



LAWS538

Access to Justice Placement Program

S2 External 2017

Dept of Law

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	6
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	6
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	8

Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Debra Ronan

debra.ronan@mq.edu.au

Contact via debra.ronan@mq.edu.au

W3A 518

Wednesday 12-4

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

30cp in LAW or LAWS and permission by special approval

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit involves attendance at clinical placements and internships. They include: 1. Public Interest Advocacy Centre – students learn the strategies and issues in advocating for the public interest, and explore strategies to achieve legal change. The program involves time at PIAC, and with the pro bono section of a law firm and a law-related agency 2. Western Sydney Community Legal Centre – students participate in community legal centre practice, study and reflect on access to justice issues, the operation of law in society, and the roles lawyers play. (weekly s1 and 2) 3. WSCLC Family Law Placement – students learn about family relationships law and practice in a community legal centre setting. 4. Aboriginal Legal Service – students undertake a paralegal placement at an Aboriginal Legal Service office in regional NSW. Entry to this unit is by application. Opportunities are advertised by the convenor by email in November for the session 1 following year, and in May for session 2. Placement opportunities at other organisations may arise during the year, and are advertised via email by the convenor

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Analyse and critique the social, political, ethical and legal issues involved in public provision of legal services in specific contexts including: public interest advocacy; or community legal centre practice; or family law; or Indigenous justice and advocacy

Contrast and analyse the connection and tension between law and procedure on the one hand, and the realities of legal practice on the other

Identify the personal and professional demands on, and expectations of, a lawyer in practice

Apply the interpersonal skills necessary in legal practice

Engage in reflection and develop self-awareness

Apply effective communication skills

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Placement</u>	0%	No	Completion of placement
<u>Class participation</u>	15%	No	See iLearn
<u>Presentation</u>	25%	No	See iLearn
<u>Research Essay</u>	40%	No	Friday 3 November
<u>Reflection</u>	20%	No	Various - see description

Placement

Due: **Completion of placement**

Weighting: **0%**

This is a pass/fail component. It is a hurdle requirement meaning that students must attend and participate in each placement day.

To indicate satisfactory attendance and participation, the placement supervisor will certify to the unit convenor that each student:

- attended each day
- responded to directions and carried out required tasks
- participated constructively in discussions
- acted ethically, i.e respectfully, with apparent honesty, and was aware of potential

conflicts of interest

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify the personal and professional demands on, and expectations of, a lawyer in practice
- Apply the interpersonal skills necessary in legal practice

Class participation

Due: **See iLearn**

Weighting: **15%**

Students are required to participate in class discussion by responding to set discussion questions. The questions and attendance dates for the various groups are provided on iLearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Contrast and analyse the connection and tension between law and procedure on the one hand, and the realities of legal practice on the other
- Identify the personal and professional demands on, and expectations of, a lawyer in practice

Presentation

Due: **See iLearn**

Weighting: **25%**

Students make an 8 minute presentation to members of the placement group, and other placement groups about a particular aspect of their placement and the institutions attended.

Guidelines and marking criteria are on iLearn. Dates for presentations will be allocated at the first seminar for each group.

Presentations will be held during weeks 9 and 11 (Monday-Thursday) 3.30 -5.30pm, or 5.30pm to 7.30pm. Students are only required to attend on the date of their presentation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply effective communication skills

Research Essay

Due: **Friday 3 November**

Weighting: **40%**

MLC - Students are required to submit a research essay on a social justice or community legal centre policy and practice issue. Topics will be provided, and students may nominate their own

topic for approval by the convenor.

PIAC - Students are required to submit a research essay on a public interest issue. Students must nominate their own topic for approval by the convenor.

FRC - Students are required to submit a research essay on issues that arise in provision of family law and community legal services. Topics will be provided. Students may also nominate their own topic for approval by the convenor.

ALS - Students are required to submit a research essay on issues relating to provision of services by the Aboriginal Legal Service Topics will be provided. Students may also nominate their own topic for approval by the convenor.

L&E Court - Students are required to submit a research essay on NSW Land and Environment Court practice, and / or litigants in person issues. Topics will be provided. Students may also nominate their own topic for approval by the convenor.

Aurora - Students must nominate their own topic for approval by the convenor.

Full details for each placement are on iLearn

Essay questions, marking and marking rubric are on iLearn

Essays are submitted via the Turnitin link on iLearn by 10pm on Friday 3 November

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and critique the social, political, ethical and legal issues involved in public provision of legal services in specific contexts including: public interest advocacy; or community legal centre practice; or family law; or Indigenous justice and advocacy

Reflection

Due: **Various - see description**

Weighting: **20%**

Depending upon the placement, students are required to write a reflective report or weekly journal entry for each week of the placement. Guidelines, marking criteria and full submission details are on iLearn

PIAC, ALS, Aurora, WSCLC Family Law July program - 1500 word reflective report due Friday week 4 (25/8).

WSCLC Family Law September program - 1500 word reflective report due Friday week 9 (13 October).

WSCLC weekly program - Weekly reflective journal (400 words) commencing Friday week 4

(25 August)

L&E Court weekly program - Weekly reflective journal (400 words) commencing Friday week 3 (18 August)

Reflective reports (PIAC, ALS, WSCLC, Aurora, Family intensive programs) are **submitted via the Reflective Report link on iLearn**

Reflective journals (WSCLC, L&E Court weekly program) are submitted by 10pm each Friday by email commencing week 4 (WSCLC) and week 3 (L&E Court), by email. Journals are to be merged into one document and submitted to iLearn by 10pm Friday week 13 (10 November)

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Engage in reflection and develop self-awareness

Delivery and Resources

Online units can be accessed at: <http://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>.

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

Outcomes have been merged, and assessment values have changed from previous offerings of the unit

Unit Schedule

Placements

Intensive placement with PIAC during July

Intensive placement with Macquarie Legal Centre Family Law program during July or September

Intensive placement with the Aboriginal Legal Service regional offices during July

Weekly placement with Macquarie Legal Centre commencing week 2

Weekly placement with NSW Land and Environment Court commencing week 1

Others as become available from time to time (will be advertised via email)

Macquarie Seminars

Reflective practice, practising in the public interest, access to justice, community legal centres and legal aid

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_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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/

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.

Macquarie Law School Policy on Assessments

In the absence of a successful application for special consideration due to a disruption to studies, any assessment task submitted after its published deadline will not be graded and will receive a mark of zero. Applications for a Disruption to Studies are made electronically via ask.mq.edu.au and should be accompanied by supporting documentation. Students should refer to the [Disruption to Studies policy](#) for complete details of the policy and a description of the supporting documentation required.

Word limits will be strictly applied and work above the word limit will not be marked.

All written assessments in the unit are to be submitted electronically. Plagiarism detection software is used in this unit.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (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 Services and 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.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources 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

- Identify the personal and professional demands on, and expectations of, a lawyer in practice
- Apply the interpersonal skills necessary in legal practice

Assessment task

- Placement

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 outcome

- Engage in reflection and develop self-awareness

Assessment task

- Reflection

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 systemically 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 outcome

- Analyse and critique the social, political, ethical and legal issues involved in public provision of legal services in specific contexts including: public interest advocacy; or community legal centre practice; or family law; or Indigenous justice and advocacy

Assessment task

- Research Essay

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 outcome

- Analyse and critique the social, political, ethical and legal issues involved in public provision of legal services in specific contexts including: public interest advocacy; or community legal centre practice; or family law; or Indigenous justice and advocacy

Assessment task

- Research Essay

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 outcome

- Apply effective communication skills

Assessment tasks

- Class participation
- Presentation

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

- Contrast and analyse the connection and tension between law and procedure on the one hand, and the realities of legal practice on the other

Assessment task

- Class participation