



MMCC8020

Public Relations and Communications

Session 1, Weekday attendance, North Ryde 2020

Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Lauren Gorfinkel lauren.gorfinkel@mq.edu.au
Credit points 10
Prerequisites Admission to MMediaComm or MCrind
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description Drawing on theories of public relations practice, with a focus on media relations, corporate social responsibility, and crisis management, this course analyses the relationship between public relations, the media, and corporate, government, and nonprofit stakeholders and situates the role of PR and media communications within broader social, political and cultural contexts.

Important Academic Dates

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

Learning Outcomes

ULO1: demonstrate advanced knowledge of the role and place of PR in contemporary society.

ULO2: analyse and evaluate the principles and theories of public relations.

ULO3: construct a media campaign that demonstrates knowledge of the principles of public relations writing.

ULO4: communicate knowledge and application of public relations theories and analyse contemporary public relations campaigns.

General Assessment Information

Assessment tasks are aligned to the unit Learning Outcomes. Timely submission of assessment tasks is a unit requirement or penalties apply. Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks

out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline.

You are required to attend all tutorials and engage with all lectures. As participation in the process of learning is linked to and underpins the unit Learning Outcomes, you will need to either apply for Special Consideration to cover any missed tutorial if the disruption is greater than three consecutive days or supply appropriate documentation to your unit convenor for any missed tutorial if less than three consecutive days.

For unit assessment requirements and standards for this unit, please refer to the Assessment Policy (Schedule 1): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/assessment>

Additional information

MMCCS website: <https://www.mq.edu.au/faculty-of-arts/departments-and-schools/departments-of-media,-music,-communication-and-cultural-studies>

Information is correct at the time of publication

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Part 1 – Media Campaign	30%	No	Week 6, April 2
Part 2 - Media Event	20%	No	Weeks 8-12
Crisis Communication Case Study	50%	No	Week 12, May 28

Part 1 – Media Campaign

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **Week 6, April 2**

Weighting: **30%**

For this assessment, students will work in teams to put together a media campaign including such materials as a media release, fact sheet/backgrounder, profile/biography of spokesperson, Q and As for an interview, images and videos/storyboards etc. Students will be marked on their individual contribution.

Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate advanced knowledge of the role and place of PR in contemporary society.
- construct a media campaign that demonstrates knowledge of the principles of public

relations writing.

- communicate knowledge and application of public relations theories and analyse contemporary public relations campaigns.

Part 2 - Media Event

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **Weeks 8-12**

Weighting: **20%**

For this assessment, students will work in the same teams as for assessment 1 to organise a media event for their organisation around the key issue raised in your media campaign. The assessment will involve writing scripts for key spokespeople as well as anticipated journalists' questions.

Students will engage in a role-play/simulation in class and reflect on the experience of acting in the role-play.

Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate advanced knowledge of the role and place of PR in contemporary society.
- communicate knowledge and application of public relations theories and analyse contemporary public relations campaigns.

Crisis Communication Case Study

Assessment Type ¹: Case study/analysis

Indicative Time on Task ²: 32 hours

Due: **Week 12, May 28**

Weighting: **50%**

For this assessment, students will write an analysis of an organisation that has faced a recent crisis. Students will introduce the organisation, explain the nature of the crisis, analyse important media articles and social media posts in relation to crisis management theory, and assess how well they handled the situation in relation to crisis management theory and principles.

Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate advanced knowledge of the role and place of PR in contemporary society.
- analyse and evaluate the principles and theories of public relations.

¹ If you need guidance or support to understand or complete this type of assessment, please

contact the Learning Skills Team

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

Lectures and Tutorials MMCC8020 consists of a 2 hour weekly seminar. Seminars begin in Week 2. Students are expected to listen/watch prescribed audio-visual materials and read assigned readings prior to their seminar to ensure they are prepared for class discussions and activities.

Audio-Visual Materials and Required Reading

Audio-visual materials and set readings will be available electronically via iLearn.

Recommended Textbooks:

The below 3 books are highly recommended. They collectively cover the main focus areas of this unit and will reinforce much of the lecture content. They will provide further examples and explanation that can be applied to assessment tasks and tutorial discussions and activities. They are available for loan via Macquarie University and can be purchased online e.g. through Booktopia.

Sutherland, K., Ali, S. and Khattab, U. (2019) *Public Relations and Strategic Communication*. Oxford University Press: Melbourne. (Covers all weekly topics)

Johnston, J. and Rowney, K. (2018) *Media Strategies: Managing content, platforms and relationships*. Allen and Unwin: Sydney. (In-depth on media relations)

Brataas, K. (2018) *Crisis Communication: Case Studies and Lessons Learned from International Disasters*. Routledge: NY. (In-depth on crisis communication)

Technology required

Students are expected to access iLearn: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/> at least once a week and keep up-to-date with announcements and new materials. Students are also advised to check their student emails regularly for ilearn and unit updates. They should be able to access pertinent scholarly and professional information from the library and from broader online, media and social media sources.

Unit Schedule

Weekly Topics:

- Introduction to PR and the Communications Industry
- Media engagement strategies
- Understanding and defining key publics
- Research used in PR practice
- Ethical behaviour and codes of practice in PR

- Crisis Communication: Cases and Techniques
- Government and Political Communications
- Community Engagement and NGOs
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate PR
- International and Multicultural PR
- Internal PR/Employee Communications

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

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 Enquiry Service

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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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://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.