

Candidate 3 evidence

Philosophy National 5 Resource Sheet										
Candidate Name	Scottish Candidate Number									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Faced with moral dilemma → In the world we live in • GHP & Intro - Bentham - GHP - Consequentialist, Hedonism, Equity - Alasdair MacIntyre ← Wrongly - unacceptable - link for felicific Calculus - Bentham Used... ◦ Influenced - science - measurements - 7 ◦ Poetry & Push Pin ◦ An Introduction to the Principle of Morals and legislation ◦ Quantitative & Qualitative ★ Higher/Lower ★ Competent Judges ★ Branches ♥ Act & Rule ♥ link to apply ← Act-Rule * Applied to trolley problem * link to criticisms — Rule-Wouldnt Pull → This simple knowledge ⊗ Three weakness ⊗ Combat with strengths Δ Conclusion Δ Is the best 										
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Strengths</th> <th>Weaknesses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>only simple ideas</td> <td>too long not easy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>goal in life = happiness</td> <td>happiness is different everyone</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democratic Government Highly Unequal</td> <td>Minority</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Strengths	Weaknesses	only simple ideas	too long not easy	goal in life = happiness	happiness is different everyone	Democratic Government Highly Unequal	Minority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Quantitative = Bentham ■ Qualitative = Mill
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To what extent does utilitarianism offer the best approach to moral dilemmas?

In the current political climate people are often faced with many moral dilemmas. Opinions differ on the morally correct act however one of the best ways to deal with these issues is as a utilitarian would. The basic structure of utilitarianism is to create the most happiness for the most people. This rule is often referred to as the Greatest Happiness Principle. Utilitarianism was written about by Jeremy Bentham in his book *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. This was where Bentham discussed the basics of utilitarianism and the three underlying qualities

Utilitarianism is a consequentialist theory which means that only the consequences of an action matter. However the other two underlying qualities of utilitarianism are Hedonism and Equity. Hedonism means that the only consequence that matters is happiness and Equity says that everyone's happiness is of equal value, but Alasdair MacIntyre, a Scottish philosopher and politician, disagreed. MacIntyre argued that motives and justice count towards morality also. He discussed a dilemma of an innocent man that was wrongly imprisoned for a crime he did not commit just because it brought about the greatest amount of happiness for others. This action is naturally seen as wrong but under utilitarianism it would be right. The same problem arises when faced with the 10 sadistic guards beating up a prisoner scenario. The pleasure and happiness from these acts is not pure, so Bentham turned around and said use the calculus he created.

Influenced by the science of his time Bentham said that his Felicific Calculus was scientific and argued that it is an efficient way to measure happiness. The calculus was built up of seven categories ranging from how intense is the happiness to how far away is the happiness gained. On a whole the calculus seemed to work but Bentham only measured happiness quantitatively, meaning that happiness is only measure in quantity. If happiness were to be only measured like this a simple game of push pin could bring about the same amount of pleasure as classical arts. John Stuart Mill decided he would adapt the theory set out by Bentham and makes it both quantitative and qualitative.

Mill set out to break apart the types of happiness you can have and set them into higher or lower pleasures. Higher pleasures were seen as pleasures that we intellectual like music and reading whereas lower pleasures were more instinctual and physical such as sleeping or eating. Pleasures were put into the either higher or lower by competent judges. A competent judge is a person who has experienced both higher and lower pleasures therefore allowing them to know the difference. Once there is the basic foundational understanding of utilitarianism it can be split into two main branches known as act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism.

An act utilitarian when faced with a moral dilemma assess the situation individually and then chooses what is the morally correct action whereas a rule utilitarian assess a situation then see if a rule applies to the situation such as don't lie. If there is not already a rule then one is created and later applied to similar situations again. Both of these types of utilitarian react differently when faced with a moral dilemma or issue. This can be seen when the knowledge of act and rule is applied to the trolley problem.

A runaway trolley is hurtling down the tracks towards four workers and you have the choice to pull a lever which changes the direction of the trolley to hit one worker instead of four. An act utilitarian would pull the lever due to the fact the happiness created from four people is far greater than one. However a rule utilitarian would not pull the lever as the rule to not kill is obvious here. To pull the lever would be to consciously murder someone. This simple knowledge of how utilitarianism works allows it to be applied to any moral situation however on a whole it has some issues.

Utilitarianism is often criticised for being too long and not practical for daily use, saying that the felicific calculus is too complicated to use every day however utilitarianism only deals with the simple ideas of pleasure and pain making it ultimately easy to use. Another criticism of utilitarianism is that everyone experiences happiness differently but it is right to say that for the majority of people happiness is a goal that they strive for in life making it easy for utilitarianism to be universalised. An issue that is highly talked about with utilitarianism is the issue of minority but it is very, very unlikely that a person is to stay in the minority group all the time. Utilitarianism is democratic and can be seen to be used in any society.

To conclude, utilitarianism offers the best approach when facing moral dilemmas due to the fact that everyone is treated on an equal playing field. Saying that, it is clear that there are issues with utilitarianism on a whole but with the allowance of compromises and acceptance that a person will not always get what they want allows utilitarianism to work on both a small or larger scale.