

# Philosophy

## Units 1-2

Philosophy provides students with the opportunity to read and understand some powerful ideas that have shaped our culture. Philosophy grapples with some of the most profound questions, such as: What is the nature of reality? Is it possible to attain absolute certainty about anything? Are right and wrong simply matters of culture? Is it rational to have religious beliefs? Studying philosophy develops the ability to clarify concepts, analyse problems and construct reasonable, coherent arguments.

### UNIT 1

Through the study of philosophical texts, students will cover an introduction in basic philosophical enquiry in metaphysics and epistemology. The selected texts explore what is meant when we say we have a mind and body, and how we use them. Epistemology addresses the study of how we attain knowledge and the importance of knowledge and justification. It also includes an introduction to logic and reasoning.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Group and class discussions, understanding and developing arguments, research reports and oral presentations.

### KEY SKILLS REQUIRED

Analytical reading, summarising, synthesising and analysing texts and formal writing.

### ASSESSED TASKS

Close reading with note taking, analysis, essays, short answer responses and a mid-year written examination.

### UNIT 2

This unit begins with a study of ethics. Through key philosophical texts students explore questions such as: What should I do? What is right? Philosophy of religion then addresses questions such as: What does the term God mean? Can a coherent account of God be given? Students will also study a selected area of value theory such as aesthetics or political theory. Students will also cover an area of logic and reasoning.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Group and class discussions, understanding and developing arguments, research reports and oral presentations.

### KEY SKILLS REQUIRED

Analytical reading, summarising, synthesising and analysing texts, formal writing.

### ASSESSED TASKS

Close reading with note taking, analysis, short answer responses and an end of semester written examination.

# Philosophy

## Units 3-4

Unit 3 and 4 Philosophy takes the central philosophical questions surrounding humanity and applies them to key texts throughout history. Students apply skills of analysis and close reading to texts by Plato, Descartes, Armstrong, Hume, Locke, Aristotle, Nietzsche, Singer and Buddhist scripture. These units allow students to explore the questions in light of specific writers over time. There is also a focus on students relating the ideas found in the texts to their lives as individuals in a modern world.

### UNIT 3

This unit considers basic questions regarding the mind and the self through two key questions: 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 in set texts from the history of philosophy to their own views on these questions and contemporary debates.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Group and class discussions, understand and develop arguments, research reports, oral presentations, close reading (including note taking), journal entries, short answer responses, essays.

#### KEY SKILLS REQUIRED

Analytical reading, summarizing, analyzing, evaluating and comparing ideas in texts and formal writing.

#### ASSESSED TASKS

Essay and short answer responses.

### UNIT 4

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.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Group and class discussions, understand and develop arguments, research reports, oral presentations, close reading (including note taking), journal entries, short answer responses, and essays.

#### KEY SKILLS REQUIRED

Analytical reading, summarising, analysing, evaluating and comparing ideas in texts and formal writing.

#### ASSESSED TASKS

Essay, short answer responses and end of year written examination.

#### VCAA ASSESSMENT –The overall Study Score will consist of:

School Assessed Coursework Unit 3 (25%), School Assessed Coursework Unit 4 (25%), and a 2 hour written examination in November (50%).