

Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for question paper 1.

Candidate 1

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt — question 1

The candidate was awarded **25 out of 30 marks**.

This is because the candidate provided a relevant, accurate and detailed description of the textual material that clearly addressed the question. The description in this essay was very clear and detailed, with the focus on the proof of the cogito to provide a foundation for knowledge.

They provided several evaluative comments with thoughtful discussion of the implications for Descartes and some personal judgements on the effectiveness of these criticisms. There is a clear line of reasoning that relates to the question asked but this could be more overtly connected to Descartes' use of reason as a basis for knowledge.

Candidate 2

Section 1 — knowledge and doubt — question 1

The candidate was awarded **15 out of 30 marks**.

This is because the candidate chose to describe aspects of all three meditations. In doing so, they have described some of the important descriptive and textual material relevant to the question. The description is largely superficial and misses out some of the depth and detail, for example, they refer to the deceiving god argument and malicious demon but do not explain their roles or what the implications of these arguments are. However, many key aspects of the text are highlighted.

There is some attempt to engage in evaluation in relation to the question, but this is very simplistic and does not really advance their argument.

Candidate 3

Section 1 —knowledge and doubt — question 1

The candidate was awarded **18 out of 30 marks**.

This was because the candidate provided a very detailed and in depth description of the doubts raised by Descartes in meditation 1 and the resulting proof of his own existence in meditation 2. This description is relevant, accurate and detailed and clearly addresses the question. There is some appropriate analysis of the arguments and how they work towards Descartes finding his certainty through the use of reason as opposed to sense experience.

There are some limited evaluative comments where the rigour of Descartes' approach is noted and how this led him to finding his foundation. However, the evaluation in this essay did not match the quality of the description and thus limited the marks that could be attained.

Candidate 4

Section 1 —knowledge and doubt — question 1

The candidate was awarded **26 out of 30 marks**.

This was because the candidate showed a deep, detailed and clear understanding of the relevant textual material in relation to the question. The candidate chose to focus their description on both meditation 1 and 3, skimming over the proof of the cogito in meditation 2. They effectively use their description to analyse the use of reason as a foundation for knowledge.

There is evaluation through the course of the essay that led to appropriate judgements in relation to the question. There is one particularly well-developed point which is the discussion of Descartes having mistaken a necessary condition for a sufficient one in relation to his use of the cogito to establish the clear and distinct rule. This is quite sophisticated; however, there is room for some greater depth and detail in their addressing of the Cartesian circle.

Candidate 5

Section 2 — moral philosophy — question 2

The candidate was awarded **20 out of 30 marks**.

This was because the candidate provided relevant, mainly accurate and some detailed descriptive information about utilitarianism as a moral theory. They give an appropriate description of the greatest happiness principle and its component parts. They distinguish between act and rule utilitarianism, although their description of rule utilitarianism is inaccurate. They analyse the scenario somewhat superficially using the hedonic calculus and suggest how a rule utilitarian's response might differ.

They have clearly addressed the question with some evaluation throughout their essay, although this could be given in greater depth and detail. Some of the most relevant evaluation comes at the start of the essay when they are relating the difficulties of predicting consequences and whether to focus on global or local consequences. These are appropriately applied to the scenario itself. An essay in the A-range would have used these evaluation points to discuss more in depth the effectiveness of using utilitarianism in this scenario.

Candidate 6

Section 2 — moral philosophy — question 2

The candidate was awarded **10 out of 30 marks**.

This is because the candidate provides very limited description of utilitarianism as a moral theory. There is a superficial explanation of the greatest happiness principle and Bentham's hedonic calculus, as well as the distinction between higher and lower pleasures. They have attempted to analyse the scenario and what a utilitarian would say should be done but made no real attempt to evaluate the use of utilitarianism in relation to this scenario.

Candidate 7

Section 2 — moral philosophy — question 3

The candidate was awarded **28 out of 30 marks**.

This is because their knowledge of the main features of utilitarianism is detailed and clear and shows a depth of understanding of the relevant information and the moral theory. They have very successfully used their knowledge of utilitarianism to provide a detailed, methodical and sophisticated analysis of utilitarianism; identifying how the different aspects of the theory might lead to the criticism in the quotation. The candidate effectively uses their own examples to highlight the problems raised and in particular the example of the cheating friend is applied to show exactly how this might result in such a criticism.

Their evaluation of the theory relates clearly to the issues raised by the question and their comments form a discussion where they consider both strengths and weaknesses.

They also consider the effect of the criticisms discussed and consider some counter-criticisms that might be raised. They give a clear, well-supported personal position on the issues raised by the quotation.