Statistics

Table 1: MATSEC Advanced Level Philosophy, May 2010
Distribution of Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of candidates</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paper 1

Section A: Logic
In general, the section on Logic is the one in which candidates obtain most points. At advanced level, it seems that they acquire a sound grasp of what is required of them.

Section B: Philosophy of Language
The majority of candidates opted for question 3. Most candidates answered the question satisfactorily, although the parallels between the genetic code and the linguistic code were rarely mentioned. A few candidates simply described the different types of animal communication, ignoring the definition of humanity and only highlighting few of the differences between the human and the animal means of communication. The majority of the few candidates who opted for question 4 did not mention the concept of poiesis and delved immediately into the three features of the theatre and the concept of pretending.

Section C: History of Philosophy
The vast majority of candidates opted for question 5. While most candidates knew the different Pre-Socratic philosophers’ ideas quite well, very few actually tackled the question. Most candidates simply delved into a description of the different philosophies without mentioning the distinguishing features, which characterized all the philosophers. Hence, very few candidates mentioned the development of new terminology, the use of argument and reason, or the idea of science. These concepts were briefly highlighted in an introductory paragraph and perhaps in the conclusion, but the philosophers were not linked together through these concepts. Perhaps this was also a question of poor writing skills. Not a single candidate from those few who opted for question 6 knew Augustine’s theory of time.
**Paper 2**

**Section A: Ethics**

Most candidates were more comfortable answering question 2 (“The ethical principles of sustainable development are interrelated and mutually supporting.” Mention and discuss these principles”). Most candidates were well prepared however some exaggerated in the inclusion of content acquired from other subjects regarding sustainable development and the ecosystem, leaving out the ethical principles implied in the concept of sustainable development. Those who answered question 1 (Discuss how specific sexual behavior is conducive to the creative growth and integration of the human person if certain fundamental values are fulfilled.) were not always familiar with the ethical concept of sexuality as a communicative action used as means to integrative growth.

**Section B: Ancient Texts.**

The majority preferred to answer questions 3 (Outline Plato’s views on justice in the state and in the individual) rather than question 4 (Discuss Aristotle’s doctrine of the Mean). At this level candidates were expected to draw a parallel between the state and the individual, explaining how the four cardinal virtues of wisdom, temperance, courage and justice interplay with the rational, spirited and appetitive soul. Candidates were finally expected to illustrate, through the various analogies presented, how justice is achieved through harmony. Many of those who answered question 4 wrote all they knew on Aristotle, and only few managed to elaborate on the key concepts of the virtues being the Golden Mean between the extremes of excess and deficiency. Almost all of the few who chose to answer Question 5 (Discuss Augustine’s solution to the problem of evil) were not at all familiar with Augustine’s definition of evil as the absence of good and the distinction between natural evil and moral evil. Others were familiar with the key events which occurred in Augustine’s life and attempted to define evil as defined by the Roman Catholic Church.

**Section C: Modern and Contemporary Texts.**

The absolute majority of the candidates answered question 6 (What does it mean to say that Descartes’ method is a method of doubt?) and most candidates were very well prepared, and answered the question fittingly. Those who answered question 8 (Discuss Charles Taylor’s solutions to the problems raised by modernity) were generally able to outline and elaborate on the key concepts of Horizons of significances and the importance of Dialogues with significant others. The few who answered question 7 (What is J.S. Mill’s solution to the view that a democracy can easily become a tyranny of the majority) too were rarely familiar with the key concepts such as that of the Tyranny of the Majority.

**Chairperson**
**Examiners’ Panel**