

Activity 2: The Universalisability Test

Consider the scenario below, and give your response to the questions that follow.

You should aim to spend about 10 minutes on this activity. Your response here will not count towards the final grade for this course. However, you will be unable to proceed with the session until you answer all the questions correctly.

Scenario:

Grace, a student, is worried about an upcoming test and wonders whether or not she should cheat to get a decent grade. She wishes to use Kant's Principle of Universalisability to help her decide

1. A

The Principle of Universalisability states that:

Choose one of the following answers.

- An action is morally right if and only if everyone universally agrees with it.
- **An action is morally right if and only if it is a universalisable one.**
- There is no universe in which we are morally permitted to cheat.
- There is no one right or wrong answer in the universe.

2. C

The test that Grace is worried about will be graded on a bell curve. If she goes ahead and cheats, will her action pass the universalisability test?

Choose one of the following answers.

- **No, it will not.**
- Yes, it will.

3. Grace applies the Universalisability Test to see if cheating violates the principle. Arrange the following sentences in order to accurately describe how she should conduct this test:

Sort answers in the right order (click on the answers to drag-and-drop in order).

1. **Imagine that she is in a world in which everyone cheats on tests.**
2. **Confirm that the goal of cheating on tests can be achieved.**
3. **Confirm that nothing essential to her will would be endangered in such a scenario.**

Final Activity: Graded Quiz

You have reached the last compulsory activity for this session.

On the next page is a quiz, comprising ten multiple choice questions related to what we have covered in this sequence.

There is only one correct response to each question. You can attempt the quiz up to 3 times. Your score from your last attempt of the quiz **will count towards your overall grade** for this course.

1

Which of the following statements is true?

Choose one of the following answers.

- Deontology is a type of utilitarianism.
- Kant believed that moral truths are based on how we feel about them.
- Kant believed that making lying promises is alright, as long as the benefits outweigh the costs.
- Deontological theories claim that actions can be morally right despite bad consequences.

2

Why does Kant think that making a lying promise is wrong?

Choose one of the following answers.

- If you wouldn't like to receive a lying promise yourself, it wouldn't be fair to make one to someone else.
- The action demonstrates dishonesty, which is wrong.
- The action cannot be universalised.
- The action would hurt the person who was lied to.

3

The second formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative, the Principle of Humanity, claims that an action is morally right if and only if:

Choose one of the following answers.

- It is within human capabilities to do it.
- It would better the state of humanity.
- It respects human beings as individuals endowed with intrinsic value and dignity.
- It involves using humans as means to an end.

4

Which of these examples is most likely to violate the Principle of Humanity?

Choose one of the following answers.

- Allowing someone to go ahead with something, even though you think she may be making the wrong decision.
- Freeing someone from slavery.
- **Blaming someone else for something you did, in order to make yourself look better in front of your boss.**
- Paying someone money, just so she will voluntarily sell you food in exchange.

5

Which of these rules is most likely to violate the Principle of Universalisability?

Choose one of the following answers.

- We are morally prohibited from cheating on our exams.
- The rich are morally required to give money to the extremely poor.
- **If physically injuring ourselves helps others in any way, then we are morally required to do it.**
- We are morally required to tell the truth.

6

Kant would most probably agree with the following statement:

Choose one of the following answers.

- It is wrong to make a lying promise, because doing so might get you into trouble.
- Blackmailing someone is morally permissible, if something very important is at stake.
- **The life of a mean person with an average IQ has just as much value as the life of a brilliant, compassionate AIDS researcher.**
- Although we should not actively suppress the autonomy of others, we have no obligation to actively promote it.

7

Which of these actions best demonstrates impartiality?

Choose one of the following answers.

- **Getting a second opinion on a hiring decision, in cases where two candidates appear equally qualified.**
- A waiter providing better service to the Prime Minister than to a regular diner.
- Not reporting that someone has cheated on a test, just because he is your friend.
- Having a policy of hiring women over men, in cases where two candidates appear equally qualified.

8

The average middle-class person doesn't donate much to the extremely poor. Kant would most probably say:

Choose one of the following answers.

- It is immoral. In a world where no one helped the extremely poor, many things essential to one's will would be endangered.
- It is immoral. It costs little for the average person to donate, but a lot for the poor to continue suffering.
- It is not immoral. The average person is a rational, autonomous being, and no one has the right to use them as a mere monetary means to escape poverty.
- It is immoral. A good person would donate to charity.

9

Utilitarians and Kantian deontologists would most probably disagree about the morality of:

Choose one of the following answers.

- Enslaving an unemployed, lazy, family-less person to save five prolific cancer researchers.
- Beating someone up to steal two dollars.
- Saving a drowning stranger from a shallow pond.
- Rigging a political election in favour of your incompetent friend.

10

Which of these statements is true about Kant's deontology?

Choose one of the following answers.

- The Principle of Humanity is attractive mainly because it promotes impartiality.
- The human right to be respected comes along with having moral responsibility, and you cannot have one without the other.
- We are always morally obliged to prevent the deaths of rational, autonomous beings.
- Kantian deontologists will always disagree with utilitarians about what to do in a moral dilemma.