

## 1 'The weaknesses of Virtue Ethics outweigh its strengths.' Discuss. [35]

**AO1**

Candidates may begin by explaining Aristotelian and modern approaches to Virtue Ethics. They may explain the Golden Mean and how this may seem to promote mediocrity.

They may discuss the fact that virtues can seem to be culturally relative and so Virtue Ethics is difficult to apply to modern dilemmas, as there are no guidelines from rules or consequences.

Candidates may discuss the difficulty of learning from virtuous people as it is difficult to assess someone's motives.

They may contrast this with the importance of a person or agent centred approach which allows virtues to grow and integrate, emotions, commitments and relationships into ethical decisions.

Candidates might also refer to the reasons for the revival of Virtue Ethics in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

**AO2**

Candidates are free to agree with the question or not, but they need to assess the arguments both for and against a person-centred theory.

They may do this by contrasting Virtue Ethics with another ethical theory which they judge may offer a better outcome, or they may conclude that a virtuous person would not need ethical principles to make the right decisions.

Candidates might assess the usefulness of a theory which does not rely on consequences.

## 2 Assess the usefulness of Religious Ethics as an ethical approach to business. [35]

**AO1**

Candidates may discuss biblical guidelines that can easily be applied to the ethical issues surrounding business. They may discuss laws about the ethical treatment of employees/workers such as Leviticus, 19:13 or about honesty and fairness.

They may use the teachings of Amos or of Jesus about justice and exploitation.

They may contrast the protestant work ethic with ideas of social justice from both Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians.

They may contrast the approach of Religious Ethics with that of another ethical theory such as Utilitarianism or Kantian ethics.

Candidates might apply an ethical theory which is seen as religious such as Natural Law or Situation Ethics.

**AO2**

Candidates could consider whether Religious Ethics are the best way of dealing with international business issues or not.

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They may wish to consider whether Religious Ethics are useful because of: their universal application; the role of Christians as shareholders; the role of ethical investments; religious criticism of environmental impact of business.

They may discuss whether an alternative ethical approach would be more useful, such as the benefits to the majority offered by Utilitarianism or Kant's ideas duty and the Categorical Imperative.

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**3 Critically assess the claim that all people are free to make moral decisions. [35]**

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**AO1**

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Candidates could discuss what is meant by moral freedom, libertarianism and hard determinism. They may discuss whether people are ever really free to make moral decisions.

They may compare these opposing views to compatibilism or soft determinism.

Some candidates may also consider theological determinism and contrast this to religious teachings on free will.

Responses may include the role of conscience in making moral decisions, whether free will is an illusion or whether psychological, genetic or social factors limit our freedom to make moral decisions (e.g. Darrow).

**AO2**

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Candidates should consider the implications for ethics if our moral decisions are not free, and whether we are morally responsible or accountable for our ethical decisions and actions.

They might consider whether we are really free or just think we are (e.g. Locke), and that our freedom is just apparent.

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They may introduce the Kant's argument that to be moral we must be free.

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They may assess the implications of Sartre's ideas, for example that it is only in acting freely that gives authentic meaning to our lives.

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**4 To what extent are ethical theories helpful when considering the issues surrounding homosexuality? [35]**

**AO1**

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Candidates could explain and contrast different views of sexual ethics: religious, such as Natural Law and Divine Command Theory; Utilitarianism; libertarian etc. and their approaches to homosexuality. They may consider different aspects of homosexuality: inclination v practice; fidelity v infidelity; age; the views of society etc.

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They might consider the influences of society, environment, genetics etc on homosexuality.

Candidates might apply the Categorical Imperative to homosexuality.

They may discuss the role of the conscience in making decisions in matters of homosexuality.

**AO2**

Candidates may consider the ethical theories helpful or may simply apply the liberal harm principle as a method of judging the issues surrounding homosexuality.

They may discuss whether there are any absolute principles that are binding in every sexual relationship, including homosexual ones e.g. not harming other people, adultery harms others, there should be equality between the partners etc.

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