1.2 Being human: freedom, and mind and body

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS free will • determinism • compatibilism • dualism • physicalism • functionalism • qualia

Objective

Continue the core theme with two more questions: are we **free** (free will and **determinism**), and what is the relation between **mind and body** (dualism, physicalism and functionalism)?

You must be able to:

- explain hard determinism, libertarianism and compatibilism
- use an example to test each view of free will
- explain substance dualism and an objection to it
- explain physicalism and functionalism
- link the debates to responsibility and to AI

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

Free will

view	claim	a problem
hard determinism	every event, including every choice, is caused by earlier events, so free will is an illusion	then no one is morally responsible, which seems wrong
libertarianism (in this debate)	some choices are not fully caused; we are the source of them	how can an uncaused choice be *mine* rather than random?
compatibilism (e.g. Hume)	free = acting on your own desires without force or obstacles, even if desires are caused	if my desires are caused by things I did not choose, am I really free?

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Harry Frankfurt's example: a man chooses to do X; a hidden device would have forced him to do X if he had started to choose otherwise, but it never acts. He could not have done otherwise, yet he seems responsible. So freedom may not need "could have done otherwise".

Mind and body

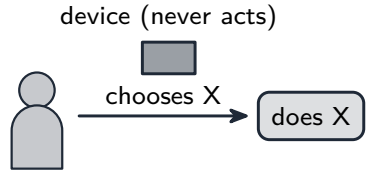
Substance dualism (Descartes): the mind is a non-physical thing, separate from the body. Problem: **interaction**: how can something non-physical move the body? (Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, 1643.) **Physicalism**: the mind is the brain, or depends on it completely. Problem: **qualia**: what it is *like* to see red seems to be more than brain facts (Frank Jackson's Mary). **Functionalism**: a mental state is what it *does* (its causes and effects), so a mind could in principle run on silicon.

Worked application. If functionalism is true, an AI that does everything pain does (detects damage, avoids it, reports it) might be in pain. A dualist would deny this; a physicalist might ask whether the right brain processes are present.

2 Practice

2.1 Distinguish **hard determinism** from **compatibilism**. [2]

2.2 Explain how Frankfurt's example challenges the idea that freedom needs the ability to **do otherwise**. [3]

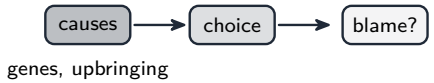


2.3 Explain Descartes' **substance dualism** and the **interaction problem**. [4]

2.4 Evaluate **functionalism** as an answer to the question "Could a machine have a mind?" [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Core theme style.)* "If our choices are caused, we cannot be held responsible for them." Discuss. [15]



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Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

2.1

hard determinism: all choices are caused, so free will does not exist; compatibilism: all choices may be caused, but we are free when we act on our own desires without force

2.2

the man chooses X by himself; the device never acts; but he could not have done otherwise, because the device would have made him do X; we still judge him responsible, so responsibility, and perhaps freedom, does not need the ability to do otherwise

2.3

dualism: the mind is a non-physical, thinking substance, separate from the physical body; Descartes argued he could doubt his body but not his thinking mind; interaction problem: physical causes need physical contact or force; so it is unclear how a non-physical mind could move a physical body, as Elisabeth of Bohemia asked

2.4

functionalism explained: mental states are defined by what they do; so a machine with the right functions could have a mind; strength: explains why different creatures, e.g. octopuses and humans, can both feel pain; objection: Searle's Chinese Room: following rules is not understanding; objection: qualia: function may leave out what experience is like; a reasoned judgement

3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, clear explanation of the philosophical issue, relevant philosophers and arguments used accurately, counter-arguments evaluated, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: explains determinism and the claim; hard determinism supports the claim: choices come from genes, upbringing and circumstances we did not choose; implications for punishment and praise; libertarian reply: some choices are not fully caused; problem of randomness; compatibilist reply: responsibility needs acting from one's own desires without force (Hume); Frankfurt's example: responsibility without alternative possibilities; Strawson's "reactive attitudes": blame and gratitude are part of human life whatever the metaphysics; real-world link, e.g. reduced responsibility in law for mental illness; evaluation of the strongest view; a reasoned conclusion

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