

# ITEM BANK



## Philosophy and Ethics Sample Stage Exams Course content and critical reasoning item bank

The item bank has been designed to provide support to teachers with the teaching and testing of critical reasoning in school-based assessment. Unit content dot points for critical reasoning have been tabled and referenced to specific items/questions in Section 1 of the 2007 sample stage exams from October 15<sup>th</sup> PD.

Below are alternative items/questions that can also address the content dot points targeted in the 2007 sample stage exams. Teachers are encouraged to use the sample items/questions from the 2007 sample stage exams in their teaching programs, but to broaden too the teaching of critical reasoning through the alternative items/questions presented below.

Future sample examinations and formal examinations will give further examples of the variety applicable to unit content dot points from critical reasoning.

<p><b>2A Critical reasoning dot point 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognising and evaluating an argument in terms of its premises, inferences and conclusions</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>questions 9, 11 &amp; 12</li> </ul>	
<i>Alternative item #1</i>	From a list of words, identify/circle the inference indicators.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Two propositions, no inference indicator; identify the premise/ conclusion.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Circle the inference indicators in a short passage.

<p><b>2A Critical reasoning dot point 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognising argument in a variety of texts as distinct from description, narration and/ or explanation</li> </ul> <p><b>Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>question 1</li> </ul>	
<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Give an example of <u>description</u> and/or <u>explanation</u> and/or <u>argument</u> and/or <u>narration</u> in your own words.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Explain the difference between <u>description</u> and/or <u>explanation</u> and/or <u>argument</u> and/or <u>narration</u> .

**2A Critical reasoning dot point 3**

- understanding modus ponens and modus tollens

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- questions 2 & 6

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Give an example of modus ponens and/or modus tollens.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Respond true or false to a definition of modus tollens/ponens, e.g. "If A, then B ..."
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Provide "If, then" form and ask if it is valid or not.

**2A Methods of inquiry dot point 2**

- inductive and deductive arguments

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- questions 3 & 4

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Create an inductive or deductive argument.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Respond true or false to a definition of induction or deduction.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Explain the difference between induction and deduction.

**2A Methods of inquiry dot point 4**

- types of inquiry: dialectic

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- question 16

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain the idea of dialectic.
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**2B Critical reasoning dot point 1**

- distinguishing between strong and weak arguments

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- questions 14 & 15

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Construct an argument and evaluate the strength of the inference.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Construct a strong or moderate or weak argument.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Complete the definition – “A strong inference is ...”
<i>Alternative item #4</i>	Respond true or false to a definition of a strong or moderate or weak inference.

**2B Critical reasoning dot point 2**

- identifying some of the major informal fallacies e.g. the genetic fallacy, ad hominem arguments, hasty generalisation, argument from irrelevant authority, argument from ignorance and equivocation

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- questions 8, 10 & 13

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Provide an example of <insert fallacy>.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Explain why the following example is an example of <insert fallacy>.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	The correct definition of <insert fallacy> is: (multiple choice item)

**2B Critical reasoning dot point 3**

- identifying formal fallacies e.g. denying the antecedent and affirming the consequent

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2007**

- questions 5 & 7

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Give an example of denying the antecedent or affirming the consequent.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Respond true or false to a definition of denying the antecedent or affirming the consequent, e.g. “If A, then B ...”
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Provide “If, then” form and ask if it is valid or not.
<i>Alternative item #4</i>	Explain the difference between denying the antecedent and affirming the consequent.

**2B Methods of inquiry dot point 3**

- types of inquiry: hermeneutics

**Example of item in sample stage 2 exam 2008**

- question 16

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain the idea of hermeneutics.
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**3A Critical reasoning dot point 1**

- mapping and evaluating simple arguments in diagram form

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- questions 2, 4 & 8

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Construct a simple argument and then do steps (a), (b) and (c) of mapping.
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<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Provide the missing proposition (either a premise or a conclusion) in the following simple argument diagram.
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**3A Critical reasoning dot point 2**

- exploring more informal fallacies e.g. appeal to adverse consequences such as scare tactics, false dichotomy, begging the question and straw man argument

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- questions 1, 5 & 7

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Provide an example of <insert fallacy>.
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<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Explain why the following example is an example of <insert fallacy>.
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<i>Alternative item #3</i>	The correct definition of <insert fallacy> is: (multiple choice item)
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**3A Critical reasoning dot point 3**

- identifying weasel words e.g. intentionally ambiguous words

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- question 3

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain what is meant by a weasel word.
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<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Why is it important to recognise weasel words in an argument?
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**3A Methods of inquiry dot point 1**

- the scientific method in philosophical and ethical inquiry

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- *structured the same as question 16 in sample stage 2 exam 2007*

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain the idea of the scientific method in inquiry.
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**3A Methods of inquiry dot point 2**

- the method of sceptical doubt in philosophical and ethical inquiry

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- *structured the same as question 16 in sample stage 2 exam 2007*

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain the idea of sceptical doubt in inquiry.
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**3A Methods of inquiry dot point 3**

- types of inquiry: phenomenology

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- *structured the same as question 16 in sample stage 2 exam 2007*

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Explain the idea of phenomenology in inquiry.
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**3B Critical reasoning dot point 1**

- tracking and mapping complex arguments in diagram form

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- question 10

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Construct a complex argument and then do steps (a), (b) and (c) of mapping.
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<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Provide the missing proposition (either a premise or a conclusion) in the following complex argument diagram.
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*\*NOTE: mapping items in stage 3 exam need to be a balance of simple and complex arguments.*

**3B Critical reasoning dot point 2**

- exploring more logical fallacies e.g. the definist fallacy, post hoc ergo propter hoc, statistical fallacies, non sequitur, and confusion of correlation and causation

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- questions 1, 5 & 7

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Provide an example of <insert fallacy>.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Explain why the following example is an example of <insert fallacy>.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	The correct definition of <insert fallacy> is: (multiple choice item)

**3B Critical reasoning dot point 3**

- distinguishing between analytic and synthetic statements

**Example of item in sample stage 3 exam 2007**

- questions 6 & 9

<i>Alternative item #1</i>	Create an analytic or synthetic statement.
<i>Alternative item #2</i>	Explain what an analytic or synthetic statement is.
<i>Alternative item #3</i>	Is the following example an example of an analytic or synthetic statement?