



Philosophy & Reason 2025 v1.2

IA1: Sample assessment instrument

This sample has been compiled by the QCAA to assist and support teachers in planning and developing assessment instruments for individual school settings.

Student name	sample only
Student number	sample only
Teacher	sample only
Exam date	sample only

Marking summary

Criterion	Marks allocated	Provisional marks
Using and Explaining	7	
Interpreting and Analysing	7	
Organising, Synthesising and Evaluating	8	
Creating and Communicating	3	
Overall	25	

Conditions

Technique	Examination — extended response
Unit	Unit 3: Moral philosophy and schools of thought
Topic/s	Topic 1: Moral philosophy
Time	Planning time: 15 minutes Working time: 120 minutes
Seen / Unseen	Unseen question Unseen stimulus
Other	Students must not bring notes into the examination

Instructions

- You may write notes, but not commence your response, during the planning time.
- Write your response on the lined paper provided.
- Write in blue or black pen.

Task

With reference to the stimulus, consider the principles of both utilitarianism and Kantian ethics as potential guidelines for the programmers of self-driving cars, and decide which theory offers a preferable resolution to the issue of what moral ‘rules’ programmers should set for self-driving cars.

Present your response in the form of an analytical essay.

In your response:

- explain the principles of both utilitarianism and Kantian ethics relevant to resolving the issue by interpreting and analysing each theory
- construct arguments by applying these relevant principles to the issue and considering possible resolutions
- evaluate the resulting claims and arguments, and the theories themselves, to justify which theory offers a preferable resolution to the issue.

Ensure that:

- use of the provided stimulus material is evident in your written response
- use of terminology related to moral philosophy and argumentation is evident throughout your response
- you adhere to
 - the genre conventions of an analytical essay
 - language conventions, including spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Instrument-specific marking guide (IA1): Examination — extended response (25%)

Using and Explaining	Marks
The student work has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • astute understanding of meaning demonstrated through employing relevant terminology of moral philosophy • sustained and accurate use of terminology of argumentation • comprehensive and accurate descriptions and explanations of concepts, methods, principles and theories relating to moral philosophy 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial understanding of meaning demonstrated through employing relevant terminology of moral philosophy • sustained and accurate use of terminology of argumentation, with minor errors or omissions • comprehensive descriptions and explanations of concepts, methods, principles and theories relating to moral philosophy that are accurate in most key aspects 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic understanding of meaning demonstrated through employing relevant terminology of moral philosophy • some accurate use of terminology of argumentation • descriptions and explanations of concepts, methods, principles and theories relating to moral philosophy are evident, but with inaccuracies or omissions 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rudimentary understanding of meaning demonstrated through employing some terminology of moral philosophy • use of terminology of argumentation is limited • significant inaccuracies or omissions in descriptions and explanations of concepts, methods, principles and theories relating to moral philosophy are evident throughout the response. 	1
The student work does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Interpreting and Analysing	Marks
The student work has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perceptive interpretation of significant ideas and information relating to moral philosophy • precise and accurate deconstruction of relevant arguments relating to moral philosophy • insightful determination of relationships within or between ideas, arguments and/or theories relevant to moral philosophy 	6–7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informed interpretation of significant ideas and information relating to moral philosophy • accurate deconstruction of relevant arguments relating to moral philosophy • effective determination of relationships within or between ideas, arguments and/or theories relevant to moral philosophy 	4–5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretation of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy • deconstruction of relevant arguments relating to moral philosophy • identification of relationships within or between ideas, arguments and/or theories relevant to moral philosophy 	2–3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simplistic interpretation of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy • partial deconstruction of arguments relating to moral philosophy • minimal identification of relationships within or between ideas, arguments and/or theories relevant to moral philosophy. 	1
The student work does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Organising, Synthesising and Evaluating	Marks
The student work has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coherent and thorough synthesis of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy and the ethical problem/dilemma in which all key aspects have been considered and resolved • insightful evaluation of claims, arguments, theories and views in moral philosophy using discerning criteria • constructs a sophisticated argument relating to moral philosophy 	7–8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial synthesis of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy and the ethical problem/dilemma in which most key aspects have been considered and resolved • considered evaluation of claims, arguments, theories and views in moral philosophy using appropriate criteria • constructs an effective argument relating to moral philosophy 	5–6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • partial synthesis of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy and the ethical problem/dilemma in which some key aspects have been considered and resolved • evaluation of claims, arguments, theories and views in moral philosophy using criteria • constructs a feasible argument relating to moral philosophy 	3–4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • superficial synthesis of ideas and information relating to moral philosophy and the ethical problem/dilemma • superficial evaluation of claims, arguments, theories and views relating to moral philosophy • provides a conclusion relating to moral philosophy with simplistic justification. 	1–2
The student work does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Creating and Communicating	Marks
The student work has the following characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys relevant ideas and arguments purposefully and fluently • consistently demonstrates features of the analytical essay genre • minimal errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation 	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys relevant ideas and arguments purposefully • generally demonstrates features of the analytical essay genre • some errors in spelling, grammar and/or punctuation 	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conveys ideas and/or arguments • sporadically demonstrates features of the analytical essay genre • frequent errors in spelling, grammar and/or punctuation impede communication of ideas and arguments. 	1
The student work does not satisfy any of the descriptors above.	0

Stimulus

In 2009 Google started its self-driving car project. This has now become an independent company called Waymo. Its aim is to develop cars that are completely self-driving, and that do not rely on the ability of the occupant to take control in an emergency. Programmers developing self-driving cars for use on public roads must therefore equip the cars with the capacity to 'make decisions'. Of course, a computer-programmed car does not really 'make decisions' — rather it follows a set of rules laid down by the programmer.

The issue then arises of what moral 'rules' programmers should set for self-driving cars. Specifically, if the car is in a situation where it cannot avoid an accident, and so is forced to 'choose' between risking the life or lives of its occupants and risking the life or lives of other road users or pedestrians, what rules should it apply?



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