LAW 564
Advanced Legal Research Project
FY1 External 2015
Dept of Law

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**General Information**

Unit convenor and teaching staff  
George Tomossy  
george.tomossy@mq.edu.au

Credit points  
6

Prerequisites  
48cp in LAW or LAWS units and (GPA in LAW units of 3.25) and permission of Executive Dean of Faculty

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description  
This unit provides students with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate advanced research skills through a series of seminar presentations and supervised research, leading to the submission of a 15,000 word thesis. Students formulate their own research question or argument in any area of legal scholarship or regulation. The thesis must be presented and defended within the broader conditions of its relevance, for example: social, historical, philosophical, economic or environmental contexts.

**Important Academic Dates**

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at [http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/](http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/)

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
2. Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
3. Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;
4. Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;
5. Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
6. Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;
7. Give an oral presentation of a research argument in an academic environment; an
8. Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

**Assessment Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10am Monday of Week 4 s1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three minute thesis</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Week 7 of s2 in tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of Thesis</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10am 1st Monday after wk 13 s2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Proposal**

**Due:** *10am Monday of Week 4 s1*

**Weighting:** *10%*

Taking into account convenor's comments, supervisor's comments and class discussion, submit:

- one page research proposal
- one page bibliography
- outline of thesis structure + weekly work plan (total one page)

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
- Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;

**Three minute thesis**

**Due:** *Week 7 of s2 in tutorial*

**Weighting:** *10%*

Present the main argument of your thesis in three minutes before supervisors and fellow researchers. One powerpoint slide with your name and title of your thesis plus an image (no animation) is allowed.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
- Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
- Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;
- Give an oral presentation of a research argument in an academic environment; an
• Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

Submission of Thesis
Due: 10am 1st Monday after wk 13 s2
Weighting: 80%

15,000 word graded research paper

The supervisor marks the paper from an expert, specialist perspective for content and originality. This mark is worth 40%.

The convenor marks the paper from a generalist perspective for style, referencing, structure and methodology. This mark is worth 40%.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
• Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
• Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;
• Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
• Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;
• Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

Delivery and Resources

1. Delivery mode
All students (internal and external) must attend the scheduled seminar in week 7 to present their three minute thesis.

Attendance for all other seminars (see iLearn for schedule and activities) are optional and are made available to assist students.

The unit will use an ilearn website. Peer review activities will take place online.

2. Lecture times and locations
For current updates, lecture times and classrooms please consult the MQ Timetables website: http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au.

3. Required and recommended resources
Required:
Readings posted on the ilearn website of the unit.
Australian Guide to Legal Citation (Melbourne University Law Review, 3 e 2012) available online
Theses MUST comply with the AGLC.

**Recommended:**


Most references are aimed at PhD students as there are very few references directed at honours students so please take this into account.


Dunleavy, P. *Authoring a PhD* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) Chapter 9 on publishing


McKerchar, M. *Design and Conduct of Research in Tax, Law and Accounting* (Sydney: Thompson LBC, 2010)

Punch, K. *Developing Effective Research Proposals* (Sage, 2006) (useful on literature reviews 44-49)

Watt, R. *Concise Legal Research* (Sydney: Federation Press, 6th ed, 2009)

**MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES**

Useful websites:


Aimed at PhD students and GPs, this site run by psychologists has a range of practical tips and strategies to help you plan and stick to your plan.

*The Desk* https://www.thedesk.org.au/about

Set up by the University of Queensland and funded by Beyond Blue, this Australian website aims to help students with modules, tools, and quizzes on avoiding perfectionism and procrastination, as well as advice on a broad range of stresses facing students. You need to register to use the site.
# Unit Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7 March</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiating the Supervisor-Student Dynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Methodology/Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>14 March</td>
<td>Methodology/theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Referencing and use of sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>Revised Research Proposal due Tuesday 18 March 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>28 March</td>
<td>Return and discussion of research proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sticking to the writing plan: motivational strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing workshop: introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Structure, referencing, style, paragraphing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No Classes: students to continue writing and revising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (S2)</td>
<td>12 Sep</td>
<td>Writing workshop: 4 pages from the body of your thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preparation for Three Minute Thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 (S2)</td>
<td>19 Sep</td>
<td>Three minute thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 (S2)</td>
<td>7 Nov</td>
<td>Thesis due 5pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preparation for class is set out in detail on iLearn
Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Honesty Policy](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)
- [Assessment Policy](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html)
- [Grading Policy](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html)
- [Disruption to Studies Policy](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html)

The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- Workshops
- StudyWise
- Academic Integrity Module for Students
- Ask a Learning Adviser
Student Enquiry Service
For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

Equity Support
Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the Disability Service who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

IT Help
For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy. The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative
We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
• Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
• Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;

Assessment task

• Submission of Thesis

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking
We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systematically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:
Learning outcomes

- Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
- Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
- Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;
- Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
- Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;
- Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Submission of Thesis

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
- Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;
- Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;
- Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
- Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;
- Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

Assessment tasks

- Research Proposal
- Three minute thesis
- Submission of Thesis
Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
• Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;
• Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

• Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
• Give an oral presentation of a research argument in an academic environment; an
• Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation’s historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

• Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;

Assessment tasks

• Three minute thesis
Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**
- Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;

**Assessment task**
- Submission of Thesis

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**
- Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
- Undertake a legal research project that can lead to a high quality scholarly paper suitable for publication;
- Choose an appropriate topic for a legal research project;
- Raise claims and support them with logical, evidence-based arguments;
- Evaluate and, if justified, refute counter arguments;

**Assessment tasks**
- Research Proposal
- Three minute thesis
- Submission of Thesis

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them
competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Use appropriate legal research methodologies, carry out independent research and analysis, and think creatively about legal problems;
- Critically analyse legal arguments orally and in writing;
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- Give an oral presentation of a research argument in an academic environment; and
- Formulate and present oral and written arguments appropriate to a legal research project.

**Assessment tasks**

- Three minute thesis
- Submission of Thesis

**Learning and Teaching Activities**

See detailed outline available on iLearn

**Technologies Used and Required**

Online units can be accessed at: [http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/](http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/).

PC and Internet access are required. Basic computer skills (e.g., internet browsing) and skills in word processing are also a requirement.

You may wish to use Endnote or Latec for referencing: we will discuss in class.

Please consult teaching staff for any further, more specific requirements.