Government of **Western Australia**
Curriculum Council

WACE
Western Australian Certificate of Education

Western Australian Certificate of Education Examination, 2010

Question/Answer Booklet

PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

Stage 3

Please place your student identification label in this box

Student Number: In figures

In words _____

_____

Time allowed for this paper

Reading/planning time before commencing work: ten minutes
Working time for paper: three hours

Materials required/recommended for this paper

To be provided by the supervisor

This Question/Answer Booklet

To be provided by the candidate

Standard materials: pens, pencils, eraser, correction fluid/type, ruler, highlighters

Special materials: nil

Important note to candidates

No other materials may be taken into the examination room. It is **your** responsibility to ensure that you do not have any unauthorised notes or other material of a non-personal nature in the examination room. If you have any unauthorised material with you, hand it to the supervisor **before** reading any further.

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Structure of this paper

Section	Number of questions available	Number of questions to be answered	Suggested working time (minutes)	Marks available	Percentage of exam
Section One: Reasoning and inquiry skills	8	8	50	30	30
Section Two: Philosophical analysis	2	2	80	40	40
Section Three: Extended argument	5	1	50	30	30
				Total	100

Instructions to candidates

1. The rules for the conduct of Western Australian external examinations are detailed in the *Year 12 Information Handbook 2010*. Sitting this examination implies that you agree to abide by these rules.

2. Answer the questions according to the following instructions.

   Write answers in this Question/Answer Booklet.

3. You must be careful to confine your responses to the specific questions asked and to follow any instructions that are specific to a particular question.

4. Spare pages are included at the end of this booklet. They can be used for planning your responses and/or as additional space if required to continue an answer.
   - Planning: If you use the spare pages for planning, indicate this clearly at the top of the page.
   - Continuing an answer: If you need to use the space to continue an answer, indicate in the original answer space where the answer is continued, i.e. give the page number. Fill in the number of the question(s) that you are continuing to answer at the top of the page.

Section One: Reasoning and inquiry skills **30% (30 Marks)**

This section contains **eight (8)** questions. Answer **all** questions in the spaces provided.

Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 1 **(2 marks)**

(a) Is the following statement analytic or synthetic? (1 mark)

It cannot be raining and not raining in the same place at the same time.

(b) Explain your answer. (1 mark)

Question 2 **(2 marks)**

For the following argument:

The right to free speech is the right to express any opinion you have in any way you wish. So, if I have a right to free speech at all, then I have the right to yell racist slogans in Parliament.

(a) Name the fallacy committed. (1 mark)

(b) Explain why it is fallacious. (1 mark)

Question 3 **(3 marks)**

For the following argument:

The climate change skeptics are wrong. For there are more places in Australia in drought now than ten years ago and there were more hurricanes last year than in any other year for which there are weather records. Furthermore, floods are now a common occurrence in southern Queensland.

(a) bracket and number all the propositions (1 mark)
(b) circle the inference indicators (1 mark)
(c) diagram the argument (1 mark)

Question 4 **(3 marks)**

For the following argument:

If we allow ourselves to torture people sometimes, this will inevitably lead to torturing people for no good reason. This is why we should never torture people under any circumstances.

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

(b) Evaluate the strength of the inference. (1 mark)

(c) Justify your evaluation. (1 mark)

Question 5 **(4 marks)**

For the following argument:

A natural thing can only become someone's private property if that person works upon it in some way to change its natural state, because the materials of nature (air, earth, water, etc.) that have not been transformed by human labour belong to nobody and are not property.

(a) Underline the conclusion. (1 mark)

(b) Evaluate the cogency of the argument. (1 mark)

(c) Explain your evaluation. (2 marks)

Question 6 **(2 marks)**

For the following passage:

The peace-keeping mission is a necessity. There is increasing evidence of weapons of mass destruction-related activity in the area, and we must commit ourselves to achieving better security outcomes.

(a) underline one 'weasel' word (or phrase). (1 mark)

(b) explain how that word (or phrase) is functioning as a weasel word in the passage. (1 mark)

Question 7 **(3 marks)**

Construct the strongest possible argument that uses all (and only) the following statements. Use a diagram to represent the argument you construct.

(1) I was caused to eat ice-cream by something physical.
(2) My desire to eat ice-cream is something physical.
(3) I ate ice-cream.
(4) My desire to eat ice-cream caused me to eat ice-cream.
(5) Everything that happens is caused to happen by something physical.

Question 8 **(11 marks)**

For the following argument:

The Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine has been administered to children through a government-sponsored initiative since 1998. Since that time the reported number of diagnoses of autism has risen sharply. Children have usually received the full MMR vaccine by the age of four and that's about the age at which autism is most commonly diagnosed. It is clear that autism is often brought about by the MMR vaccine.

(a) Write down and number the premises. (4 marks)

(b) Write down and number the conclusion. (1 mark)

(c) Diagram the argument. (3 marks)

(d) Evaluate the strength of the inference. (1 mark)

(e) Justify your evaluation. (2 marks)

End of Section One

Section Two: Philosophical analysis **40% (40 Marks)**

This section contains **two (2)** questions. Answer **both** questions.

Write your answers in the space provided.

Spare pages are included at the end of this booklet. They can be used for planning your responses and/or as additional space if required to continue an answer.

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Suggested working time: 80 minutes.

Question 9 **(20 marks)**

Summarise, clarify and critically evaluate the contributions of each participant in the following dialogue.

OSCAR: I've just been visiting my aunt at the hospital. She's been really sick for ages and the doctors have just told her that she has less than a year to live. It was awful seeing her so miserable and, what's worse, she said that now she knows she's going to die she just wants it all to end as soon as possible — she even wants to talk to the doctors about euthanasia! Anyway, I'm sure the doctors would never do something so wrong.

LUCINDA: Why? I mean, you don't think there should be laws against committing suicide do you? The only difference is that your aunt is so sick she needs her doctors to help. And you can't deny someone what they want just because they're sick.

OSCAR: But doctors have made a promise to 'do no harm'. They're in hospitals to *save* lives.

LUCINDA: Well, up to a point. Sometimes they turn off life support when someone has been in a coma for ages. And if there's been a massive catastrophe they might leave some people to die because if they tried to save that person they wouldn't be able to help a bunch of other people.

OSCAR: That's totally different! They're not actually killing people if they do that. If doctors went around killing people no-one would ever go to hospitals. You'd be better off staying home and hoping for the best.

LUCINDA: Oh, come on! That's so unrealistic. Doctors aren't going to start killing people willy-nilly. They'd only euthanase people who say they want to die. And what's wrong with that? When you die is a huge thing. It affects everything. I mean, imagine you were super-athletic your whole life and then had a car crash and ended up totally paralysed. You'd want to die, right? You'd have nothing to live for, you'd be making your family miserable and everyone would remember you as a dribbling mess.

OSCAR: How do *you* know what people want? Last time I was at the hospital visiting my aunt her whole family was there and everyone was really exhausted and upset. You could tell it made my aunt feel guilty. How do the doctors know she isn't really asking to die only because she thinks that's what her family wants? And anyway, it's not just about letting people have what they want. Once you let doctors 'help' people die, you've opened the floodgates for doctors to kill my aunt just because she's a 'waste of resources'. Life is sacred and we shouldn't be deciding who lives and dies based on who is a burden and who isn't.

LUCINDA: That's just what I'm saying. Only those who want to die should be euthanased. We could even make laws that make it illegal to euthanase anyone who hasn't said they want to die. I just don't see the problem. You want your aunt to be as happy as possible before she dies. And she doesn't want to suffer and be seen in a sick and undignified way by her family and everyone else. So if you care for her, you should give her what she wants, and help her die in a dignified way. *That's* respecting the value of life!

OSCAR: Now *you're* the one being unrealistic. You don't care for people by giving them whatever they want. Otherwise parents would feed their children nothing but lollies and soft drink.

Question 10 **(20 marks)**

Summarise, clarify and critically evaluate **one** of the following passages.

(i) Thought and the value of philosophy

Thought is one of the most powerful forces in the Universe. The way you see things makes them what they are. We never meet life innocently. We always take in life through the grid of thought we use. Our thoughts filter experience all the time. The beauty of philosophy is the way it shows us the nature of the layers of thought which always stand invisibly between us and everything we see. Even your meetings with yourself happen in and through thinking. The study of philosophy helps you to see how you think. Philosophy has no doctrines; it is an activity of disclosure and illumination. One of the great tasks in life is to find a way of thinking which is honest and original and yet right for your style of individuality. The shape of each soul is different. It takes a lifetime of slow work to find a rhythm of thinking which reflects and articulates the uniqueness of your soul.

More often than not, we have picked up the habits of thinking of those around us. These thought-habits are not yours; they can damage the way you see the world and make you doubt your own instinct and sense of life. When you become aware that your thinking has a life of its own, you will never make a prison of your own perception.

(John O'Donohue, *Eternal Echoes*, p.121)

(ii) The significance of the democratic political method

In an area so full of grand claims, it is safest to begin by using the word 'democracy' in its narrowest sense. So conceived, democracy is the method of choosing a government through competitive elections in which people who are not members of the governing groups participate. Whatever may be said for or against democracy so conceived, it is surely not a supreme ideal of life. It is doubtful that anyone has ever treated the right to cast a ballot once every year or so as an end in itself. A society in which the democratic political method has been consolidated, to be sure, has a tremendous source of reassurance. It possesses a peaceful method for determining who shall hold power and for effecting changes in the structure of power. Yet even peace is only one value among others. It is worth something to have security and order, but how much it is worth depends on the kind of security and order it is. The importance of the democratic political method lies mainly in its non-political by-products. It is important because a society in which it is well established will probably be different in at least four respects — in the conditions that protect its liberties, in the kind of consensus that prevails, in the character of the conflicts that go on within it, and in the manner in which it educates its rulers and citizens.

(Charles Frankel, 'The Significance of the Democratic Political Method', p. 629)

(iii) Religion and Scientific Research

It is easy to see why the churches have always fought science and persecuted its devotees. On the other hand, I maintain that the cosmic religious feeling is the strongest and noblest motive for scientific research. Only those who realize the immense efforts and, above all, the devotion without which pioneering work in science cannot be achieved, are able to grasp the strength of the feeling out of which alone such work can arise. What a deep conviction of the rationality of the universe and what a yearning to understand, Kepler and Newton must have had to enable them to spend years of solitary labour in disentangling the principles of celestial mechanics[1]! Those whose acquaintance with scientific research is derived chiefly from its practical results easily develop a completely false notion of the mentality of the men who, surrounded by a sceptical world, have shown the way to kindred spirits scattered wide through the world and the centuries. Only one who has devoted his life to similar ends can have a vivid realization of what has inspired these men and given them the strength to remain true to their purpose in spite of countless failures. It is cosmic religious feeling that gives a man such strength. A contemporary has said, not unjustly, that in this materialistic age of ours the serious scientific workers are the only profoundly religious people.

(Albert Einstein, 'On the Design of the Universe', pp. 293–4)

[1] **celestial mechanics** – the principles of celestial mechanics are the laws governing the movements of the stars, planets and other heavenly bodies.

End of Section Two

Section Three begins on page 22

Section Three: Extended argument **30% (30 Marks)**

This section contains **five (5)** questions. Answer **one (1)** question. Write your answer in the space provided. Argue for or against the statement with clear definitions, examples and reasons.

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Suggested working time: 50 minutes.

Question 11 **(30 marks)**

Morality is just a matter of custom.

Question 12 **(30 marks)**

A good society needs only to exhibit universal tolerance and freedom for all.

Question 13 **(30 marks)**

A solitary life is a life without meaning.

Question 14 **(30 marks)**

Some people know theism is true because they have experienced the divine.

Question 15 **(30 marks)**

Just as using humans as slaves has been abolished, so too should using animals for food be abolished.

End of questions

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Question number: _____

Additional working space

Additional working space

Additional working space

Additional working space

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Section Two

Question 10 (i) Extract from: O'Donohue, J. (1998). *Eternal Echoes: Exploring Our Hunger to Belong*. London: Bantam Press, p121.

Question 10 (ii) Adapted from: Frankel, C. (1972). The significance of the democratic political method. In C. Cohen, (Ed.) *Communism, fascism and democracy*. New York: Random House, pp. 628–638.

Question 10 (iii) Adapted from: Einstein, A. (1989). On the Design of the Universe. In R. C. Solomon. (Ed.) *Introducing Philosophy*. Florida: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, pp. 293–294.

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