VCE Philosophy

Prescribed texts for 2016

The following texts are prescribed for the VCE Philosophy study design and are referred to in the study design as set texts. Please note that some of the set texts for 2016 have been changed from those prescribed for 2015.

The editions listed below will be used by the examination setting panel in setting the 2016 VCE Philosophy examination. Teachers need to ensure that students are familiar with these editions.

The prescribed texts can be sourced from major booksellers, including online and academic booksellers, or directly from the publisher. Note that The Nature of Mind and Other Essays is out of print. Copies of Armstrong’s essay 'The Nature of Mind' can be obtained from the VCAA and have been reproduced for educational purposes with the permission of the publishers.

Unit 3 – Minds, bodies and persons

Area of Study 1 – Minds and bodies


Descartes R 1996 (reprinted 2003), ‘First Meditation’, ‘Second Meditation’, and ‘Sixth Meditation’ – page 54 extract ‘First I know that everything which I clearly and distinctly understand … And accordingly, it is certain that I am really distinct from my body, and can exist without it’, Meditations on First Philosophy, trans. Cottingham J, revised edn, Cambridge University Press (ISBN 978-0521-55818-1).


Area of Study 2 – Personal identity


Hume D 1986, A Treatise of Human Nature, Book 1, Part IV, Section 6, two extracts: pp. 299–304 ‘There are some philosophers … and are apt to imagine, that ’tis nothing but a continu’d survey of the same object’; and pp. 306–311 ‘We now proceed to explain the nature of personal identity … and to proceed in the accurate anatomy of human nature, having fully explain’d the nature of our judgement and understanding’, Penguin Classics, Penguin (ISBN 978-0-140-43244-2).


Unit 4 – The good life

Area of Study 1 – Conceptions of the good life


