



OXFORD UNIVERSITY

PHILOSOPHY TEST

November 2022

Only to be taken by applicants for the Philosophy and Theology joint degree.

Question Paper and Answer Booklet



Surname

Other names

School/College name*

*If you are an individual candidate, taking this test away from a school or college, please write the name of your examination centre in this box.

Centre Number Candidate Number

UCAS Number (if known) - -

Date of Birth ^d ^d - ^m ^m - ^y ^y

Oxford College of Preference

You have 60 minutes (one hour) for this test.

Candidates should attempt Part A, which consists of one question, and ONE QUESTION ONLY from Part B. The two questions you answer will be given an equal weighting, so you are advised to spend half of the available time on each of them.

Any planning and rough working should be completed in this test booklet, and clearly indicated as such. There are 10 pages available for you to write on, including those with the printed questions; no additional pages are available, and none should be used. You must use a black pen. No dictionaries of any kind are permitted.

The Philosophy Test is a test of philosophical reasoning skills. There is no expectation that candidates will have undertaken any formal study of philosophy, and it is not a test of philosophical knowledge.

Credit will be given for precise and careful reasoning which answers the question asked, with particular merit being given to answers which anticipate and are able to answer objections to the reasoning given. No credit will be given for irrelevance, nor for the mere statement of opinions without evidence or argument to support them.

Answer **PART A** and **ONE QUESTION ONLY FROM PART B**.

Spend half an hour on each and do as much as you can within that time.

PART A

1. Read carefully through the following passage, and answer the questions which follow.

Suppose a man should tell you that he was come back from the dead; you would be apt to suspect his evidence. But what would you suspect? That he was not alive, when you heard him, saw him, felt him, and conversed with him? You would question whether the man had ever been dead. But would you say that it is incapable of being made plain by human testimony that this or that man died a year ago?

A resurrection considered only as a fact to be proved by evidence is a plain case; it requires no greater ability in the witnesses than that they be able to distinguish between a man dead and a man alive. I do allow that this case and others of like nature require more evidence to give them credit than ordinary cases do. But it is absurd to say that such cases admit no evidence, when the things in question are manifestly objects of sense.

Thomas Sherlock

- a. Explain briefly in your own words the central argument of the above passage.
- b. **EITHER:** Ought one to resist the claim that ‘this case and others of like nature require more evidence to give them credit than ordinary cases do’?

OR: Is it true that cases such as that referred to in the passage are ‘manifestly objects of sense’?

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Please turn over (Page 1 of 10)

PART B

2. Could there be such a thing as Artificial Stupidity?

3. Comment on the meanings of the underlined phrases in each instance of the following pairs, explaining how you are able to come to your judgement. In any case where you are unable to decide on a single answer, explain why not.

- a. The prime minister of the United Kingdom has occasionally been a woman.
The prime minister of the United Kingdom has an exotic taste in domestic decoration.
- b. The most remote planet from our sun used to be Neptune, then it was Pluto, now it is Neptune again.
The most remote planet from our sun has an orbital period of around 165 earth years.
- c. The Hobbit is a book by JRR Tolkien.
The chief ring of power was discovered by the hobbit.
- d. The dodo is extinct.
The dodo is dead.
- e. When Napoleon attempted to invade Russian in 1812, Jane Austen's most recently published novel was Sense and Sensibility.
Jane Austen's most recently published novel is Lady Susan.

4. Should humility be regarded as a virtue or as a vice?

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