

AM SYLLABUS (2008-2010)

PHILOSOPHY

AM 25

SYLLABUS

**Philosophy AM 25
Syllabus**

(Available in September)
Paper I (3 hrs) + Paper II (3 hrs)

Introduction

Philosophy is a fascinating subject. It deals with some of the most basic questions human beings have asked themselves. Rather than providing easy or ready-made solutions, it encourages those who take it seriously to think about such questions systematically, to discuss them rigorously, to examine what others have said about them, to form considered judgements and derive sound conclusions from well-structured arguments.

Aims and objectives

Candidates who sit for the Philosophy examination at Advanced Level should demonstrate that they have acquired the necessary skills to deal confidently with the problems set in the Logic section of the examination. They should also be able to present the main issues of the philosophy of language in a clear light and to discuss the specific problems in applied ethics (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, human sexuality, war, sustainable development and the rights of future generations) philosophically. They should be familiar with the main problems raised by ancient philosophers (from the Presocratics to Augustine) and show a thorough knowledge of the selected texts, taking a critical stance where necessary.

Content

Paper I

Section A. Logic

V. Riolo, *An Introduction to Logic* (Malta University Press, 1994).

Section B. Philosophy of Language

P. Serracino Inglott, *Peopled Silence* (Malta University Press, 1994).

Section C. History of Philosophy

Either J. Friggieri, *In-Nis[a tal-]sieb* (Media Centre, Malta, 2000), Chapters 1 to 7 only (pp. 1 to 165).

Or T. Irwin, *Classical Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989.

Questions in this Section will be set in both Maltese and English. Consequently, in Paper I – Section C, candidates may opt to answer in either language.

Paper II

Section A. Ethics

E. Agius, *Problems in Applied Ethics* (Malta University Press, 1994).

Section B. Ancient texts.

One of the following:

- (i) Plato, *Republic* (Books V, VI, VII)
- (ii) Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Books I, II, III, IV)
- (iii) Augustine, *Confessions*

Section C. Modern and contemporary texts.

One of the following:

- (i) Descartes, *Meditations*
- (ii) J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*
- (iii) C. Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Harvard University Press, 1992)

Assessment Criteria

Candidates will be expected to:

- (i) show they have acquired the basic logical skills to work out logical problems;
- (ii) use language clearly, consistently and appropriately;
- (iii) identify and formulate problems philosophically;
- (iv) construct philosophical arguments;
- (v) reflect on the origins of philosophy and its early development;
- (vi) show a critical understanding and appreciation of the set texts.

Assessment Scheme

Two three-hour papers are set. Each paper will be divided into three sections. Candidates will be asked to answer one question from each section. Each question will carry an equal share of the global mark.

Grade Descriptions

- A Excellent performance all round
- B Very good overall
- C Average
- D Fair to low
- E Marginal performance
- F Unsatisfactory