Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for question 1 or 2 of this course assessment component (question paper 1 – section 1 – knowledge and doubt).

Candidate 1

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt – question 1

The candidate was awarded **22 marks**.

This is because the candidate provided relevant, accurate and detailed description of the textual material that clearly addressed the question. The description in this essay was often excellent providing depth and detail and they managed to explain some of the most complex aspects of Descartes reasoning successfully, in particular the causal adequacy principle and the reliance on degrees of reality.

They provided many evaluative comments. Most of these were well explained and some explanation of the implications of these criticisms was given. However, this candidate did not attain the top band range of marks because many of their criticisms required further explanation of how they affected Descartes' proof of God as a whole or why they were problematic for Descartes. Providing some personal judgements on the quality of these criticisms would have improved the quality of this essay even further.

Candidate 2

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt – question 1

The candidate was awarded 30 marks.

This is because the candidate provides an excellent response to this question. Their answer is detailed, clear and accurate. It shows in depth understanding of Descartes' arguments in meditation 3 and how they work together to support his conclusions about God. Their discussion of Descartes' arguments shows knowledge of the fine detail of the text.

This candidate provides a thorough evaluation of several aspects of Descartes' reasoning. They present appropriate criticisms of each argument in detail while fully engaging with the question. Their discussion of criticisms shows a conversational critique of the issues raised. This is done exceptionally well throughout the essay. An example of this, comes in their discussion of the establishment of the clear and distinct rule. The candidate considers the establishing of this rule as a consequence of the cogito and discusses whether Descartes has a right to do so. They include explanation of how Descartes might defend himself in the face of criticism and provide personal judgements on how problematic these ideas are for Descartes. In this, and through the course of their

essay the candidate shows clear, well-supported personal conclusions that are fully consistent with their description and evaluation.

Section 2 — moral philosophy – question 4

The candidate was awarded 30 marks.

This is because the candidate shows a deep, detailed and clear understanding of Utilitarianism as a moral theory. Their response to the issues raised by the quotation is methodical and sophisticated. They show understanding of the complexities of Utilitarianism as a moral theory and the development of the different branches of Act and Rule Utilitarianism.

The candidate also provides several well-developed evaluative comments that involve a deep discussion of the implications of the criticisms and how they relate to Utilitarianism, showing awareness of the impact for the branches of Act and Rule Utilitarianism. In the case of their discussion of the difficulty in predicting consequences they address with examples how successful this criticism might be. They recognise that situations may be straightforward to predict or can be more complex and they interrogate this issue in relation to act and rule utilitarianism, weighing up the strength of the criticism for both. Throughout the course of the essay the candidate makes judgements about the issues raised and argues for a clear, well-supported personal position.

Candidate 3

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt – question 1

The candidate was awarded 16 marks.

This is because the important descriptive and textual material is described with some of the trickier content in meditation 3 attempted. However, there is a lack of clarity as to how the different parts of Descartes' arguments work together to lead him to a belief in the existence of God. There are also some inaccuracies, for example, the explanation of what makes something clear as something that must be logically true is not technically correct. Also, the explanation of the causal adequacy principle as the cause having to be greater than the effect rather than that the cause must have at least as much 'reality' as the effect, means that the reasons for describing the degrees of reality is missed and shows a lack of understanding of how these ideas work together.

There are a few evaluative comments which are somewhat appropriate, however there could be more explanation of how these criticisms affect Descartes reasoning and how much of a problem they are for it. For example, the candidate explains that some people have different ideas of God, but it is not clear how this impacts Descartes reasoning. It is likely that this is to suggest that it is unlikely that all people have an innate idea of God but more explanation of why it might suggest this is needed. To further develop this a discussion of how this would affect the conclusions Descartes has drawn would be appropriate.

Section 2 — moral philosophy – question 3

The candidate was awarded **17 marks**.

This is because the candidate explains the important descriptive material, such as the greatest happiness principle and its component parts, although these could be explained more precisely or fully. There are some inaccuracies in their description. For example, they say that the equity principle requires that everyone is treated equally when it only requires that we consider everyone's happiness/pleasure and unhappiness/pain equally; our treatment of different people will vary depending on which will create the most happiness.

There are a few appropriate evaluative comments given in relation to Utilitarianism however these are mostly quite general criticisms with limited explanation. Showing how these criticisms applied to the scenario, as they do with regards the equity principle, would have shown greater depth of analysis and evaluation. They make a personal judgement in their conclusion which is somewhat supported by the critical points made in their essay.

Candidate 4

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt – question 2
The candidate was awarded 11 marks.

This is because the candidate clearly showed some familiarity with aspects of Hume's theory, giving some relevant description of aspects of matters of fact and relations of ideas and providing a number of Hume's own examples from the text. However, many parts of their description were inaccurate or showed confusion and misunderstandings about what Hume was intending to say or what the examples were meant to show. For example, the description of Hume's examples of the postcard from France and the watch on the desert island are generally correct, but the candidate presents them as examples of how our senses could deceive us when Hume gives these as examples of reasonings based on matters of fact. They are intended to show that most of our a posteriori knowledge claims are based on assumptions regarding cause and effect. When discussing the example of Adam, the candidate suggests that Hume thinks Adam would be able to work out a priori what the effect of water would be. This is the opposite of what Hume is arguing. For the above reasons, the critical comments given in response to Hume are largely inappropriate or confused.

Candidate 5

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt – question 2
This candidate was awarded 18 marks.

This is because they presented relevant, mainly accurate and detailed descriptive information on Hume's view of causation. Their reference to the textual material is mostly accurate, but they do confuse the role that some of Hume's examples play, in particular the reference to the examples of the postcard from France, the person in the dark etc. are given as examples of how we cannot know for certain

the causes of a particular effect when these are meant to be showing how we reason about matters of fact based on a belief in cause and effect. However, they get the discussion of the example of Adam, the billiard balls and the experiments with eating bread largely accurate and as Hume intended.

The candidate clearly addresses the question and gives some appropriate evaluative comments. These comments could be explained more fully. For example the point about Hume's theory being too simplistic and not really being able to account for the distinction between causation and correlation is an appropriate one, but the candidate does not explain why this is the case or why this is a problem. Further developing the evaluative comments they make making judgements about their impact for Hume would add to the quality of this essay.

Candidate 6

Section 2 — moral philosophy – question 3

The candidate was awarded 23 marks.

This is because the candidate describes Utilitarianism giving relevant, accurate and fairly detailed explanation of the theory. Their explanation shows understanding of the Greatest Happiness Principle and its component parts, the use of the Hedonic Calculus as well as how act and rule Utilitarianism differ in their approaches.

Their answer clearly addresses the question giving a detailed response to the situation. They show an awareness of how the hedonic calculus might be applied to different aspects of the scenario and the resulting choice a Utilitarian might make. In the evaluation they give several well-explained and some developed comments that are related to how Utilitarianism would respond specifically to this scenario. They raise appropriate questions about the correctness of the Utilitarian approach and how it fits in with our moral intuition.

Candidate 7

Section 2 — moral philosophy – question 4

The candidate was awarded 23 marks.

This is because the candidate demonstrates a detailed knowledge and understanding of Utilitarianism as a moral theory. They describe the most relevant aspects of the theory accurately and with some depth, including the GHP and its component parts, the hedonic calculus and higher and lower pleasures, as well as the distinctions between Act and Rule Utilitarianism. They also provide appropriate examples to exemplify how Utilitarianism could be applied in moral situations. Some of these are somewhat superficial and developing the depth of these and the discussion of them would further enhance the quality of this essay.

This essay specifically addresses the question asked throughout and deals with the issues that the quotation raises. They provide several well-explained and developed evaluative comments that support their personal judgements in relation to the question. Increasing the depth of these and considering counterarguments to them would have added to the quality of this essay.

Candidate 8

Section 1 — arguments in action

Question 1
The candidate was awarded **0 marks** as they did not identify the statement.

Question 2
The candidate was awarded **1 marks** for the premise indicator 'since'.

Question 3
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.

Question 4
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. 1 mark for noting that there are no premises given in support of a conclusion, and 1 mark for recognising that they are just explaining why they are a fan.

Question 5(a)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct description of a conductive argument.

Question 5(b)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for their conductive argument.

Question 6
The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark was given for correctly identifying the conclusion and 1 mark for correctly identifying the 3 premises. 1 mark for the correct argument diagram.

Question 7(a)
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.

Question 7(b)
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.

Question 8
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.

Question 9(a)
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.

Question 9(b)
The candidate was awarded **0 marks**.
Question 9(c)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for recognising that the structure of the argument was problematic.

Question 10
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. They did not correctly define the fallacy, but they did get a mark for their example of a post hoc fallacy and the explanation as to why this was problematic.

Question 11(a)
The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark for their example of a fallacious appeal to authority, although their description was not quite accurate. They got 1 mark for recognising that an appropriate authority would be within an area of expertise and 1 mark for recognising that Ruti may have used a fallacious appeal to authority as we don't know the area of expertise of the researcher.

Question 11(b)
The candidate was awarded **2 marks** for recognising that Ruti favours the information that supports her claim and ignores the evidence presented by Koyama.

Question 12
The candidate was awarded **0 marks** as they did not attempt question 12.

Candidate 9

Section 1 — arguments in action

Question 1
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for identifying the statement.

Question 2
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for the premise indicator 'because'.

Question 3
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct explanation of the use of counterexamples.

Question 4
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. 1 mark for noting that the passage was explaining why they were a fan and 1 mark for recognising it was not trying to convince us of anything.

Question 5(a)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct description of a conductive argument.

Question 5(b)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for their conductive argument.

Question 6

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark was given for correctly identifying the conclusion and 1 mark for correctly identifying the 3 premises. 1 mark for the correct argument diagram.

Question 7(a)

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct definition of a deductive argument.

Question 7(b)

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** for recognising that the conclusion was not certain based on the premises and their explanation of why it was a conductive argument.

Question 8

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**.

Question 9(a)

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct definition of a valid argument.

Question 9(b)

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for a correct example of a valid argument.

Question 9(c)

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for recognising that the argument mistakes a necessary condition for a sufficient one.

Question 10

The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark was given for a correct explanation of the post hoc fallacy, 1 mark for their example and 1 mark for their explanation of why the reasoning is flawed in their example.

Question 11(a)

The candidate was awarded **4 marks**. 1 mark for explanation of a fallacious appeal to authority. They got 3 further marks for their detailed discussion of Koyama and Ruti's claims and whether or not they appealed to appropriate authorities.

Question 11(b)

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** for recognising that Ruti favours the information that supports her claim and ignores the evidence presented by Koyama.

Question 12

The candidate was awarded **2 marks**.

Section 2 — knowledge and doubt - Descartes

Question 13
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**.

Question 14(a)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for recognising that Descartes' doubt about the senses was limited and some a posteriori knowledge could be known for certain.

Question 14(b)
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for recognising that Descartes doubts the senses entirely after the dreaming argument.

Question 15
The candidate was awarded **6 marks.**

Section 3 — moral philosophy

Question 19
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. 1 mark for the claim that only reason could be used to make moral judgements. They gained 1 mark for developing this point and recognising that reason would make a moral system universally binding and not subjective.

Question 20
The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark was given for the claim that the good will cannot be corrupted for evil ends. 1 mark for the examples of how bravery and intelligence could be used for evil. 1 mark for recognising that the good will was good, according to Kant, even when the consequences of the action were bad, because you had acted with the will to be good. The candidate further developed this idea with reference to Kant's quote that the good will would 'shine through like a jewel' but had already gained full marks for this question.

Question 21(a)
The candidate was awarded **3 marks**. 1 mark for noting that Sinead is not acting out of respect for the moral law but because it gives her satisfaction. 1 mark for noting that only actions 'freely and consciously chosen' were morally praiseworthy. 1 mark for the comparison with Kant's shopkeeper who only gives the correct change but not out of duty.

Question 21(b)
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. 1 mark is given for arguing that although many would say Kant is too demanding that there is no altruism in Sinead's action. 1 mark for the explanation of why it makes sense that only actions which are altruistic should be morally praiseworthy.

Candidate 10

Section 2 — knowledge and doubt - Hume

Question 16
The candidate was awarded **2 marks**. 1 mark for distinguishing between the force and liveliness of impressions and ideas and 1 mark for the examples given to explain these.

Question 17
The candidate was awarded **1 mark** for explaining how the idea of God is composed of simple ideas that are combined and augmented. They do not however explain what the copy principle is.

Question 18
The candidate was awarded **5 marks**. They gain 1 mark for explaining the missing shade of blue as a spectrum with one shade missing, which the subject could fill in mentally. 1 mark is given for the claim that the missing shade of blue is intended to rebut Hume's theory. 1 mark for noting that Hume sees it as too singular to threaten his theory. 1 mark for noting that the point about the missing shade of green is not important. A final mark is given for the point that the 'blind guy holds no weight here'.