
VCE UNITS INFORMATION

VCE Philosophy Units 3 and 4

Philosophy explores some of the most enduring and influential ideas that underpin many of society's greatest achievements in ethics, science and the arts. Philosophy is a challenging and stimulating study, which nurtures curiosity, problem-solving skills, open-mindedness and intellectual rigour. It involves explicitly developing the habits of clarifying concepts, analysing problems, and constructing reasoned and coherent arguments. It encourages students to reflect critically on their own thinking and helps them to develop a sophisticated and coherent worldview. Prescribed primary texts by significant philosophers are used to develop a critical appreciation of key questions and contemporary debates. The ability to think philosophically is highly regarded in careers where conceptual analysis, strategic thinking, insightful questioning and carefully reasoned arguments are needed.

CONTENT

Unit 3: Minds, Bodies and Persons

Are human beings more than their bodies? Is there a basis for the belief that an individual remains the same person over time? Students critically compare the viewpoints and arguments put forward in set texts from the history of philosophy to their own views on these questions and to contemporary debates. This encompasses philosophical questions and associated viewpoints and arguments within other spheres of discourse such as religion, psychology, sociology and politics.

Unit 4: The Good Life

This unit considers the crucial question of what it is for a human to live well. What does an understanding of human nature tell us about what it is to live well? What is the role of happiness in a well-lived life? Is morality central to a good life? How does our social context impact on our conception of a good life? In this unit, students explore texts by both ancient and modern philosophers that have had a significant impact on contemporary western ideas about the good life.

OUTCOMES

Unit 3

- Students should be able to discuss concepts relating to the mind, psyche and body, and analyse and evaluate viewpoints and arguments concerning the relationship between the mind and body, and psyche and body, found within and across the set texts and in contemporary debates
- Students should be able to analyse, compare and evaluate theories of personal identity in the set texts and discuss related contemporary debates

Unit 4

- Students should be able to analyse, compare and evaluate the philosophical viewpoints and arguments in the set texts in relation to the good life
- Students should be able to discuss contemporary debates related to the good life and interplay between social and technological developments and conceptions of the good life

ASSESSMENT

Satisfactory completion for a unit is based on the decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. An end of year examination will test from all the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4. The examination will contribute 50%.