

Ethics Mock Exam Feedback

The first essay is excellent—really sophisticated and engaged very well with the question (although perhaps in your introduction you could be a bit clearer about the sense in which hedonism might be thought to be *arbitrarily* restricted, and in the main body you could avoid describing it as arbitrarily restricted so long as you're just engaged in exposition). It would get a high first-class mark.

The second essay is also excellent—again, sophisticated and engaging brilliantly, not just with Scanlon and his appeal to phenomenology but also with wider moral theory. I have some substantive doubts about the 'false consciousness' objection (Scanlon sees moral principles as filters of maxims, like Kant), and you should be careful not to represent Scanlon's account of moral motivation as if he's trying to answer the 'why be moral?' question (I don't think that's right), but these are advanced issues, and the essay is worth a very high first as it is.

The third essay isn't quite as strong. The opening paragraph is a bit dense and hard to understand, and it's surprising that the motivating sentences don't mention agential flourishing as the source of reasons that looks as if it makes trouble (later in the essay it becomes clear that this is because it wants its argument to apply as widely as possible, including to non-eudaimonistic views, but I would suggest focusing on eudaimonistic ones in the first instance and then extending the argument). And the essay's discussion of egoism doesn't look directly relevant to the question. The same elements would have made more sense as directly addressed the question if you had *started* with the egoism objection as the apparent motivation for self-effacingness, as Annas does, and then focused on whether it's self-effacing and whether, if it is, that's objectionable. Nevertheless, this essay would also get a first-class mark, I think, because the irrelevance is only mild and it's sophisticated and independent-minded as well as clearly demonstrating familiarity with the relevant arguments.