# Philosophy



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## Introduction

Philosophy is a Stage 5 NSW Department of Education approved elective course.

The [Curriculum planning and programming, assessing and reporting to parents K-12](https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2005-0290) policy and the associated policy standards set out the requirements for schools regarding the mandatory hours for additional studies (electives) in Stage 5. Version 9.3 of the policy standards introduces the option of NSW Department of Education approved elective courses which can make up a maximum of 200 hours of the mandatory 400 hours of electives.

If a school chooses to deliver a NSW Department of Education approved elective course, students and parents/carers need to be consulted and understand that the course will not be listed on the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

A Philosophy course was previously offered as a school-developed board endorsed course developed and supported by staff at North Sydney Girls High School.

### Rationale

Philosophical thought shapes what people think, value, and how they engage with others and the world around them. Philosophy is concerned with questions of ethics, knowledge, aesthetics and reality. It seeks to shed light on life’s big issues, such as the nature of reality, how we should live and what it means to be human. Philosophy also grapples with the problems that lie at the foundation of issues of public debate such as artificial intelligence, human rights and freedom of speech.

In this course, students are actively engaged in exploring authentic ethical, social and political dilemmas in philosophy. They are challenged to think rigorously and discuss these issues in communities of inquiry. This engagement in philosophical discussion encourages students to think creatively, critically and collaboratively.

Philosophy equips students with the skills essential for active citizenship in today’s complex global society. Through the study of philosophy, students will develop the skills to think deeply and formulate sound arguments. A study of philosophy will also encourage an open-minded disposition and a willingness to challenge existing beliefs and values.

### Aim

The aim of philosophy is to develop student knowledge of key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments. By applying this knowledge to social dilemmas through communities of inquiry, students will challenge assumptions and beliefs and build their capacity for critical reasoning and ethical decision making.

### Purpose and audience

This resource communicates the outcomes and content students will engage with throughout their study of the course. It is developed for teachers to provide consistent advice in the subject selection process for Stage 5 students and for use when developing resources and implementing the course.

### When and how to use this document

This resource is an essential document to ensure that all material developed and used for this course meet the requirements for hours, outcomes, and content. Use this document when offering the course, when developing teaching and learning resources, and when maintaining records to indicate students have met the requirements for the course.

## Course structure and requirements

Students may undertake either 100 or 200 hours of study in philosophy in Stage 5.

The course is divided into core and options. The core should precede the options. The options may be studied in any order.

The course may be structured in the following ways:

**100-hour course**

* a minimum of 2 core study topics
* additional study of selected options to meet the 100-hour requirement.

**200-hour course**

* a minimum of 2 core study topics
* additional study of selected options to meet the 200-hour requirement.

### Core

Each core unit represents 20-25 indicative hours:

* Core 1 – Introduction to philosophy
* Core 2 – Logic, argument and critical reasoning

### Options

Each option represents 15-25 indicative hours:

* Option 1 – Epistemology
* Option 2 – Metaphysics
* Option 3 – Ethics
* Option 4 – Aesthetics
* Option 5 – Political philosophy
* Option 6 – Personal philosophy
* Option 7 – Personal interest project
* Option 8 – School developed option

## Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

Schools must ensure that the options chosen enable all the outcomes to be assessed by the completion of the course.

## Core 1 – Introduction to philosophy

In this core module, students will learn about the origins of philosophy, explore key questions asked by philosophers and reflect on their own personal philosophy.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions.

### Content

Students:

* define philosophy
* describe key terms and concepts in philosophy, for example
* epistemology
* ethics
* metaphysics
* aesthetics.
* explain the benefits of studying philosophy, for example
* an examined life
* critical thinking
* pleasure.
* assess the relevance of philosophical allegories to modern society, for example
* Plato’s ‘Allegory of the Cave’
* ‘Ship of Theseus’.
* examine the history of philosophy and the ideas of key philosophical thinkers throughout time, for example
* Aristotle
* Confucius
* Simone De Beauvoir
* Rene Descartes
* John Locke
* Immanuel Kant
* Hannah Arendt
* Friedrich Nietzsche
* Plato
* Jean-Jacques Rousseau
* David Hume
* Socrates
* Cornell West.
* explore the relationship between philosophy and other disciplines, for example
* science
* religion
* history.
* reflect on one’s personal philosophy by exploring questions such as
* Who am I?
* Why am I here?
* Is my mind separate from my body?
* What does it mean to be good?

## Core 2 – Logic, argument and reasoning

This core module focuses on what it means to think well. It introduces the basic philosophical skills of argument and reasoning and then allows for the application of these skills in a community of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions.

### Content

#### Components of philosophical arguments

Students:

* describe the structure of philosophical arguments, for example
* argument
* premise
* conclusion
* explore different forms of inference and reasoning, for example
* inductive
* deductive
* abductive
* investigate the elements of an effective argument, for example
* validity
* soundness
* avoiding ambiguity and vagueness
* research common fallacies, rhetoric, and errors of reasoning, for example
* the ‘straw man’
* the ‘slippery slope’
* majority belief
* ad hominem
* post hoc rego propter hoc
* appeal to authority
* circular reasoning
* gamblers fallacy
* attribution bias
* assuming the consequent
* assess frameworks to guide ethical decision making, for example
* consequentialist
* duty
* virtue.

#### Philosophical arguments, community of inquiry

Students:

* identify the process and protocols in a community of inquiry
* explain the criteria for successful participation in a community of inquiry, for example
* critical thinking
* creative thinking
* collaborative thinking
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions in one of these key areas
* metaphysics
* epistemology
* ethics.

## Option 1 – Epistemology

In this option, students will study the nature, origin, and limits of human knowledge. Students will examine philosophical thinking on epistemology and consider key questions in communities of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions.

### Content

Students:

* explore definitions of knowledge
* describe sources of knowledge, for example
* reason
* emotion
* intuition
* sense perception
* memory
* imagination
* faith
* explain different views of knowledge, for example
* theoretical versus practical
* rationalism versus empiricism
* cultural views of knowledge, for example, traditional Aboriginal learning through Elders
* discuss problems or limitations of knowledge, for example scepticism
* analyse the use of knowledge in society, for example
* equality of access to knowledge
* relationship between knowledge and power
* examine philosophical thinking on epistemology, for example
* Rene Descartes
* John Locke
* Plato
* Edmund L Gettier
* David Hume
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on epistemology, such as
* Can I know anything at all?
* How can we know it?
* What are the limits of knowledge?
* What is the difference between knowledge and belief?
* What are the sources of our knowledge in areas such as history, the law and the media, and how reliable are they?
* Should we trust our senses?
* Are we born with knowledge?
* What role does experience and reason play in acquiring knowledge?
* Is the universe law bound or unpredictable and free?
* Are knowledge, belief and truth relative to different individuals or cultures?

## Option 2 – Metaphysics

Metaphysics is an area of philosophy related to reality. In this option, students will explore theories of perception, question the reliability of the senses and relate reality to time and consciousness. They will also examine philosophical thinking on metaphysics and consider key questions in communities of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions.

### Content

Students:

* define metaphysics
* explain theories of perception, for example
* common sense realism
* representative realism
* materialism and idealism
* phenomenalism
* causal realism
* analyse sceptical arguments about the reliability of the senses, for example
* the illusion argument
* dreaming
* brain in a jar
* discuss concepts of reality and mind, including
* self-identity, for example, how do I exist? What makes me, me?
* the mind/body problem
* free will versus determinism
* discuss concepts of reality and time, for example
* the paradox of time
* ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ theories of time
* examine philosophical thinkers on metaphysics, for example
* Gottfried Leibnitz
* Baruch Spinoza
* David Hume
* Aristotle
* Immanuel Kant
* John MacTaggart
* Rene Descartes
* George Berkeley
* David Armstrong
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on metaphysics, for example
* Could I be dreaming?
* What exists?
* Do objects continue to exist when they aren’t being observed?
* How does mind relate to matter?
* On what basis could time travel be possible?
* Does time exist?
* Do the past and future exist?
* What is the mind?
* What are thoughts?
* What is consciousness?
* Might I be a brain in a vat?
* Could our reality actually be a simulation?

## Option 3 – Ethics

Ethics is an area of value theory or axiology that is concerned with what is morally right and wrong. In this option, students will examine philosophical thinking on ethics and consider what is meant by living a good life. They will also consider key ethical questions by participating in communities of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* define ethics
* explain the foundations of moral judgements, for example
* belief in a higher being
* environment
* rationality
* gender
* analyse ethical theories, for example
* utilitarianism
* Kantian ethics
* virtue ethics
* naturalism
* emotivism
* assess philosophical thinking on what is meant by living a ‘good’ life, for example
* Aristotle
* Socrates
* Plato
* Hedonistic theories
* Immanuel Kant
* Friedrich Nietzsche
* discuss ethical thought experiments, such as
* Philippa Foot's, 'trolley problem'
* Judith Jarvis Thompson's, 'famous violinist'
* Immanuel Kant's, 'murderer at the door’
* explore frameworks for ethical decision making
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on ethics, for example
* Should this generation consume less to protect future generations?
* Can rules define morality?
* Should you ever tell a lie?
* Should euthanasia be legalised?
* Does the end justify the means?
* Where does morality come from?
* What is the ‘ought-gap’, and can it be bridged?
* What is nihilism?
* Is it possible to act against your own interests?
* Is pure altruism possible or are all acts essentially based on self-interest?
* Is moral behaviour found only in human beings?
* 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)?

## Option 4 – Aesthetics

Aesthetics is an area of value theory or axiology that is focussed on the study of beauty, art, and taste. Beauty can be attributed to natural features of the environment like rainforests or beaches as well as to human made objects like music or art. This option deals with how beautiful environments or objects make us feel, as well as how we judge the beauty and value of different art and objects. As part of this study, students will examine key philosophical thinking on aesthetics and consider key questions in communities of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* explore definitions of aesthetics
* identify a range of aesthetic experiences, for example
* pleasure
* provocation
* ugliness
* perfection
* compare subjective and objective notions of beauty
* explain factors that influence judgements and taste, for example
* culture
* education
* religion
* economic, political, or moral value
* examine philosophical thinking on aesthetics, for example
* Plato
* David Hume
* Immanuel Kant
* Arthur Danto
* R.G. Collingwood
* assess the role of aesthetics in personal or social change
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on aesthetics, for example
* What is beautiful or ugly?
* Is beauty in the eye of the beholder?
* Why do we find certain things beautiful?
* Are aesthetic judgments objective statements or purely subjective expressions of personal attitudes?
* Is there such a thing as good taste in art?
* What makes good art?
* Is there a justification for censorship of art?
* Is there a link between the meaning of a work and the intentions of the artist?
* How does morality intersect with art?

## Option 5 – Political philosophy

This option is a philosophical study of government that explores political philosophies and issues like the enforcement of laws, rights, liberty and concepts of justice. The option also addresses moral judgements about the legitimacy of political action and the scope of public power. As part of this study, students will examine key philosophical thinking on politics and consider contemporary questions in communities of inquiry.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* define political philosophy
* explain key terms in politics, for example
* equality
* justice
* rights
* democracy
* freedom
* civil disobedience
* analyse key ideologies of government and politics, for example
* liberalism
* socialism
* Marxism
* conservatism
* research political philosophies of key philosophical thinkers, for example
* John Stuart Mill, ‘the harm principle’
* Jean Jacques Rousseau’s, ‘social contract’
* Baron de Montesquieu’s, ‘the separation of powers’
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on politics, for example
* To what extent are politicians able to take actions that would otherwise be wrong?
* Are governments needed?
* What is the best form of government?
* Is political deception ever justified?
* Is it ever okay to break the law?
* What rights and freedoms should a government protect?
* Is taxation legitimate?
* Should the government be able to force you to do things for your own good?
* What is the relation between the government and individuals?
* How should the distribution of goods and services be arranged?
* What does it mean to be free?
* What do we owe the governments of other countries?
* Should we sacrifice some of our material well-being today to leave a better world for our grandchildren?

## Option 6 – Personal philosophy

The Greek word ‘telos’ is often translated as 'end', 'goal' or 'purpose in life'. In this option, students will explore key thinking on teleology and participate in at least one community of inquiry. They will then apply knowledge from the course to reflect on their own personal philosophy or purpose.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* define ‘telos’
* analyse the purpose of life according to different schools of philosophy, for example
* Kantianism
* Theism
* Confucianism
* Stoicism
* compare key philosophical thinking on teleology, for example
* Socrates
* Aristotle
* Confucius
* Epicurus
* Friedrich Nietzsche
* Emmanuel Kant
* Plato
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines philosophical issues or questions on teleology, for example
* What is the meaning of life?
* Does everything have a purpose?
* Is happiness the ultimate goal of life?
* What does it mean to live a good life?
* How important is a moral compass?
* What achievements do you value most in life?
* Who am I?
* Where did I come from?
* Is there a god(s)?
* What is the purpose of my existence?
* assess the purpose and importance of a ‘personal philosophy’
* explore one’s own personal philosophy for fulfilling life’s purpose by
* reflecting on personal beliefs, values, and assumptions
* reflecting on key learning experiences and key philosophical positions
* relating learning experiences and philosophical positions to life’s own purpose or ‘telos’.

## Option 7 – Personal interest project

This option provides an opportunity for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of a particular area of learning of relevance and interest to them that is not studied through the core or options. The topic should extend a particular area of individual student or group interest that is not studied through other core topics or options. It may be conducted individually or collaboratively. For this option, schools may address some or all of the outcomes identified, as relevant to the study developed. Only one personal interest project can be studied within either the 100 or the 200-hour course.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* identify a problem, question, or specific area of interest in philosophy and undertake research that includes the following
* explain the issue, question, or area of interest
* justify the research topic in terms of its significance, relevance, and interest
* identify appropriate strategies for conducting the research
* examine philosophical thinking related to the issue, question, or area of interest
* assess key concepts related to the issue, question, or area of interest
* reflect on various ways that findings could be applied to their personal philosophy
* communicate findings through creative visual, written, or oral presentation, using digital technologies where appropriate
* evaluate the learning achieved in the process of completing the research, for example
* change in personal values, beliefs, or assumptions
* development of thinking and reasoning skills
* ethical decision making.

## Option 8 – School-developed option

This option provides an opportunity for in-depth study of a specific area, problem, or question in philosophy. Students may study an alternate area of philosophy such as philosophy of religion, science, or contemporary society. They may also undertake deeper study in areas of interest touched on during the course. Examples may include race and racism; the history of philosophy; a philosopher depth study; contemporary human rights, love or the existence of a god.

It is possible for students to complete this option as part of participation in communities of inquiry at Philosothon.

For this option, schools may address some or all of the outcomes identified, as relevant to the study developed. Only one school developed option can be studied within either the 100 or the 200-hour course.

### Outcomes

A student:

* **PH5-1** examines key philosophical thinkers, problems and arguments
* **PH5-2** develops an understanding of models of ethical decision making
* **PH5-3** explores the role of philosophy as an agent of personal or social change
* **PH5-4** researches and assesses information using a variety of sources
* **PH5-5** identifies key factors affecting decisions
* **PH5-6** constructs logical arguments based on critical reasoning
* **PH5-7** communicates ideas effectively using a variety of modes
* **PH5-8** reflects on values, beliefs and assumptions
* **PH5-9** works independently and in communities of inquiry to explore philosophical questions

### Content

Students:

* identify a problem, question, or specific area of interest in philosophy
* explain the issue, question, or area of interest
* discuss the key concepts related to the issue, question, or area of interest
* examine philosophical thinking related to the issue, question, or area of interest
* participate in at least one community of inquiry that examines the issue, question, or area of interest
* evaluate the learning achieved in the process of completing this study, for example
* change in personal values, beliefs, or assumptions
* development of thinking and reasoning skills
* ethical decision making.

## Additional information

Please complete the following [feedback form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=muagBYpBwUecJZOHJhv5kbKo2q_ZUXlHndJMnh2Wd8NUOUk0VTIzUDVVSlVFQVM5MkdOMkJGTjVKNCQlQCN0PWcu) to help us improve our resources and support.

Curriculum design and implementation is a dynamic and contextually specific process. The department is committed to supporting teachers meet the needs of all students. The advice below on assessment and planning for the needs of every student may be useful when considering the material presented in this resource.

### Assessment for learning

The list below are some formative assessment strategies that could be used:

* Learning Intentions and Success Criteria assist educators to articulate the purpose of a learning task to make judgements about the quality of student learning. These help students focus on the task or activity taking place and what they are learning and provide a framework for reflection and feedback. [Online tools](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/622) can assist implementation of this formative assessment strategy.
* Eliciting evidence strategies allow teachers to determine the next steps in learning and assists in evaluating teaching and learning activities. Strategies that may be added to a learning sequence to elicit evidence include all student response systems, [exit tickets](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/543), mini whiteboards (actual or [digital](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/575)), [hinge questions](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/557), [Kahoot](https://kahoot.com/), [Socrative](https://www.socrative.com/), [Quizlet](https://quizlet.com/) or quick quizzes to ensure that individual student progress can be monitored and the lesson sequence adjusted based on formative data collected.
* Feedback is designed to close the gap between current and desired performance by informing teacher and student behaviour (AITSL). AITSL provides a [factsheet to support evidence-based feedback](https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/improve-practice/feedback#:~:text=FEEDBACK-,Factsheet,-A%20quick%20guide).
* [Peer feedback](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/549) is a structured process where students evaluate the work of their peers by providing valuable feedback in relation to learning intentions and success criteria. It can be supported by [online tools](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Browser?cache_id=1d29b).
* Self-regulated learning opportunities assist students in taking ownership of their own learning. A variety of strategies can be employed and some examples include reflection tasks, [Think-Pair-Share](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/645), [KWLH charts](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/562), [learning portfolios](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/583) and [learning logs](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/564).

The primary role of assessment is to establish where individuals are in their learning so that teaching can be differentiated and further learning progress can be monitored over time.

Feedback that focuses on improving tasks, processes and student self-regulation is the most effective. Students engaging with feedback can take many forms including formal, informal, formative, summative, interactive, demonstrable, visual, written, verbal and non-verbal.

[CESE What works best update 2020](https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/about-us/educational-data/cese/wwb-what-works-best-2020-update.pdf) (CESE 2020a)

### Differentiation

Differentiated learning can be enabled by differentiating the teaching approach to content, process, product and the learning environment. For more information on differentiation go to [Differentiating learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/professional-learning/teacher-quality-and-accreditation/strong-start-great-teachers/refining-practice/differentiating-learning) and [Differentiation](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub/primary-school/teaching-strategies/differentiation).

When using these resources in the classroom, it is important for teachers to consider the needs of all students in their class, including:

* **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students**. Targeted [strategies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec/aboriginal-education-in-nsw-public-schools) can be used to achieve outcomes for Aboriginal students in K-12 and increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal histories and culture. Teachers should utilise students’ Personalised Learning Pathways to support individual student needs and goals.
* **EAL/D learners**. EAL/D learners will require explicit English language support and scaffolding, informed by the [EAL/D enhanced teaching and learning cycle](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald/enhanced-teaching-and-learning-cycle) and the student’s phase on the [EAL/D Learning Progression](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency). In addition, teachers can access information about [supporting EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/multicultural-education/english-as-an-additional-language-or-dialect/planning-eald-support/english-language-proficiency) and [literacy and numeracy support specific to EAL/D learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/literacy-and-numeracy/resources-for-schools/eald).
* **Students with additional learning needs**. Learning adjustments enable students with disability and additional learning and support needs to access syllabus outcomes and content on the same basis as their peers. Teachers can use a range of [adjustments](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/disability-learning-and-support/personalised-support-for-learning/adjustments-to-teaching-and-learning) to ensure a personalised approach to student learning. In addition, the [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning) can be used to support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies and subject specific curriculum considerations can be found on the [Inclusive Practice hub](https://education.nsw.gov.au/campaigns/inclusive-practice-hub).
* **High potential and gifted learners**. [Assessing and identifying high potential and gifted learners](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/assess-and-identify#Assessment1) will help teachers decide which students may benefit from extension and additional challenge. [Effective strategies and contributors to achievement](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/evaluate) for high potential and gifted learners helps teachers to identify and target areas for growth and improvement. In addition, the [Differentiation adjustment tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/high-potential-and-gifted-education/supporting-educators/implement/differentiation-adjustment-strategies) can be used to support the specific learning needs of high potential and gifted students. The [High Potential and Gifted Education Professional Learning and Resource Hub](https://schoolsnsw.sharepoint.com/sites/HPGEHub/SitePages/Home.aspx) supports school leaders and teachers to effectively implement the High Potential and Gifted Education Policy in their unique contexts.

All students need to be challenged and engaged to develop their potential fully. A culture of high expectations needs to be supported by strategies that both challenge and support student learning needs, such as through appropriate curriculum differentiation.

## About this resource

All curriculum resources are prepared through a rigorous process. Resources are periodically reviewed as part of our ongoing evaluation plan to ensure currency, relevance and effectiveness. For additional support or advice contact the Teaching and Learning Curriculum team by emailing [secondaryteachingandlearning@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:secondaryteachingandlearning@det.nsw.edu.au).

**Alignment to system priorities and/or needs**:

This resource aligns to the School Excellence Framework elements of curriculum (curriculum provision) and effective classroom practice (lesson planning, explicit teaching).

This resource supports teachers to address Australian Professional Teaching Standards 2.1.2, 2.3.2, 3.2.2, 7.2.2

This resource has been designed to support schools with successful implementation of new curriculum, specifically the NSW Department of Education approved elective course, Philosophy © 2021 NSW Department of Education for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

The resource is produced to assist schools with promoting and implementing the course for the first time. As the course may be taught by teachers from a range of key learning areas, the resource is designed to support teachers from a variety of KLA expertise.

**Department approved elective course**: Philosophy

**Course outcomes**: PH5-1, PH5-2, PH5-3, PH5-4, PH5-5, PH5-6, PH5-7, PH5-8, PH5-9

**Author**: Curriculum Secondary Learners

**Publisher**: State of NSW, Department of Education

**Resource**: Course document

**Related resources**: Further resources to support Philosophy can be found on the Department approved elective courses webpage including course document, sample scope and sequences, assessment materials and other learning sequences.

**Professional Learning**: Join the [Teaching and Learning 7-12 statewide staffroom](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/statewide-staffrooms) for information regarding professional learning opportunities.

**Universal Design for Learning Tool**: [Universal Design for Learning planning tool](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/teaching-and-learning-resources/universal-design-for-learning). Support the diverse learning needs of students using inclusive teaching and learning strategies.

**Consulted with**: Aboriginal Outcomes and Partnerships, Inclusion and Wellbeing, EAL/D and subject matter experts from Western Sydney University.

**Reviewed by**: This resource was reviewed by Curriculum Secondary Learners and by subject matter experts in schools to ensure accuracy of content.

**Creation date**: 25th October 2021

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**Evidence Base**:

‘The long-term vision is for a curriculum that supports teachers to nurture wonder, ignite passion and provide every young person with knowledge, skills and attributes that will help prepare them for a lifetime of learning, meaningful adult employment and effective future citizenship’ (NESA 2020:xi).

The development of the course and the course document as part of department approved electives aims to respond to the goals articulated in NESA’s curriculum review. Consistent messages from the review include:

* ‘Flexibility’ was the word most used by teachers to describe the systemic change they want
* Teachers need more time to teach important knowledge and skills
* Students want authentic learning with real-world application.

This course and the department approved electives provide teachers with flexibility in the curriculum and authentic learning experiences. They allow for ‘increased local decision making in relation to the curriculum’ as this ‘is associated with higher levels of student performance’ (NESA 2020:52).

This resource has been developed so that teachers are able to use the principles of what works best. Explicit teaching using ‘the language of the syllabus to increase students’ familiarity with the vocabulary so students can unpack assessment questions and understand exactly what they are being asked to do’ (CESE 2020b:11).

Essential elements to be included in a school’s documented curriculum:

* syllabus outcomes and scope of learning for each KLA for each year
* a scope and sequence and associated learning programs for each course, including teaching activities mapped against NESA syllabus outcomes and content, and including registration and evaluation (NSW Department of Education 2021:7).

## References

**Links to third-party material and websites**

Please note that the provided (reading/viewing material/list/links/texts) are a suggestion only and implies no endorsement, by the New South Wales Department of Education, of any author, publisher, or book title. School principals and teachers are best placed to assess the suitability of resources that would complement the curriculum and reflect the needs and interests of their students.

If you use the links provided in this document to access a third-party's website, you acknowledge that the terms of use, including licence terms set out on the third-party's website apply to the use which may be made of the materials on that third-party website or where permitted by the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth). The department accepts no responsibility for content on third-party websites.

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