

NST1 HPS/1
NST2PC HPS/1
PBT1 HPS1
HPT2PI HPS/1
HPT2SA HPS/1
HPT2SC HPS/1

NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

NST1 HPS/1 Part IB: History and Philosophy of Science
NST2PC HPS/1 Part II: Physical Sciences

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

PBT1 HPS1 Part IB: Psychological and Behavioural Sciences

HUMAN, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

HPT2PI HPS/1 Part IIA: Politics and International Relations
HPT2SA HPS/1 Part IIA: Social Anthropology
HPT2SC HPS/1 Part IIA: Sociology

Wednesday 28th May 2025 13:30 to 16:30 (BST)

ET25_NST1_HPS/1

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE (Paper 1)

History of Science

This is a closed book exam.

Candidates must answer FOUR questions; they must answer one question from Section A and three questions from Section B.

All questions carry equal weighting. Candidates must not reuse portions of text from one answer in another answer.

You have 3 hours (plus any pre-agreed individual adjustment) to answer this paper. Please write your answers within the time-period.

SECTION A

Answer one of the questions from the two options below:

1. Has scientific knowledge grown over time, and if so, in what sense and how?
2. How have institutions shaped the production of knowledge about nature?

SECTION B

Answer three of the questions from the ten options below:

3. Why did so many early modern natural philosophers dedicate their books to princely and church rulers?
4. Was Isaac Newton the “last of the magicians”?
5. How did scholars and artisans in early modern East Asia make knowledge about plants and objects?
6. What impact (if any) did Europe's universities have on the development of natural philosophy after 1600?
7. How did nineteenth century experimental physicists establish authority outside their laboratories?
8. Why did the evolution of species become such an influential idea around the world in the late nineteenth century?
9. Was the First World War the “chemists’ war”?
10. “There are no magic bullets.” Discuss in relation to pharmaceuticals in the twentieth century.
11. Activists’ challenges to scientific and medical authority since the 1960s have been a positive development. Discuss.
12. Why has genomic research into human diversity generated controversy?

END OF PAPER

NST1 HPS/2
NST2PC HPS/2
PBT1 HPS2
HPT2PI HPS/2
HPT2SA HPS/2
HPT2SC HPS/2

NATURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

NST1 HPS/2 Part IB: History and Philosophy of Science
NST2PC HPS/2 Part II: Physical Sciences

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

PBT1 HPS2 Part IB: Psychological and Behavioural Sciences

HUMAN, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL SCIENCES TRIPOS

HPT2PI HPS/2 Part IIA: Politics and International Relations
HPT2SA HPS/2 Part IIA: Social Anthropology
HPT2SC HPS/2 Part IIA: Sociology

Friday 13th June 2025 9:00 to 12:00 (BST)

ET25_NST1_HPS/2

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE (Paper 2)

Philosophy of Science

This is a closed book exam.

Candidates must answer FOUR questions; they must answer one question from Section A and three questions from Section B.

All questions carry equal weighting. Candidates must not reuse portions of text from one answer in another answer.

You have 3 hours (plus any pre-agreed individual adjustment) to answer this paper. Please write your answers within the time-period.

SECTION A

Answer one of the questions from the two options below:

1. Could science exist without scientific communities?
2. Should scientists pay more attention to philosophers? Should philosophers pay more attention to scientists?

SECTION B

Answer three of the questions from the ten options below:

3. Contrast and assess Kuhn's and Popper's philosophies of science with respect to the demarcation problem.
4. Compare Feyerabend's critique of method to Cartwright's. Which, if either, is more convincing?
5. The underdetermination of theories by data necessitates scientists' reliance on social factors in theory choice. Do you agree?
6. What, if anything, does Absolute Space explain?
7. Does the different organisation of the octopus brain, compared to the human brain, preclude octopuses from experiencing pain in a way comparable to humans?
8. Is the idea of representational risk helpful for understanding how values influence the development of models?
9. Should we be more sceptical towards claims of social scientists than towards those of natural scientists?
10. Do values play a special role in psychology and the social sciences?
11. When should policymakers act on uncertain results?
12. Does biology need a unified species concept?

END OF PAPER