

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

Philosophy of science
PHL323/E

DEGREE EXAMINATIONS

JANUARY

YEAR: 2019

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Time: 3 hours

Subject: Philosophy of science

Subject Code: PHL323/E

Marks: 100% (each question weighs 100, total converted to a %)

This paper consists of 2 pages including the
cover page

Internal Examiners

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INSTRUCTIONS

Answer any THREE questions. DO NOT have overlap between your
different answers.

QUESTIONS:

1. Critically analyse the three assumptions of the nature of facts and how we have access to them according to the common sense view of science.
2. What is the problem with induction and confirmation in science? Discuss referring to the logical positivists and their critics.
3. What are Karl Popper's considerations of the scientific method? Critically assess its advantages and limitations with regard to scientific progress and the history of science.
4. Critically discuss the question of the development of science and scientific methodology drawing on different philosophical theories of science (e.g. logical positivism, Popper, Kuhn, Lakatos, Feyerabend).
5. Critically analyse Kuhn's conception of scientific change. Also discuss the problem of the relativity of scientific progress.
6. What do you think science is? Do the 'social sciences' have the relevant features to be called a science? Support your answer with the relevant course material.
7. Do you agree with Feyerabend that science cannot be justified as the best way of acquiring knowledge? Discuss this addressing the problem of formulating a universal knowledge system and the disparity in some of the approaches of modern science and indigenous knowledge, e.g. in agriculture and medicine (Wiredu, Hountondji, Mazzocchi)