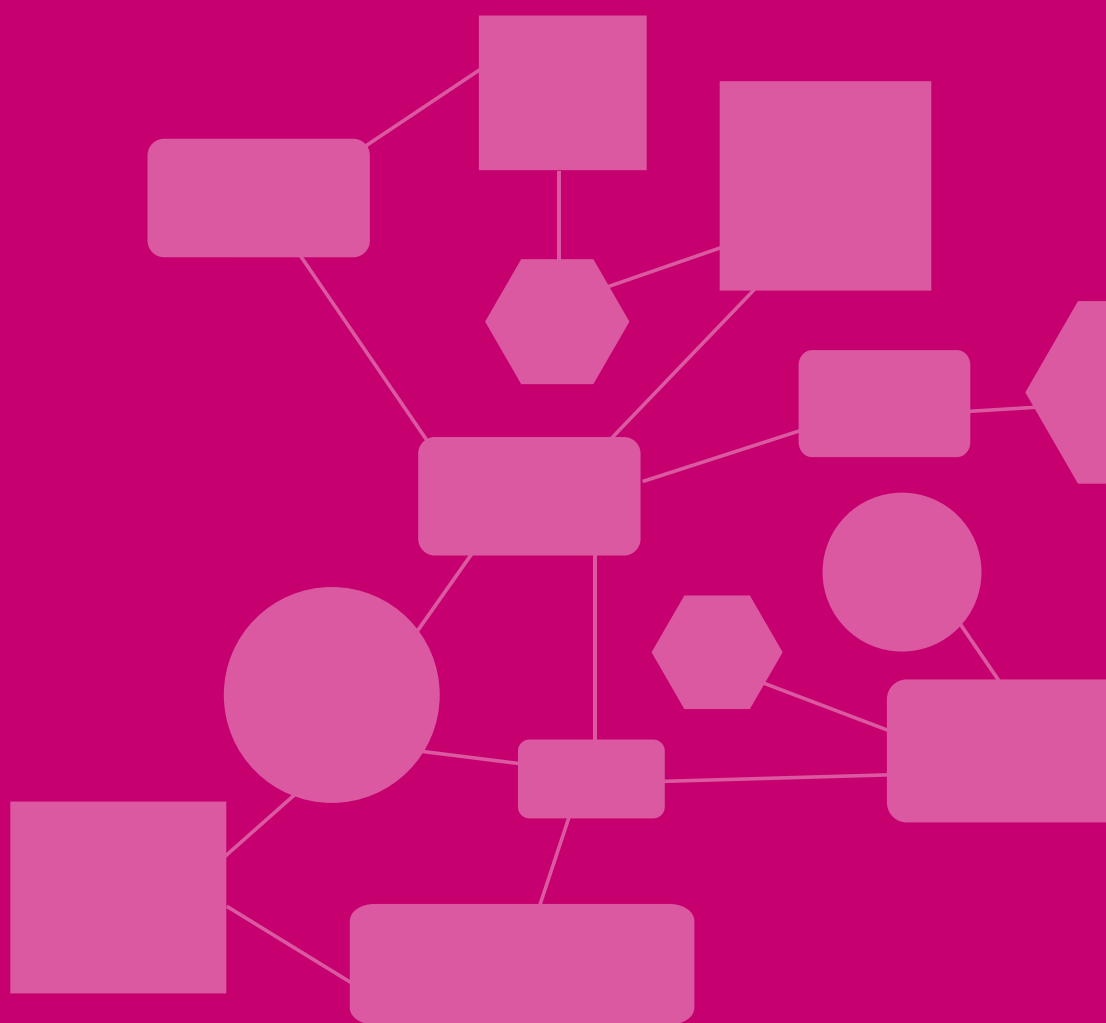


Victorian Certificate of Education

# PHILOSOPHY

STUDY DESIGN



[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)

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# Important information

## Accreditation period

Units 1–4: 1 January 2019 – 31 December 2023

Implementation of this study commences in 2019.

## Other sources of information

The [VCAA Bulletin](#) is the only official source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. The Bulletin also regularly includes advice on VCE studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to refer to each issue of the Bulletin. The Bulletin is available as an e-newsletter via free subscription on the VCAA's website at: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au).

To assist teachers in developing courses, the VCAA publishes online the *Advice for teachers*, which includes teaching and learning activities for Units 1–4, and advice on assessment tasks and performance level descriptors for School-assessed Coursework in Units 3 and 4.

The current [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#) contains essential information on assessment processes and other procedures.

## VCE providers

Throughout this study design the term 'school' is intended to include both schools and other VCE providers.

## Copyright

VCE schools may reproduce parts of this study design for use by teachers. The full VCAA Copyright Policy is available at: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/aboutus/policies/policy-copyright.aspx](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/aboutus/policies/policy-copyright.aspx).

# Introduction

## Scope of study

VCE Philosophy contains a broad introduction to western philosophy and its methods of inquiry. It explores themes and debates within metaphysics, epistemology (philosophy of knowledge) and value theory, as well as techniques of reasoning and argument drawn from formal and informal logic. It investigates human nature through questions about the relationship between body and mind, and personal identity, leading to an examination of the good life.

Prescribed texts by significant philosophers are used to develop a critical appreciation of key questions and contemporary debates. Where religious concepts and traditions of thought are discussed, they are considered from a philosophical rather than theological point of view.

## Rationale

Philosophy is broadly concerned with questions of ethics, epistemology and metaphysics. Philosophy is the founding discipline of logic, and continues to develop and refine the tools of critical reasoning, influencing approaches in mathematics, digital coding, science and the humanities. Philosophers grapple with the problems that lie at the foundation of issues of public debate such as artificial intelligence, justification for a charter of human rights and freedom of speech.

Philosophers are concerned with thinking rigorously and rationally about ideas, and exploring their meaning, context, coherence and implications. The nature of the questions studied, together with the techniques of reasoning and argument used to study them, can in turn help to create new ideas and insights.

VCE Philosophy explores foundational ideas and enduring questions related to diverse fields including the humanities, sciences and the arts. It is a challenging and stimulating study, which nurtures curiosity, problem-solving skills, open-mindedness and intellectual rigour.

Studying VCE Philosophy 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.

Exploring the big philosophical questions and the ideas of some of history's greatest thinkers promote a satisfying intellectual life and offer inspiration to future thinkers. The ability to think philosophically is highly regarded in careers that involve conceptual analysis, strategic thinking, insightful questioning and carefully reasoned arguments.

## Aims

This study enables students to:

- understand the nature of western philosophy and its methods
- identify and articulate philosophical questions
- understand and analyse significant philosophical ideas, viewpoints and arguments in their historical contexts
- explore ideas, responding to central philosophical questions, viewpoints and arguments with clarity, precision and logic
- understand relationships between responses to philosophical questions and contemporary issues
- cultivate open-mindedness, reflecting critically on their thinking and that of others, and exploring alternative approaches to philosophical questions.

## Structure

The study is made up of four units.

Unit 1: Existence, knowledge and reasoning

Unit 2: Questions of value

Unit 3: Minds, bodies and persons

Unit 4: The good life

Each unit deals with specific content contained in areas of study and is designed to enable students to achieve a set of outcomes for that unit. Each outcome is described in terms of key knowledge and key skills.

## Entry

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 and Unit 4 as a sequence. Units 1 to 4 are designed to a standard equivalent to the final two years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum.

## Duration

Each unit involves at least 50 hours of scheduled classroom instruction.

## Changes to the study design

During its period of accreditation minor changes to the study will be announced in the [VCAA Bulletin](#). The Bulletin is the only source of changes to regulations and accredited studies. It is the responsibility of each VCE teacher to monitor changes or advice about VCE studies published in the Bulletin.

## Monitoring for quality

As part of ongoing monitoring and quality assurance, the VCAA will periodically undertake an audit of VCE Philosophy to ensure the study is being taught and assessed as accredited. The details of the audit procedures and requirements are published annually in the [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#). Schools will be notified if they are required to submit material to be audited.

## Safety and wellbeing

It is the responsibility of the school to ensure that duty of care is exercised in relation to the health and safety of all students undertaking the study. Sensitivity to religious and cultural beliefs should be exercised when selecting themes for study in Units 1 and 2.

## Employability skills

This study offers a number of opportunities for students to develop employability skills. The *Advice for teachers* companion document provides specific examples of how students can develop employability skills during learning activities and assessment tasks.

## Legislative compliance

When collecting and using information, the provisions of privacy and copyright legislation, such as the Victorian *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and *Health Records Act 2001*, and the federal *Privacy Act 1988* and *Copyright Act 1968*, must be met.

# Assessment and reporting

## Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on the teacher's decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Demonstration of achievement of outcomes and satisfactory completion of a unit are determined by evidence gained through the assessment of a range of learning activities and tasks.

Teachers must develop courses that provide appropriate opportunities for students to demonstrate satisfactory achievement of outcomes.

The decision about satisfactory completion of a unit is distinct from the assessment of levels of achievement. Schools will report a student's result for each unit to the VCAA as S (Satisfactory) or N (Not Satisfactory).

## Levels of achievement

### Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision. Assessment of levels of achievement for these units will not be reported to the VCAA. Schools may choose to report levels of achievement using grades, descriptive statements or other indicators.

### Units 3 and 4

The VCAA specifies the assessment procedures for students undertaking scored assessment in Units 3 and 4. Designated assessment tasks are provided in the details for each unit in VCE study designs.

The student's level of achievement in Units 3 and 4 VCE Philosophy will be determined by School-assessed Coursework (SAC) and external assessment as specified in the VCE study design.

The VCAA will report the student's level of achievement on each assessment component as a grade from A+ to E or UG (ungraded). To receive a study score the student must achieve two or more graded assessments and receive S for both Units 3 and 4. The study score is reported on a scale of 0–50; it is a measure of how well the student performed in relation to all others who took the study. Teachers should refer to the current [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#) for details on graded assessment and calculation of the study score. Percentage contributions to the study score in VCE Philosophy are as follows:

- Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
- Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework: 25 per cent
- End-of-year examination: 50 per cent.

Details of the assessment program are described in the sections on Units 3 and 4 in this study design.

## Authentication

Work related to the outcomes of each unit will be accepted only if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all unacknowledged work is the student's own. Teachers need to refer to the current [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#) for authentication procedures.



# Unit 1: Existence, knowledge and reasoning

What is the nature of reality? How can we acquire certain knowledge? These are some of the questions that have challenged humans for millennia and underpin ongoing endeavours in areas as diverse as science, justice and the arts. This unit engages students with fundamental philosophical questions through active, guided investigation and critical discussion of two key areas of philosophy: epistemology and metaphysics. The emphasis is on philosophical inquiry – ‘doing philosophy’, for example through formulation of questions and philosophical exchanges with others. Hence the study and practice of techniques of reasoning are central to this unit. As students learn to think philosophically, appropriate examples of philosophical viewpoints and arguments, both contemporary and historical, are used to support, stimulate and enhance their thinking about central concepts and problems. At least one of these examples will be from a primary philosophical text using a complete text or an extract. For the purposes of this study, a primary text is defined as offering a positive argument or viewpoint rather than a mere critique. Students investigate relevant debates in applied epistemology and metaphysics, and consider whether the philosophical bases of these debates continue to have relevance in contemporary society and our everyday lives.

For the purposes of this study, arguments make a claim supported by propositions and reasoning, whereas a viewpoint makes a claim without necessarily supporting it with reasons or reasoning. Philosophical debates encompass philosophical questions and associated viewpoints and arguments within other spheres of discourse such as religion, psychology, sociology and politics.

## Area of Study 1

### Metaphysics

Metaphysics is the study of the basic structures and categories of what exists, or of reality. It is the attempt to work out a logical account of everything that we know or believe about existence, including all our scientific knowledge.

This area of study introduces students to metaphysical problems through a study of questions associated with selected themes.

#### Metaphysical themes

Students study at least two of the following five themes. A range of questions for study is to be selected from the list under each theme. Appropriate questions outside the list can also be included for study. For at least one of the themes selected, students must study one or more primary text/s. Suggested thinkers are included at the end of each section, from which appropriate primary text/s can be selected.

#### 1. On the material mind

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is the mind? What are thoughts? What is consciousness?
- What ontological commitments are made by dualism, materialism, and idealism, respectively?
- In materialist philosophies of mind, what do the following labels mean?  
Behaviourism, identity theory, functionalism, the computational theory of mind, eliminativism, anomalous monism, realistic monism
- Can reasons be causes?
- Does experience add anything to propositional knowledge?
- If we knew everything there was to know about the physics and physiology of colour, would we know everything there is to know about colour?

- What must the physical universe be like for it to include experiences such as pain?
- What kinds of things are propositional attitudes such as beliefs and desires; especially given they cannot be located in any specific part of the brain?
- Are mindless but animate human bodies conceivable? If so, are they therefore metaphysically possible?
- Might computers have minds?

Suggested thinkers: Rene Descartes, George Berkeley, David Armstrong

## 2. On the existence and nature of God

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What are the arguments for the existence of God?
- To what extent have developments in science and philosophy undermined or reinforced traditional arguments for the existence of God?
- Is religious faith different from other kinds of faith?
- What can philosophy say about the attributes of God?
- Is the concept of God consistent with traditional theistic beliefs (for example, divine compassion, divine intervention in human life)?
- Does the existence of suffering constitute a refutation of the existence of God?

Suggested thinkers: Thomas Aquinas, Blaise Pascal, William Paley, David Hume

## 3. On materialism and idealism

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Are material/physical objects the only things that exist?
- Does the world consist of ideas?
- To what extent does the mind make its world?
- What are secondary qualities? To what extent do they exist in the world?
- Can idealism account for the apparent objectivity and persistence of physical objects?
- In what ways is the contemporary realism/anti-realism debate distinct from the historical materialism/idealism debate?
- How real is virtual reality?

Suggested thinkers: Plato, John Locke, Rene Descartes, George Berkeley

## 4. On free will and determinism

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Can we be free if there are causes for all our actions?
- Do forces beyond our control determine everything we do?
- What is indeterminism in nature? Does it help us to understand free will?
- Do theories of compatibilism or soft determinism successfully reconcile freedom and determinism?
- How is determinism linked to materialism and freedom to dualism?
- How is freedom linked to notions of agency, responsibility, reward and punishment?

Suggested thinkers: Daniel Dennett, David Hume, Thomas Reid, Baron D'Holbach, Arthur Schopenhauer, William James, Peter van Inwagen

## 5. On time

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is time?
- Does it make sense to speak of time having a beginning or an end?
- Can there be a coherent time-travel story?
- What paradoxes arise when considering the possibility of time travel?
- On what basis could time travel be physically possible?
- What would have to be the nature of time for time travel to be possible?

Suggested thinkers: Aristotle, St. Augustine, Immanuel Kant, John MacTaggart

## Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse metaphysical problems and evaluate viewpoints and arguments arising from these, and identify metaphysical problems in relevant contemporary debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

### Key knowledge

- debates and questions that arise from exploration of at least two metaphysical themes as outlined above
- definitions of key terms and concepts associated with the chosen metaphysical problems
- reasons for the diversity of metaphysical viewpoints
- central viewpoints and arguments associated with the chosen metaphysical problems as represented in at least one primary text
- viewpoints and arguments central to the chosen metaphysical problems in general
- the relationship between metaphysical problems and relevant contemporary debates, such as punishment, the treatment of animals, issues of life and death and artificial intelligence.

### Key skills

- formulate philosophical questions arising from metaphysical problems
- identify key philosophical concepts and questions related to metaphysical problems in the context of contemporary debates
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments associated with metaphysical problems
- analyse viewpoints and arguments presented in a primary philosophical source
- offer justified critical responses to viewpoints and arguments associated with metaphysical problems
- reflect critically on their own viewpoints and arguments relating to metaphysics
- formulate informed responses to metaphysical problems, and explain, defend and refine those ideas in philosophical exchanges with others.

## Area of Study 2

### Epistemology

The word epistemology derives from two Ancient Greek words: episteme meaning 'knowledge' and logos meaning 'what is said about something'. In the ancient world, episteme was contrasted with doxa meaning 'belief', or something falling short of genuine knowledge. This ancient contrast points to one of the basic problems in epistemology: the difference between belief and the certainty associated with knowledge.

This area of study introduces students to basic epistemological problems through a study of questions associated with selected themes. Students also consider philosophical problems in contemporary debates, including the implications of accepting particular views about knowledge; for example, what are the implications for the authority of science from a position that knowledge, belief and truth are relative to different cultures? Does considering this implication lead to a revision of the initial position?

## Epistemological themes

Students study Theme 1 'On knowledge' and at least one other theme. A range of questions for study is to be selected from the list under each theme. Appropriate questions outside the list can also be included for study. For at least one of the themes selected, students must study one or more primary text/s. Suggested thinkers are included at the end of each section, from which appropriate primary text/s can be selected.

### 1. On knowledge

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Is justified true belief the same as knowledge?
- Is certainty necessary for knowledge?
- What is the difference between knowledge and belief?
- If one of your firmly held beliefs is challenged, should you go about justifying or modifying it and, if so, how?
- What are the sources of our knowledge in areas such as history, the law, forensics, evolutionary biology and the media? How reliable are they?

Thinkers: Plato, Rene Descartes, Edmund L. Gettier

### 2. On the possibility of a priori knowledge

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What are the sources of our knowledge (for example, do sources include deductive argument, induction, scientific method, testimony or intuition)?
- How reliable are sources of knowledge?
- Should we trust our senses?
- Is it possible to attain knowledge purely through the senses?
- Is it possible to attain knowledge through the use of reason alone?
- Is there any knowledge with which we are born?
- Is reason superior to experience in giving us knowledge of the world?
- What are the differences between rationalism and empiricism, a priori and a posteriori knowledge, and necessary and contingent truths?

Thinkers: Rene Descartes, John Locke, David Hume, A. J. Ayer

### 3. On science

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is the scientific method?
- Should the methods of observation, experiment and measurement be trusted?
- What is the problem of induction? Can induction be justified?
- What is the reductionist view of scientific knowledge?
- What is falsificationism?
- Does science provide an objective account of the world?

Thinkers: Francis Bacon, David Hume, Karl Popper, Thomas Kuhn

#### 4. On objectivity

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Are knowledge, belief and truth relative to different individuals or cultures?
- Is truth subjective?
- Is objective truth possible or attainable by humans?
- Does mathematics offer a way to obtain truth?
- Does science offer objective truths?
- What is the role of emotion in knowledge?
- What is the status of knowledge from different sources such as mythology, religion, the arts, sciences or mathematics? How should we compare such knowledge?

Suggested thinkers: William James, Richard Rorty, Simon Blackburn

### Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse epistemological problems and evaluate viewpoints and arguments arising from these, and analyse epistemological problems in the context of relevant contemporary debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

#### Key knowledge

- debates and questions that arise from exploration of the theme 'On knowledge' and at least one other epistemological theme as outlined above
- central viewpoints and arguments associated with the chosen epistemological questions as represented in at least one primary text
- definitions of key terms and concepts associated with the chosen epistemological problems
- reasons for the diversity of epistemological viewpoints
- viewpoints and arguments central to the chosen epistemological problems
- criticisms that can be raised in response to the viewpoints and arguments central to the chosen epistemological problems
- the implications of adopting a particular epistemological position for relevant contemporary debates, such as the authority of science, the weight of legal evidence or truth in the media
- the interplay between viewpoints and arguments on epistemological questions and relevant contemporary debates such as the authority of science, the weight of legal evidence or truth in the media.

#### Key skills

- formulate philosophical questions arising from epistemological problems
- analyse definitions of key philosophical concepts related to epistemological problems and in the context of relevant contemporary debates
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments associated with epistemological problems
- analyse viewpoints and arguments presented in a primary philosophical source
- offer justified critical responses to viewpoints and arguments associated with epistemological problems
- reflect critically on personal viewpoints and arguments relating to epistemology
- formulate informed responses to epistemological problems and explain, defend and refine those responses in philosophical exchanges with others
- explain the interplay between an epistemological position and a relevant contemporary debate.

## Area of Study 3

### Introduction to philosophical inquiry

Philosophy is an activity as much as it is a body of thought, and students of philosophy benefit not just from attaining new knowledge, but also through developing their reasoning faculties. Philosophy is the activity of considering central, contestable problems, and attempting to develop good reasons for holding one position rather than another. In analysing concepts and clarifying positions, philosophers also discover how ideas are logically and conceptually connected with each other. Precise use of language is essential to these processes as a means of supporting coherence and the rigorous testing of ideas.

This area of study introduces students to the distinctive nature of philosophical thinking and a variety of approaches to philosophical inquiry. They practise some basics of informal logic and other techniques of philosophical reasoning, such as analogical reasoning, that are essential to the study of problems in metaphysics and epistemology. They explore cognitive biases and consider any implications for approaching problems in epistemology and metaphysics, for example the relation between confirmation bias, science and pseudo-science, and attribution bias and questions of causality.

### Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply methods of philosophical inquiry to the analysis of philosophical viewpoints and arguments, including those in metaphysics and epistemology.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

#### Key knowledge

- the roles of reasoning and argument, intuition, imagination, metaphor, emotion and experience in philosophical thinking about metaphysical and epistemological problems
- key terms associated with philosophical reasoning such as argument, deduction, induction, validity, soundness, contradiction, assumption, standard form, syllogism, analogy, example, counterexample, counterargument, proposition, claim, assertion, definition, probability
- techniques of reasoning and argument
- cognitive biases that undermine reasoning and investigation, such as gamblers' fallacy, attribution bias, confirmation bias, Dunning-Kruger effect and any implications of these for approaching debates in epistemology and metaphysics.

#### Key skills

- analyse the roles of reasoning and argument, intuition, imagination, metaphor, emotion and experience in examples of philosophical thinking
- analyse simple arguments to identify the premises and conclusions, and the relationships between the premises and conclusions, including standard form presentation
- identify and describe errors in reasoning such as cognitive biases
- apply philosophical thinking and knowledge of cognitive biases to analysis and evaluation of philosophical viewpoints and arguments, including those in metaphysics and epistemology and related debates
- use appropriate terminology when analysing and evaluating arguments
- apply metacognitive evaluations of their own reasoning.

## Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments at Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate three outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

- an essay
- a written analysis
- short-answer responses
- a written reflection
- presentations (oral, multimedia)
- a dialogue (oral, written)
- a research task.

Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

# Unit 2: Questions of value

What are the foundations of our judgments about value? What is the relationship between different types of value? How, if at all, can particular value judgments be defended or criticised?

This unit enables students to explore these questions in relation to different categories of value judgment within the realms of morality, political and social philosophy and aesthetics. Students also explore ways in which viewpoints and arguments in value theory can inform and be informed by contemporary debates. They study at least one primary philosophical text, using the complete text or an extract, and develop a range of skills including formulating philosophical questions and informed responses. For the purposes of this study a primary text is defined as offering a positive argument or viewpoint rather than mere critique.

For the purposes of this study, arguments make a claim supported by propositions and reasoning, whereas a viewpoint makes a claim without necessarily supporting it with reasons or reasoning. Philosophical debates encompass philosophical questions and associated viewpoints and arguments within other spheres of discourse such as religion, psychology, sociology and politics.

## Area of Study 1

### Ethics and moral philosophy

What should I do? What is right? On what basis can we choose between different courses of action? These are ongoing fundamental questions. In this area of study students are introduced to key debates in moral philosophy that stretch back thousands of years. The laws of our society reflect a position that murder and theft are wrong, but a philosopher is interested in the justifications for these convictions. Is morality a matter of personal prejudice or can we give good reasons for holding particular moral beliefs? Are there fundamental moral beliefs that should be universally binding, or are they preferences that develop in response to particular cultural contexts?

In this area of study students are concerned with discovering if there are basic principles and underlying ideas of morality and assessing ethical viewpoints and arguments according to standards of logic and consistency. Philosophical methods may be used to address everyday dilemmas, as well as issues debated in the media and important moral challenges of our times.

Students explore two of the themes listed below. Suggested thinkers are included at the end of each section, from which appropriate primary text/s can be selected.

#### 1. On the foundations of morality

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Where does morality come from?
- Is morality subjective or objective?
- What is the 'is-ought gap' and can it be bridged?
- What is the relationship between religious belief and morality?
- What is the relationship between nature and morality?
- Is it possible to speak of moral progress?
- What is nihilism?
- Do moral principles exist? Are they universal or relative to particular situations?

Suggested thinkers: J.L. Mackie, Bernard Williams, Simon Blackburn



## 2. On moral psychology

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is the relationship between reason and action?
- What is 'weakness of will' and what are its causes and moral implications?
- Is it possible to act without a reason? Is it possible to act against your own interests?
- Is pure altruism possible or are all acts essentially based on self-interest?
- What role does and should reason, intuitions, emotion, duty and self-interest have in ethical decision-making?
- Is moral behaviour found only in human beings?
- Should our own pleasure seeking be our primary motivation when making ethical decisions?
- Does it make sense to speak of acting well out of habit?
- Should we focus on cultivating our own character and virtues to ensure sound ethical decision-making?

Suggested thinkers: Bernard Williams, Alasdair MacIntyre, Aristotle, A.J. Ayer, Hannah Arendt

## 3. On right and wrong

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What are the major theories philosophers have offered about what makes an action morally right?
- Does the motive or character of the person performing an action matter to the morality of that action?
- Are acts right or wrong to the extent that they maximise pleasures or minimise suffering? What are the relative merits of various versions of utilitarianism, such as positive, negative, preference, act, rule, ideal or hedonistic?
- Are there certain acts that should be considered right or wrong in themselves independently of their consequences? Why and to what extent?
- Is religious authority a legitimate source of moral principles (for example, principles derived from the Ten Commandments, the Eightfold Path, the Golden Mean, the Five Pillars of Islam)?

Suggested thinkers: Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, Michael Sandel, Philippa Foot

## Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse problems in ethics and moral theory and related contemporary debates, and evaluate viewpoints and arguments in response to these problems, and discuss the interplay between philosophical thinking and contemporary ethical and moral debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

### Key knowledge

- debates and questions that arise from exploration of two of the ethical and moral themes listed above
- central viewpoints and arguments associated with the chosen ethical and moral questions as represented in at least one primary text
- definitions of key terms and concepts associated with the chosen ethical and moral themes
- viewpoints and arguments central to the core problems within the chosen ethical and moral themes
- criticisms that can be raised in response to the viewpoints and arguments central to the chosen ethical and moral themes
- philosophical concepts, viewpoints and arguments related to selected ethical and moral debates
- the interplay between viewpoints and arguments informed by value theory and relevant contemporary debates.

**Key skills**

- analyse definitions of key philosophical concepts related to problems in ethics and moral philosophy and in the context of relevant contemporary debates
- formulate philosophical questions arising from the problems central to the chosen themes
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments associated with the problems central to the chosen themes
- analyse viewpoints and arguments presented in a primary philosophical source
- offer justified critical responses to viewpoints and arguments associated with problems central to the chosen themes
- reflect critically on personal viewpoints and arguments relating to ethics and moral philosophy
- formulate informed responses to problems in ethics and moral philosophy and explain, defend and refine those responses in philosophical exchanges with others
- explain the interplay between relevant contemporary debates and viewpoints and arguments arising in ethics and moral philosophy.

## Area of Study 2

### Further problems in value theory

In addition to discussing ethical and moral value, philosophers consider a range of other types of values, including social, political and aesthetic value.

Often philosophers concern themselves with questions regarding the foundations of particular forms of value. They consider whether these various forms of value are grounded in the nature of things or whether they are human creations. If they are human creations, students consider whether these forms of value might yet appeal to commonly held or universal standards. How these questions are approached may depend upon the type of value considered.

At other times, philosophers set aside these foundational questions and consider particular questions relating to social, political or aesthetic value. Is democracy the only justifiable form of government? What are the obstacles to freedom? How are conflicts between rights to be resolved? What is the point of art?

This area of study provides students with an introduction to some of these questions and the ways in which philosophers have addressed them. Students explore how philosophical methods can be brought to bear on a range of questions regarding value.

### Value theory themes

Students study at least two of the following four themes. A range of questions for study is to be selected from the list under each theme. Appropriate questions outside the list can also be included for study. For at least one of the themes selected, students must study one or more primary text/s. Suggested thinkers are included at the end of each section, from which appropriate primary text/s can be selected.

#### 1. On rights and justice

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is the basis and justification of rights?
- If there are human rights, then there are certain acts that should be considered right or wrong, independently of their consequences. What determines the content and extent of human rights?
- To what extent are there and should there be constraints on our rights?
- Can an individual, for example an infant, have a right without knowing about it?
- How are conflicts between rights to be resolved?
- What is the relationship between law and morality?

- How are rights related to responsibilities?
- Are we justified in punishing criminals?
- Is the state justified in enforcing moral norms?
- Do only human beings have rights? Do animals have rights? Do communities, cultures or environments have rights?

Suggested thinkers: Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, Simone Weil, John Rawls

## 2. On liberty and anarchy

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- Is democracy the only justifiable form of polity?
- Is freedom a fundamental human right?
- What are the threats to freedom in the modern world and to what extent should freedom be protected?
- What is the social contract?
- What is the relationship between free markets and free societies?
- What is the distinction between positive and negative liberty?

Suggested thinkers: John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, Robert Nozick, Adam Smith, Isaiah Berlin

## 3. On aesthetic value

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is art?
- What is beauty? Is beauty necessary or even desirable in art?
- What defines the aesthetic? (For example, exploration of such concepts as taste, aesthetic properties, aesthetic experience, aesthetic appreciation, and their relationship)
- To what extent does art transcend everyday moral categories?
- What is the purpose and value of art?
- Is there a legitimate distinction between 'high' and 'low' art?
- Is there an interesting distinction to be made between art and craft?
- Can an aesthetic judgment be wrong? Are some aesthetic judgments better or worse than others?

Suggested thinkers: Plato, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, R.G. Collingwood, Arthur Danto

## 4. On the interpretation of artworks

Questions that may be explored in this theme include:

- What is the relationship between art and philosophy?
- What is the relationship between the meaning of a work and the intentions of its artist?
- What is the relationship between the meaning of an artwork and its context?
- What is the intentionalist fallacy? To what extent is it a fallacy?
- To what extent is a society justified in censoring art?
- How important is originality in the arts? Should we condemn forgeries or even honest copies?
- In what sense can we speak of meaning in non-representational art (for example, music)?
- What is a metaphor? Can we say that a metaphor is 'true'?
- What is the relationship between a work of art and what it represents?

Suggested thinkers: W.K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley, Arthur Danto, Susan Sontag, Nelson Goodman

## Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse selected problems in value theory and evaluate viewpoints and arguments in response to these problems, and discuss philosophical issues in the context of relevant contemporary debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

### Key knowledge

- debates and questions that arise from exploration of two of the value theory themes listed above
- central viewpoints and arguments associated with the chosen value theory questions as represented in at least one primary text
- definitions of key terms and concepts associated with the chosen value theory themes
- viewpoints and arguments central to the core problems within the chosen value theory themes
- criticisms that can be raised in response to the viewpoints and arguments central to the chosen value theory themes
- the implications of adopting a particular position for relevant contemporary debates associated with the chosen value theory themes.

### Key skills

- analyse definitions of key philosophical concepts and questions related to problems in value theory and in the context of relevant contemporary debates
- formulate philosophical questions arising from the problems central to the chosen themes
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments associated with the problems central to the chosen themes
- analyse viewpoints and arguments presented in a primary philosophical source
- offer justified critical responses to viewpoints and arguments associated with problems central to the chosen themes
- reflect critically on their own viewpoints and arguments relating to value theory
- formulate informed responses to problems in value theory and related contemporary debates and explain, defend and refine those responses in philosophical exchanges with others
- explain the relationship between relevant contemporary debates and viewpoints and arguments arising in value theory.

## Area of Study 3

### Techniques of philosophical inquiry

In this area of study students develop their abilities to analyse and evaluate philosophical viewpoints and arguments. They examine and apply a range of reasoning techniques and consider the role of other factors involved in philosophical thinking such as emotion. Students develop their capacity for metacognition through consideration of reflective equilibrium.

## Outcome 3

On completion of this unit the student should be able to apply methods of philosophical inquiry to the analysis and evaluation of philosophical viewpoints and arguments, including those in value theory.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 3.

**Key knowledge**

- techniques of reasoning and argument
- the roles of reasoning and argument, metaphor, intuition, imagination, emotion and experience in philosophical thinking concerned with value theory
- key terms associated with philosophical inquiry
- the role of reflective equilibrium as a technique for developing a philosophical position
- recognised patterns of good and bad reasoning such as common syllogisms and common fallacies.

**Key skills**

- analyse and evaluate the roles of reasoning and argument, metaphor, intuition, imagination, emotion and experience in philosophical thinking concerned with value theory
- analyse arguments to identify the premises and conclusions, and the relationships between the premises and conclusions, including standard form presentation and chains of reasoning
- apply philosophical thinking to analysis and evaluation of philosophical viewpoints and arguments including those in value theory and related debates
- identify and describe errors of reasoning including the identification of common fallacies
- use appropriate terminology when analysing and evaluating arguments
- apply metacognitive evaluations to their own reasoning.

## Assessment

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks that provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study, including the key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes, should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks. Assessment must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and should be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

All assessments at Units 1 and 2 are school-based. Procedures for assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

For this unit students are required to demonstrate three outcomes. As a set these outcomes encompass the areas of study in the unit.

Suitable tasks for assessment in this unit may be selected from the following:

- an essay
- a written analysis
- short-answer responses
- a written reflection
- presentations (oral, multimedia)
- a dialogue (oral, written)
- a research task.

Where teachers allow students to choose between tasks they must ensure that the tasks they set are of comparable scope and demand.

# Unit 3: Minds, bodies and persons

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 put forward in philosophical sources to their own views on these questions and to contemporary debates.

For the purposes of this study, arguments make a claim supported by propositions and reasoning, whereas a viewpoint makes a claim without necessarily supporting it with reasons or reasoning. Philosophical debates encompass philosophical questions and associated viewpoints and arguments within other spheres of discourse such as religion, psychology, sociology and politics.

## Texts for Units 3 and 4

In this study the term ‘text’ refers to a complete text or extract/s from a philosophical work.

Texts for Units 3 and 4 are prescribed annually by the VCAA and referred to in Units 3 and 4 as ‘set texts’. The prescribed texts for each unit will be published annually in the [VCAA Bulletin](#).

## Area of Study 1

### Minds and bodies

The central concern of the philosophy of mind is to explain the relationship between the body and the mind. The difficulty in advancing such an explanation stems from the fact that bodies and minds appear to be very different types of entities. To illustrate, consider that the experience of reading doesn’t obviously feel like neurons firing in a brain. Some philosophers argue that such apparent differences indicate that the two are in reality fundamentally independent entities. Others typically argue that the mind is just the physical body but then must reconcile the apparent differences.

Students examine the views of those who argue that the mind is nothing more than the body, as well as those that think there is more to the human mind than just the body, and consider whether the two can exist independently of each other.

### Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to examine concepts relating to the mind and body, analyse, compare and evaluate viewpoints and arguments concerning the relationship between the mind and body found in the set texts, and discuss contemporary debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

#### Key knowledge

- philosophical concepts used in discussions related to the mind and body generally, including consciousness and the Hard Problem, dualism, materialism/physicalism, behaviourism, qualia, mental states, monism, immaterialism/idealism, epiphenomenalism, interactionism, parallelism, functionalism
- the concepts ‘mind’ and ‘body’ as they occur within viewpoints and arguments in the set texts
- concepts related to mind and body and their relationship as they occur in viewpoints and arguments in the set texts
- the extent to which the mind can be known by the self and others

- arguments for and against the notion that the mind is to be identified with the body and that mental events can be explained as physical events
- contemporary debates related to the concepts of mind and body and their relationship, and the impact of the development of science on these debates
- implications of different positions on mind and body for contemporary debates.

**Key skills**

- explain, analyse and apply philosophical concepts
- outline viewpoints and arguments using appropriate terminology, and identify the premises and conclusions of arguments and the relationships between the premises and conclusions of each argument
- situate the set texts and their viewpoints and arguments in the contexts of relevant debates and scientific developments
- justify critical responses to philosophical viewpoints using clear and precise language
- offer relevant criticisms of arguments by assessing the plausibility of premises, revealing any assumptions made, showing whether the conclusions follow from the premises, and analysing the potential consequences for positions on the relationship between mind and body
- critically compare philosophical viewpoints and arguments by comparing the plausibility of the premises or viewpoints, the strength of the assumptions made, and reasoning used and the potential consequences for debates concerning mind and body
- apply an understanding of philosophical concepts to the analysis and evaluation of debates and critically respond to philosophical viewpoints and arguments in the contexts of relevant debates and scientific developments.

## Area of Study 2

### Personal identity

Modern philosophers have explored the question of the continuity of the self over time. They have attempted to identify the basis on which we say, for example, that an individual is the same person at 80 as they were at eight years old. Self, in this sense, is a contested term that refers to what is most essential about ourselves as a particular entity distinguished from others, if anything.

In this area of study students explore selected positions on personal identity and the arguments for and against them. In doing so, students consider the implications of views on personal identity for personal responsibility of past actions and personal concern for future happiness. Students consider how thought experiments can be used to explore and challenge theories of personal identity. A range of relevant thought experiments is to be sourced from within the set texts where possible and beyond the set texts as appropriate. Students apply their understanding of philosophical concepts and problems related to personal identity to analyses of contemporary debates such as organ transplants and cloning.

### Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to analyse, compare and evaluate viewpoints and arguments on personal identity in the set texts and discuss related contemporary debates.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

**Key knowledge**

- philosophical concepts in the set texts relating to discussions of personal identity
- viewpoints, arguments and assumptions made in the set texts concerning the basis of the sense of personal identity
- objections and criticisms that can be raised in response to the viewpoints and arguments proposed in the set texts in relation to personal identity
- similarities and differences between viewpoints and arguments on personal identity in the set texts
- a range of thought experiments used by philosophers to explore positions on personal identity
- the implications of arguments relating to personal identity for questions of personal responsibility and concern
- contemporary debates related to issues of personal identity
- implications of different positions on personal identity for contemporary debates.

**Key skills**

- explain, analyse and apply philosophical concepts
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments by using appropriate terminology and identifying the premises and conclusions of arguments, and the relationships between the premises and conclusions of each argument
- situate the set texts and their viewpoints and arguments in the contexts of debates relating to personal identity
- justify critical responses to philosophical viewpoints using clear and precise language
- explore the implications of thought experiments for philosophical positions on personal identity
- offer relevant criticisms of arguments by assessing the plausibility of premises, revealing any assumptions made, showing whether the conclusions follow from the premises, and analysing the potential consequences for positions on personal identity
- critically respond to philosophical viewpoints and arguments in the context of relevant debates and scientific developments
- critically compare viewpoints and arguments in the set texts by comparing the plausibility of the premises or viewpoints, the strengths of the assumptions made, and reasoning used and the potential consequences for debates concerning personal identity
- apply an understanding of philosophical concepts to analysis and evaluation of debates.

## School-based assessment

### Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

### Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 3 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.



The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes *Advice for teachers* for this study, which includes advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher's assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

### Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 3 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Examine concepts relating to the mind and body, analyse, compare and evaluate viewpoints and arguments concerning the relationship between the mind and body found in the set texts, and discuss contemporary debates.</p>	50	<p>The student's performance on each outcome is assessed by at least two of the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an essay</li> <li>• a written analysis</li> <li>• short-answer responses</li> <li>• a written reflection</li> <li>• presentations (oral, multimedia)</li> <li>• a dialogue (oral, written)</li> </ul> <p>At least one essay task is required for Unit 3.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b></p> <p>Analyse, compare and evaluate viewpoints and arguments on personal identity in the set texts and discuss related contemporary debates.</p>	50	
<b>Total marks</b>	100	

### External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination, which will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

# 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 life well lived? 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 philosophical texts that have had a significant impact on western ideas about the good life.

Students critically compare the viewpoints and arguments in set texts to their views on how we should live, and use their understandings to inform a reasoned response to contemporary debates.

For the purposes of this study, arguments make a claim supported by propositions and reasoning, whereas a viewpoint makes a claim without necessarily supporting it with reasons or reasoning. Philosophical debates encompass philosophical questions and associated viewpoints and arguments within other spheres of discourse such as psychology, sociology, science, engineering and politics.

## Texts for Units 3 and 4

In this study the term ‘text’ refers to a complete text or extract/s from a philosophical work.

Texts for Units 3 and 4 will be prescribed annually by the VCAA and are referred to in Units 3 and 4 as ‘set texts’. The prescribed texts for each unit will be published annually in the [VCAA Bulletin](#).

## Area of Study 1

### Conceptions of the good life

In this area of study students are exposed to philosophical concepts, debates and perspectives on the nature of the good life through a study of philosophical texts. As they reflect on the implications of accepting the views and arguments presented by these thinkers, students develop their own critical responses to the authors’ viewpoints and arguments.

### Outcome 1

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss concepts related to the good life, and analyse, compare and evaluate the philosophical viewpoints and arguments in the set texts in relation to the good life.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 1.

#### Key knowledge

- concepts used in discussion of the good life generally including morality, happiness, human nature, values, hedonism, egoism, freedom, pleasure, pain, teleology, virtue, altruism, wisdom, self-restraint, justice, equality, duty, praise and blame
- connections between philosophical concepts related to the good life
- philosophical concepts used in the set texts in discussion of the good life
- the influence of the social, historical and philosophical context on the nature and strength of viewpoints and arguments in the set texts

- concepts and assumptions made and viewpoints and arguments proposed in the set texts, and general concepts relating to these general questions:
  - What, if anything, does an understanding of human nature tell us about the good life?
  - What does the good life have to do with being morally good?
  - What is the nature of happiness and what is its role in the good life?
  - What is the relationship between the good life for an individual and for broader society?
- objections and criticisms that can be raised in response to the viewpoints and arguments proposed in relation to questions on the good life in the set texts
- similarities and differences between the viewpoints and arguments on the nature of the good life in the set texts
- objections and criticisms that can be raised when critically comparing the viewpoints and arguments on the good life in the set texts.

### Key skills

- explain, analyse and apply philosophical concepts and their connections
- outline philosophical viewpoints using appropriate terminology
- recognise arguments, identifying the premises, conclusions, and any assumptions made
- identify and evaluate the relationship between the premises and conclusion of each argument
- justify critical responses to philosophical viewpoints on the good life using clear and precise language
- offer relevant criticisms of arguments by assessing the plausibility of premises, revealing any assumptions made, showing whether the conclusions follow from the premises, and analysing the potential consequences for the good life
- critically compare viewpoints and arguments offered in the set texts by comparing the plausibility of the premises or viewpoints, the strength of the assumptions made, and reasoning used and the potential consequences

## Area of Study 2

### Living the good life in the twenty-first century

An important aspect of the study of philosophical texts is the light that they can shed on contemporary questions and debates.

In this area of study students develop and justify responses to debates on technological development in relation to the good life. They outline arguments made in a variety of sources and critically respond to them. They explore the interplay between the changing conditions of contemporary life and our ability to live a good life, considering how the strength of the interplay is dependent not only on the nature of developments in contemporary life but on the conception of the good life.

For the purposes of this area of study, technological development can be interpreted broadly to refer to current or potential technologies in the public discourse. This includes, for example, bio-enhancements and other potential developments in medical science, the use of robotics, or developments in entertainment technology. In developing their responses, students draw on other philosophical sources on the good life, and philosophical concepts from Area of Study 1.

## Outcome 2

On completion of this unit the student should be able to discuss contemporary debates related to technological development and the good life, and examine the interplay between technological development and conceptions of the good life.

To achieve this outcome the student will draw on key knowledge and key skills outlined in Area of Study 2.

### Key knowledge

- philosophical concepts related to the interplay of technological development and the good life including progress, reality, control, dependency, freedom, and creativity
- connections between philosophical concepts related to the interplay of technological development and the good life
- the interplay between technological development and responses to these questions:
  - What, if anything, does an understanding of human nature tell us about the good life?
  - What does the good life have to do with being morally good?
  - What is the nature of happiness and what is its role in the good life?
  - What is the relationship between the good life for an individual and for broader society?
- viewpoints and arguments, and objections and criticisms relating to the extent that technological development enhances or undermines our ability to live a good life
- influences that technological development and conceptions of the good life may have and ought to have on each other.

### Key skills

- explain, analyse and apply philosophical concepts and their connections
- identify viewpoints and arguments on the nature of the good life and technological development in a range of sources
- identify the philosophical assumptions underlying viewpoints and arguments
- outline philosophical viewpoints and arguments related to contemporary debates on technological development and the good life in a range of sources
- evaluate and critically compare viewpoints and arguments proposed in contemporary debates regarding technological development and the good life
- evaluate the interplay between conceptions of the good life and technological development
- apply concepts, arguments and examples drawn from philosophical sources to support critical reflection
- interpret and synthesise source material
- formulate and defend a reasoned philosophical response using precise language.

## School-based assessment

### Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on whether the student has demonstrated the set of outcomes specified for the unit. Teachers should use a variety of learning activities and assessment tasks to provide a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate the key knowledge and key skills in the outcomes.

The areas of study and key knowledge and key skills listed for the outcomes should be used for course design and the development of learning activities and assessment tasks.

## Assessment of levels of achievement

The student's level of achievement in Unit 4 will be determined by School-assessed Coursework. School-assessed Coursework tasks must be a part of the regular teaching and learning program and must not unduly add to the workload associated with that program. They must be completed mainly in class and within a limited timeframe.

Where teachers provide a range of options for the same School-assessed Coursework task, they should ensure that the options are of comparable scope and demand.

The types and range of forms of School-assessed Coursework for the outcomes are prescribed within the study design. The VCAA publishes *Advice for teachers* for this study, which includes advice on the design of assessment tasks and the assessment of student work for a level of achievement.

Teachers will provide to the VCAA a numerical score representing an assessment of the student's level of achievement. The score must be based on the teacher's assessment of the performance of each student on the tasks set out in the following table.

### Contribution to final assessment

School-assessed Coursework for Unit 4 will contribute 25 per cent to the study score.

Outcomes	Marks allocated	Assessment tasks
<p><b>Outcome 1</b></p> <p>Discuss concepts related to the good life, and analyse, compare and evaluate the philosophical viewpoints and arguments in the set texts in relation to the good life.</p>	60	<p>The student's performance on each outcome is assessed by at least two of the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an essay</li> <li>• a written analysis</li> <li>• short-answer responses</li> <li>• a written reflection</li> <li>• presentations (oral, multimedia)</li> <li>• a dialogue (oral, written)</li> </ul> <p>At least one essay task is required for Unit 4.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 2</b></p> <p>Discuss contemporary debates related to technological development and the good life, and examine the interplay between technological development and conceptions of the good life.</p>	40	
<b>Total marks</b>	<b>100</b>	

## External assessment

The level of achievement for Units 3 and 4 is also assessed by an end-of-year examination.

### Contribution to final assessment

The examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

## End-of-year examination

### Description

The examination will be set by a panel appointed by the VCAA. All the key knowledge and key skills that underpin the outcomes in Units 3 and 4 are examinable.

**Conditions**

The examination will be completed under the following conditions:

- Duration: two hours.
- Date: end-of-year, on a date to be published annually by the VCAA.
- VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the [VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#).
- The examination will be marked by assessors appointed by the VCAA.

**Further advice**

The VCAA publishes specifications for all VCE examinations on the VCAA website. Examination specifications include details about the sections of the examination, their weighting, the question format/s and any other essential information. The specifications are published in the first year of implementation of the revised Unit 3 and 4 sequence together with any sample material.