealing is required to save a life (stealing medical supplies)?
- o The critique that there is no such thing as property/ownership anyway, so there is no issue of universalisation
- o The view that consequences of actions determine their moral value: see the utilitarianism section above
- o Kant ignores the value of certain motives, eg love, friendship, kindness.

- **Aristotelian virtue ethics**:
- The primary focus is generally on the character of the person performing the action.
- Although Aristotle would (probably) say that stealing is always wrong – in the same way that adultery and murder are – you could interpret his virtue ethics as allowing stealing in some circumstances.
- If a virtuous person, who had fixed dispositions/virtues of, say, honesty and compassion, made a reasoned decision that, in this particular circumstance, it was right to steal, then it might be right.
- Aristotle would want to guard against someone stealing once undermining his/her disposition to be honest.
  - o **Issues**, including:
  - o How helpful is Aristotelian virtue ethics, as a way of making moral decisions, when it can be used to argue both that it is right and it is wrong to steal?
  - o Aristotelian accounts are too agent-focused meaning that someone might refrain from stealing merely to preserve their 'virtue' even if it would, eg, maximise happiness (this would be similar to the 'clean-hands' objection to pacifism).

- **Metaethical arguments:**
- Some students may wish to argue that the answer to 'Is it wrong to steal?' is 'No', not because it is morally right or permissible, but rather because there is no property "wrongness" (as error theorists do).
- Some students may argue that the answer to 'Is it wrong to steal?' is 'Yes' (or 'No') so long as utterances such as 'stealing is wrong' (or 'stealing is not wrong') are seen not as being cognitively meaningful but instead as performing some other role, eg expressing emotion (emotivism) or prescribing actions (prescriptivism).
- Students might argue that 'it is wrong to steal' is an analytic truth, since 'stealing' means 'taking something from someone dishonestly' and it is analytically true that dishonesty is wrong (perhaps leading to a discussion of the is/ought distinction and Moore's Open Question Argument).
- Students may appeal to empiricist challenges to cognitivism such as Hume's Fork and Ayer's Verification Principle.

As the focus of this question is primarily AO2, do not penalise students for misattributing arguments.

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

26 October 2016