

# Commentary on candidate evidence

The candidate evidence has achieved the following marks for each section of the assignment.

## Candidate 1

### **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **0 marks** because they have not provided adequate description of any philosophical positions relating to their chosen philosophical question or claim.

No marks are awarded for describing a moral issue.

### **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

In the first paragraph they demonstrate that they know utilitarianism's judgement on the morality of the death penalty would depend on the consequences. **(1 mark)**

They have considered the potential consequences of a life sentence compared to the death penalty if the convicted person is innocent, and concluded that whereas the death penalty leaves room only for pain, a life sentence leaves some opportunity for happiness. **(4 marks)**

## **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **0 marks** because they have not explained criticisms of any responses relating to their chosen philosophical question or claim.

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **0 marks** because there is no connected line of thought in their assignment, and they have not presented a conclusion with an appropriate reason.

## **Candidate 2**

### **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks** because they have provided a lot of relevant description of one or more philosophical positions relating to their chosen philosophical question. The nature of the candidate's question has perhaps allowed too much scope for description: they would have gained at least 10 marks had so many been available.

### **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **5 marks** because there are several points at which they use and analyse relevant information relating to their philosophical question. The first 'B' mark was awarded at the top of the second page, where the candidate notes that

because the negative consequences of killing your best friend outweigh the positive consequences of saving them, a Utilitarian would choose option B **(1 mark)**.

The candidate gained a further 3 'B' marks at the bottom of the second page/top of third page. The first one of these was for explaining how you would be using your best friend as a means to an end **(1 mark)**. The second mark was awarded for noting that by choosing option B, you would be breaking the perfect duty to never kill because you would be responsible for killing your best friend **(1 mark)**. The third mark was awarded for explaining that by choosing option A, you would not be breaking any perfect duties or using anyone as a means to an end **(1 mark)**.

The final 'B' mark was awarded in the following paragraph where the candidate notes that an accidental flip of the switch will have the same consequences as a deliberate intent to kill **(1 mark)**.

## **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **3 marks** because they explained two criticisms of responses relating to their chosen philosophical question. The candidate has made a clear and focused point and then developed it **(2 marks)**. The third 'C' mark was awarded in the last paragraph of the assignment, where the candidate says 'Bentham's theory of using consequences to determine morality proves very well as it is in human nature to act in situations based on the consequences' **(1 mark)**.

Although the candidate explained some further criticisms, they were awarded no further marks for these because they were either copied from their resource sheet or they were generic criticisms of theory that were not relevant to their philosophical question or claim.

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** because they presented a conclusion with an appropriate reason that is consistent with the body of the assignment.

## **Candidate 3**

### **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks** because they have provided extensive relevant description of utilitarianism. The candidate has made many more points than there are marks available.

### **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The first mark was awarded after their explanation of the hedonic principle, where they say 'because humans actively seek out pleasure and avoid pain, we ought to conclude that pleasure and happiness are the only things that hold true moral worth and are the only truly good things' (**1 mark**).

A further 2 marks were awarded further down that paragraph: one for the application of the hedonic calculus (**1 mark**), and one for noting that the hedonic calculus would lead you to the conclusion that it is your moral obligation to visit your grandmother (**1 mark**).

The candidate was awarded a mark for noting that 'Higher & lower pleasure to be practical in day to day life as it removes the quantity bias that was present in

Bentham's utilitarianism. This means that if everyone were to act in accordance with utilitarianism, more people would indulge in pleasure so the mind rather than those of the body' **(1 mark)**.

A further 2 'B' marks were awarded in the following paragraph. The first was for noting that that it would be the moral duty of the sadistic guards to carry out the torture **(1 mark)**, and the final 'B' mark was awarded at the bottom of the page where the candidate expands on their final reason why Utilitarianism is impractical in day-to-day life **(1 mark)**.

## **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The first 'C' mark was awarded near the end of the second paragraph, where the candidate notes that the hedonic calculus offers a simple and intuitive way of quantifying happiness **(1 mark)**.

A further mark was awarded at the very end of that paragraph where they say that everyone living in accordance with utilitarianism, and higher and lower pleasures, would lead to a more civilised society **(1 mark)**.

A further 4 'C' marks were awarded in the following paragraph. The first was for the point that utilitarianism seems to be able to justify what most people would see as horrific acts **(1 mark)**. Another mark was awarded for noting that the justification of horrific acts due to the quantity of pleasure they result in would result in a collapse of society as we know it **(1 mark)**. A mark was awarded for the point that we often do not have time to carry out the hedonic calculus **(1 mark)**. The final 'C' mark was awarded for the candidate's point that utilitarianism is impractical as it is often very difficult to determine the outcome of an action **(1 mark)**.

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** because there is a clear line of thought running through their assignment, and they have presented a conclusion supported by an appropriate reason that is consistent with the body of their assignment.

## **Candidate 4**

### **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks** because they have given a great deal of accurate description of the philosophical position relating to their question. The candidate has made at least twelve points that could have been awarded marks in this category, but there is a cap of 6 marks for description.

### **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** for explaining why Descartes thought the idea of God is innate.

### **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

The first 'C' mark was awarded where the candidate objects that the principle of the missing shade of blue also works for notes on a piano and spiciness of food (**1 mark**).

The candidate was awarded 2 marks for considering whether the hallucinations of someone with schizophrenia might disprove Hume's copy principle (**2 marks**).

A further 'C' mark was awarded for the candidate's use of nightmares, which are more forceful and lively than impressions, as a counterexample to Hume's claim that all impressions are more lively and forceful than ideas (**1 mark**).

The final 'C' mark was awarded for noting that the ideas of beauty and justice seem not to come from impressions (**1 mark**).

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** because they have presented a conclusion with an appropriate reason that is consistent with the body of their assignment.

## **Candidate 5**

### **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The first is in the first paragraph, where the candidate notes that happiness and pleasure is the most important thing in life (**1 mark**).

A further 2 marks were awarded. The first is for noting that Bentham believed it was human nature to value pleasure, and what motivates us is to increase pleasure and reduce pain (**1 mark**). The second mark is for their explanation of the hedonic calculus (**1 mark**).

A further 3 marks were awarded. The first was for stating that Nozick showed that there are things humans value more than happiness (**1 mark**). Another mark was awarded for the claim that when presented with the choice most of us would choose to stay unplugged (**1 mark**), and a further mark was awarded for developing that point by saying that we want our life to be rooted in the real (**1 mark**).

## **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **2 marks** because they went on to further explain Nozick's point by saying 'this shows that things like truth, connections and real experience is valued just as or even more so than happiness and pleasure...you cannot fully understand and embrace happiness unless you have lived through those low points in life'.

## **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The first 2 marks were awarded where the candidate tries to show how Bentham's theory can be thought to provide 'an uncomplicated way to make life better and easier for everyone' (**2 marks**).

The candidate was awarded 2 'C' for noting that the idea of constant happiness is unrealistic (**1 mark**), and for considering the view that it perhaps does not matter how 'real' the happiness is (**1 mark**).

A further mark was awarded for noting that, despite Nozick's thought experiment, Bentham was right to say that we value happiness and pleasure (**1 mark**). The candidate's final 'C' mark was awarded for saying that the constant pursuit of happiness may undermine it (**1 mark**).

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **1 mark** because they have presented a conclusion supported by an appropriate reason.

## **Candidate 6**

### **Note on marking this assignment**

The candidate's question is very broad, and they have chosen to answer it by considering two different arguments. Some of the criticisms they have included – Hume's and Russell's, for example – overlap and are themselves responses to the question. This made it difficult to determine how marks should be allocated, and what should count as 'A', 'B' and 'C' marks. Our process was as follows: we ticked all the points that were right, then scored out any repetition. For each point, we asked whether it could be considered as an 'A', 'B' or 'C' mark. For any points that could be considered for a mark in more than one section, we allocated marks in a way that ensured that the candidate was not disadvantaged by the marking caps.

## **A: Introducing the chosen philosophical question or claim and describing responses to it**

The candidate was awarded **6 marks**.

The candidate was awarded 3 marks for their description of Aquinas's argument (**3 marks**).

A further mark was awarded for noting that Bertrand Russell said it is not right to say God is an exception to the principle that everything must have a cause (**1 mark**).

The candidate was awarded a further mark for their description of the design argument (**1 mark**).

The final 'A' mark was awarded for describing the quoll as an example of bad design **(1 mark)**.

## **B: Using and analysing relevant information relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **5 marks**.

The first mark was awarded for their consideration of Hume's agreement with Russell **(1 mark)**.

A further mark was awarded for noting that the big bang theory is an alternative explanation of how the universe was created **(1 mark)**.

Another mark was awarded for the candidate's use of the bucket orchid example **(1 mark)**.

A mark was awarded for the candidate's explanation that the quoll is a bad design because 18 of its babies will die **(1 mark)**.

The final 'B' mark was awarded for stating 'the cosmological argument used the universe itself to prove God is real, whereas the teleological argument focuses on things in the universe instead.' **(1 mark)**.

## **C: Explaining criticisms of responses relating to the chosen philosophical question or claim**

The candidate was awarded **4 marks**.

The first mark was awarded for saying that Aquinas has just guessed that there is not an infinite chain of causes **(1 mark)**.

The second mark was awarded for describing Russell's claim that the universe does not need a cause and could be eternal **(1 mark)**.

A further mark was awarded where the candidate considers the teleological argument and offers agreement with Paley by saying 'if we had to design airplanes, cars and trains why do we expect that animals and nature have just appeared out of nowhere?' **(1 mark)**

The final 'C' mark was awarded for considering the possibility that the six surviving quoll babies would be better adapted **(1 mark)**.

## **D: Presenting ideas in a logical sequence throughout the assignment**

The candidate was awarded **0 marks** because they have not offered a conclusion that is supported by a reason that is consistent with the body of their assignment, and there is not a connected line of thought throughout their assignment.