



# Cambridge International AS & A Level

**THINKING SKILLS**

**9694/41**

Paper 4 Applied Reasoning

**October/November 2022**

**1 hour 45 minutes**



You must answer on the enclosed answer booklet.

You will need: Answer booklet (enclosed)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Answer **all** questions.
- Follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper, ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

## INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is 50.
- The number of marks for each question or part question is shown in brackets [ ].

This document has **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

- 1 (a) State the main conclusion of the argument in Document 1. [1]
- (b) Identify **three** intermediate conclusions in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Document 1. [3]
- (c) Identify **one** counter-assertion in paragraphs 3 to 6 of Document 1. [1]
- (d) Analyse the structure of the reasoning in paragraph 2 of Document 1. [3]
- 2 (a) Identify and explain **three** flaws and/or weaknesses present in the reasoning in paragraphs 4 to 6 of Document 1. [6]
- (b) Assess the extent to which the reasoning in paragraph 3 of Document 1 supports the argument as a whole. [3]
- 3 (a) Explain why the questionnaire in Document 5 might produce unreliable responses. [3]
- (b) Look at the extract from the magazine article in Document 4.
- Give **three** reasons why the support given by the table to the claim that “Personality tests are better predictors of employment competency than literacy and maths tests” is weak. [3]
- 4 *You are advised to spend some time planning your answer before you begin to write it.*
- ‘Everyone should find out as much as possible about their personality.’
- Construct a reasoned argument to support **or** challenge this claim. In your answer you should make critical use of the documents provided. [27]

**DOCUMENT 1****Beware of personality tests and astrology!**

- 1 In 1948, US psychology professor Bertram Forer administered a personality test to his students. He then gave each student a detailed description of their personality, which he said was based on their answers. He asked them to grade those descriptions for accuracy. The average grade was between 'good' and 'excellent'. But the professor had actually ignored their answers to the test and given identical descriptions to all of them. This experiment shows that all claims to uncover information about people's psychological traits are dishonest and exploitative. No one should pay any attention to such claims.
- 2 People who spend all their time completing personality tests resemble the young man in the Greek myth who fell in love with his own reflection. This preoccupation with self is psychologically and spiritually unhealthy. Instead of giving people the knowledge and skills they need to become more effective in their work and relationships, these tests distract them from engagement with the outside world.
- 3 Many people say that personality tests have given them important new insights into the mysteries of their minds, souls and personalities. But there seems to be a natural human desire to believe what we are told about these things. This is especially true if the revelations are flattering – which they usually are. So claims of this kind should be subjected to greater critical scrutiny.
- 4 Magazines and websites aimed at the less intelligent and more suggestible groups in society – such as teenagers – include many personality quizzes. They are very unreliable. It would not be realistic for them to be tested for accuracy, and even if they were, it is not feasible to give a complete description of someone's personality traits on the basis of their answers to a few multiple-choice questions. Furthermore, it is ridiculous to assign people to one of only three or four categories, as often happens at the end of such quizzes.
- 5 If you search online for 'arguments in favour of astrology', most of the results actually consist of authoritative attacks on astrology by authors who are eminent in such fields as economics or politics. Evidently, there is no such thing as an argument in favour of astrology, since the only people who believe in it are anti-intellectual eccentrics.
- 6 Many of the people who believe in horoscopes and personality tests claim that they are just 'a bit of fun'. But they are actually more dangerous than such users realise, because what may be harmless in the beginning soon develops into an obsession, until they cannot make the simplest decision without consulting their personal astrologer. Some people are misled into making disastrous choices, which ruin their lives.

## DOCUMENT 2

### The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator™

Take a pen or pencil and write your name on a piece of paper. Now change hands and write your name again. What did writing with the 'wrong' hand feel like? Awkward? Embarrassing? But you could probably do it.

According to the pioneering psychologist CG Jung, 'handedness' is not the only inborn preference which everyone has. Discovering those preferences can reveal a lot about our personalities, such as the kind of job which we will enjoy, the way we learn best and even the style of religion which will best meet our spiritual needs. Marriage guidance counsellors have used these preferences to help spouses understand one another better, and managers have used them in order to get the best out of their workers.

Two American women – Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Briggs Myers – used Jung's work as the basis for a psychometric tool known as The Myers–Briggs Type Indicator™ (MBTI™ for short). This is based on a questionnaire, in which users choose between two answers to 88 questions. These answers reveal a set of four preferences, which interact in predictable ways. There are 16 possible permutations of these preferences, each of which gives rise to a distinct 'personality type', such as ISTJ or ENFP.

The I or E preference refers to the source of our energy: from within ourselves (I) or from other people (E). The second preference recorded in the type label is S, for those who focus on detail, or N, for those who are more inclined to see the 'big picture' and the possibilities inherent in situations. If the third letter in someone's type is T, they prefer to make their judgments by using logic, whereas people with an F preference are influenced more by values and relationships. The final letter is J, for people who like to make plans and follow them, or P, for people who prefer to operate spontaneously.

The MBTI™ questionnaire has been exhaustively validated in interviews, and can be used with great confidence.

When I administer the MBTI™ questionnaire to a large group of people, I usually divide them into groups according to their personality types and ask them to compare notes about themselves. This always reveals many interesting similarities. On one occasion, the members of one group discovered they were all ex-policemen. Another time, the members of a group had all worked as actors.

### MBTI™ Consultant

**DOCUMENT 3****Do not ignore what the stars tell you**

Many Western writers reject astrology without even looking into it. They describe it as unscientific. But it is cultural arrogance to assume that science can explain everything. Astrology has been around for centuries and just as many people believe in it as believe in science. The truth of astrology can be proved only in the experience of those who believe in it.

Early astrologers laid the foundation of what we know and accept today as astronomy, which has subsequently proved many of the early theories presented by the astrologers. We know the moon affects the tides, because we can prove it with objective evidence. We have not yet been able to quantify the effect which planetary and celestial energies have on human development, but it would be premature and irrational to assume that such effects do not exist.

Your horoscope is as unique to you as your fingerprints. It is like a roadmap for your life. It can help you find and reveal your strengths – those natural qualities you were born with, but which need to be brought out, honed and polished.

Many people find they can correctly identify someone's star sign by their character traits and personality: for example, a perfectionist and well-organised Virgo, a sensitive Piscean, or an ambitious Capricorn. If you know someone's star sign, you can use that knowledge to work out the best way to communicate with them, e.g. in the workplace.

Astrology can tell you what educational and career path you should follow, to create for yourself a successful and contented life. Insights and advice from astrology can also help you make the best use of opportunities and avoid danger. Astrology can help you in your intimate relationships, by advising on the choice of a life-partner.

People need something that helps them to make sense of their life experience. Even if the predictions in your horoscope may not always come true, they give you something to believe in. For example, knowing you will be happy again may be all you need after a painful break-up.

## DOCUMENT 4

### Personality tests are widely used in education and employment

#### Comment from a college tutor

The college where I work as a tutor uses a computer questionnaire to help students choose the right university course for them. The computer analyses their answers to 50 multiple-choice questions and then recommends some courses which match their interests, personalities and learning styles.

Before the program was introduced to the college, all the tutors were asked to use it first, in order to familiarise themselves with its working, so that they could help students. Because I have degrees in two quite different subjects – English and Theology – I wondered which of those two subjects the computer would recommend.

To my surprise, the first choice of course which the computer recommended for me was Psychology & Sociology, and all the other recommendations consisted of one or other or both of those subjects.

After the initial surprise at these recommendations, I realised that the computer's suggestions were actually right. By analysing my answers, the computer had found out something about me which was true, but I had not known it. If I had been aged 18, and had given the same answers, courses in those two subjects would have been of great interest to me and would have been excellent choices.

This experience has encouraged me to recommend the computer program to my students, because I can assure them that it probably knows them better than they know themselves.

#### Extract from a magazine article

Increasingly, employers are using personality tests to assess whether job applicants are likely to be suitable for employment. In fact, as the table below shows, personality tests are better predictors of employment competency than literacy and maths tests.

<i>Type of assessment</i>	<i>Percentage of employers using this type of assessment</i>
Job skill test	70
Personality test	46
Literacy and maths skills test	41



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