

Commentary on candidate evidence

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

Question paper 1

Candidate 1

Section 1: knowledge and doubt – question 1

This candidate was awarded **18 marks**. This was because the essay included relevant and accurate descriptive information which clearly addressed the question. They included some clear discussion of the distinction between impressions and ideas, and some analysis of this in relation to their experience prior to sitting their exam. They have given some explanation of Hume's arguments for the copy principle, such as the deaf person having no notion of sound and the role of the imagination, but these could be more detailed and with greater explanation of the role they play in Hume's theory.

There are some thoughtful evaluative comments of varying depth and explanation. In general, these have a great deal of potential but lack the detail that would show the full understanding of Hume's theory and how they challenge his ideas.

Candidate 2

Section 1: knowledge and doubt – question 1

The candidate was awarded **27 marks** because their response was in depth, detailed and showed a full grasp of the content of Hume's theory. They consistently weave criticism alongside their description and show that they understand why and how the criticism challenges Hume's ideas. They have engaged in some deeper

analysis and evaluation by offering criticisms and counter criticisms, which is what would be expected in the top mark range.

They have explained clearly the distinction between impressions and ideas and provided criticism of the claim that ideas are always less vivid than impressions. They have explained the copy principle and the two arguments to support it: the idea of God and that a lack of impression leads to the lack of a corresponding idea. The explanation of the missing shade of blue is particularly clear and shows an understanding of exactly the issue for Hume, and there is some in depth evaluation in relation to the missing shade of blue thought experiment. They argue competently towards their conclusion.

Candidate 3

Section 2: moral philosophy – question 3

The candidate was awarded **17 marks** because they have covered the essential descriptive material of Kantian ethics, although there are some inaccuracies and a lack of detail. They refer to some of the issues raised by the quotation, in particular the focus on duty rather than consequences, and have given some appropriate evaluative comments on this.

They have explained aspects of the universal law formulation of the categorical imperative, but this is not completely accurate. In particular, their explanation that a society where everyone would lie when it was convenient would not be a 'nice place to live' shows some lack of clarity on how this contradiction occurs for Kant. Although they go on to say it is not logical to allow everyone to lie, it is not clear that they understand why this is a contradiction in conception. There is a similar misunderstanding of the contradiction in the will. They have provided some appropriate evaluation of how prioritising duties will not force us to think about the effect we have on others, and they also appropriately evaluate Kant's focus on intentions rather than outcomes, with some examples to support this.

Candidate 4

Section 2: moral philosophy – question 2

The candidate was awarded **22 marks**. This was because their answer was relevant, accurate and detailed in terms of the descriptive information of Kantianism and from the start they clearly address the question. They have provided a detailed and methodical response to the situation with several well-explained and developed evaluative comments. These could be developed further with some counter considerations and doing so would take this essay into the higher band range.

The candidate begins their essay clearly stating their intentions. They have provided a fairly competent description of some of the core aspects of Kantian ethics, including the sovereignty of reason, the universal law formulation and the contradictions, as well as perfect and imperfect duties and the humanity formulation. Their application of these is also done reasonably well, although the contradictions is not entirely accurate. They have included several well discussed criticisms with some depth and appropriately applied to the scenario.