



LAWS5057

Conflict of Laws

Session 2, Special circumstance 2020

Macquarie Law School

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Disclaimer

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Notice

As part of [Phase 3 of our return to campus plan](#), most units will now run tutorials, seminars and other small group learning activities on campus for the second half-year, while keeping an online version available for those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies online.

To check the availability of face-to-face and online activities for your unit, please go to [timetable viewer](#). To check detailed information on unit assessments visit your unit's iLearn space or consult your unit convenor.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Dr. Harry Melkonian

harry.melkonian@mq.edu.au

Contact via students must use private iLEarn communication

TBA

TBA

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

80cp in LAW or LAWS units

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit deals with rules for resolving difficulties when a private legal problem has an international element. Such difficulties fall into three categories: first, do our courts have jurisdiction to decide a matter that has connections with another country; second, which law should our courts use to decide the dispute, our law or the law of some other country; and third, if a matter has been decided by a foreign court, should our courts recognise and enforce the foreign judgment? Therefore this unit spans many related topics, including tort, contract, succession and family law.

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:

ULO1: Critically analyse the common law and statutory rules governing conflict of laws.

ULO2: Critically analyse key international agreements and jurisdictional concepts that may apply to conflict situations.

ULO3: Evaluate the mechanics and controversy regarding anti-suit injunctions with respect to foreign legal proceedings.

ULO4: Explain how choice of law and choice of forum apply in commercial, contractual, or tort disputes.

ULO5: Examine the doctrine of international comity as it relates to protection of local judicial process and the implications of enforcement of foreign judgments within Australia and Australian judgments in other countries.

ULO6: Critically analyse challenges posed by the internet in general and social media in particular in situations involving contract and tort disputes, including commercial transactions, privacy, defamation, and local suppression orders.

General Assessment Information

Late Assessment Penalty

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. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Word limits will be strictly applied and work exceeding the word limit will not be graded. Citations should conform to the current version of the AGLC

All assessments in this unit are to be submitted electronically. Plagiarism detection software is used in this unit. papers and exams may only be submitted once - once submitted they cannot be withdrawn

With respect to moderation, detailed rubrics will be made available on iLearn. All fail papers are double-marked by the Unit Convenor

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Mid-Semester Test</u>	30%	No	03/10/2020
<u>Final Test</u>	40%	No	17/11/2020
<u>Formative Quizzes</u>	0%	No	Week 3
<u>Essay</u>	30%	No	30/09/2020

Mid-Semester Test

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **03/10/2020**

Weighting: **30%**

This will be a mid-semester test.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically analyse the common law and statutory rules governing conflict of laws.
- Critically analyse key international agreements and jurisdictional concepts that may apply to conflict situations.
- Evaluate the mechanics and controversy regarding anti-suit injunctions with respect to foreign legal proceedings.

Final Test

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 25 hours

Due: **17/11/2020**

Weighting: **40%**

This is the final online test.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically analyse the common law and statutory rules governing conflict of laws.
- Critically analyse key international agreements and jurisdictional concepts that may apply to conflict situations.
- Evaluate the mechanics and controversy regarding anti-suit injunctions with respect to foreign legal proceedings.
- Explain how choice of law and choice of forum apply in commercial, contractual, or tort disputes.
- Examine the doctrine of international comity as it relates to protection of local judicial process and the implications of enforcement of foreign judgments within Australia and Australian judgments in other countries.
- Critically analyse challenges posed by the internet in general and social media in particular in situations involving contract and tort disputes, including commercial transactions, privacy, defamation, and local suppression orders.

Formative Quizzes

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 6 hours

Due: **Week 3**

Weighting: **0%**

These are open book multiple choice quizzes. These will not count for final grade, but used to assess understanding across semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Evaluate the mechanics and controversy regarding anti-suit injunctions with respect to foreign legal proceedings.

Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **30/09/2020**

Weighting: **30%**

All students must write an essay in response to a set question or problem that will be based on a current issue encompassed within conflict of laws.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Critically analyse key international agreements and jurisdictional concepts that may apply to conflict situations.
- Critically analyse challenges posed by the internet in general and social media in particular in situations involving contract and tort disputes, including commercial transactions, privacy, defamation, and local suppression orders.

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

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

Please Note that class scheduling is tentative depending on whether live tutorials are offered.

This unit is taught through a combination of lectures and tutorials. The lectures are offered iLearn on the Echo360 System

The prescribed casebook is Nygh's Conflict of Laws 10th Ed (2020). If students feel that they would benefit from a textbook, Private International Law in Australia by Reid Mortensen et al 4th Edition (2019) may be helpful but will not be referred to in the course and is not required.

In addition to the casebook, we will have substantial recourse to other materials, including recently decided cases, journal articles and book chapters. These materials will be listed in iLearn by respective topic. Most of these materials will be available through Leganto. Very recent cases will be available through online library resources.

Attendance at tutorials is an essential element of this course because exercises are conducted during tutorials and these exercises are directly relevant to questions raised in the assessments. The techniques addressed in the tutorials are expected to be utilised in responding to exam questions. In effect class participation is rolled into the assessments. Because if you do not engage in the tutorials, you will be unable to complete the assessments.

If you cannot regularly attend Tutorials, you should not enroll in this course as exam topics usually rely on tutorials as opposed to lectures. An attendance role will be taken at each tutorial session. Students may, from time to time, attend tutorial sessions other than the one in which they are enrolled providing that seating is available. As part of the art of lawyering, conflict of laws issues are best addressed through problem solving. Success in the examinations is invariably associated with active participation in the tutorials. During the tutorials, we will review current cases that are not in the casebook and students will attempt to solve conflict of laws problems. While participation is essential for satisfactory completion of the course, tutorial work is not graded - it is an opportunity to see how the doctrines actually work to solve problems. It is a time for students to support each other as we work through challenging real-life situations based on recent Australian, UK, Canadian, EU and US case decisions.

It is also anticipated that our class will engage in drafting a public submission regarding the Hague Convention on Enforcement of Judgments. This project is voluntary and is not graded.

Students who are not prepared to attend and participate in tutorials should not enroll in this course.

Unit Schedule

The following is a general and somewhat idealised version of what we will cover. The current version will be available on iLearn and will be subject to modification.

The study of conflict of laws has never been more essential than it is now. As Australian lawmakers struggle to deal with international media problems, the key issues of jurisdiction, choice of law, and recognition of judgments become essential tools of the lawyer and lawmaker. These subjects constitute Conflict of Laws.

We will focus on the application of law to such matters as hate speech, online commercial

transactions and privacy abuses where there is some element of multinational activity.

Conflict of laws is sometimes called private international law. However, in Australia, Canada and the United States, conflict of laws is a more apt title because the situations are typically domestic as opposed to international. This, however, is changing, as Australia attempts to enforce its domestic laws against multi-national corporations.

Conflict of laws issues are central to the actual practice of law. Essentially conflicts, as it is commonly known, deals with many aspects of procedural law - some of which may be outcome determinative. The most well-known aspect of this subject is the subject of choice of law. This is the doctrine that enables a lawyer to advise the court as to the body of law that is to be applied to a dispute. The subject also deals with jurisdiction, injunctions in aid of jurisdiction, restraints on local proceedings and enforcement of judgments. Conflicts may be unique among law courses because it is perhaps the only subject in which non-lawyers rarely have any knowledge or even awareness of the concept's existence. It is not unfair to say the conflict of laws is a subject known only to the legal profession and is essential to the lawyer's art. While frequently addressed in terms of disputes (litigation), conflict of laws is an essential body of law for legal practitioners who draft agreements because many conflicts issues are subject to party agreement.

Conflicts is not just a matter of following rules. Rather, knowledge of conflicts guides skilled practitioners in obtaining better outcomes for their clients. While based on legal theory, in practice, conflicts permits lawyers to attempt to utilise the most desirable venues and bodies of law to benefit their clients' interests. Conflict of laws is somewhat of a misnomer; the actual focus is on personal jurisdiction, choice of law or forum selection and this unit will examine essential concepts relating to these issues.

Using a problem-based approach, this course will examine a variety of circumstances to see how conflicts theory can be strategically applied to influence the ultimate outcome of a dispute. Perhaps the centrality of a working knowledge of conflict of laws is exemplified by the following examples:

A client believes that she has been defamed by a posting on a social media website. The individual who made the posting is unknown (but known to the website operator). The corporation that owns the social media website is located in the United States and does not have any offices in Australia but does have a local subsidiary.

The client wants you to file suit against the social media company in NSW. Does the court have in personam jurisdiction (jurisdiction over the person of the defendant), which state's (nation's) laws of defamation would apply, and how could any judgment in your client's favour be enforced?

Or, in a more mundane situation -

An independent contractor called Alan resides in Victoria. He is assigned projects by Apex Corporation. Apex trained him in Victoria and required him to purchase various specified equipment including a stepladder manufactured by Bosco Specialties in Brisbane, Queensland. Most of the work performed by Alan for Apex is in Victoria. While working on a project for Apex just across the border in New South Wales, Alan fell from the stepladder and sustained

extremely serious injuries. Alan believes that he fell because the ladder was defectively designed and manufactured. Alan's claim against Apex has been resolved through Workers' Compensation and is not in issue.

Alan presents himself to you at your law office in Victoria. A decision is made to proceed by way of litigation in the Supreme Court of Victoria against Bosco Specialties. The plaintiff was tardy coming to you for advice but you ascertain that the statute of limitations for pursuing an action in tort is not time barred under Victorian law. But, you also note that under both NSW and Queensland laws, the action appears to be time-barred. If the action is commenced in Victoria, will it likely be time-barred?

While the common law of tort is uniform across Australia; statutes of limitation vary among the States. Here, the correct statute of limitation may be outcome determinative. While this seems like a rather mundane personal injury matter, it presents classic conflict of laws issues that will likely decide whether the matter may proceed or will be time-barred.

In both of these situations, conflict of laws provides the tools necessary to reach the better results

Tentative Weekly Schedule - Readings will also materials listed on iLearn and available through Leganto

Week 1	<p>Introduction to the Unit – Why conflict of laws is central to the practice of law? Implications of the Internet. In Personam Jurisdiction</p> <p>Casebook Ch. 1 and 3</p> <p>Casebook refers to <i>Nygh's Conflict of Laws</i> 10th edition (2020)</p> <p>Mark Leeming, <i>Authority to Decide - The Law of Jurisdiction in Australia</i> 2d ed (2020), Chapter 1 [available on Leganto]</p>
Week 2	<p>Federal Jurisdiction and Cross-Vested Jurisdiction</p> <p>Casebook: Ch. 5 §§ 5.1 - 5.6, 5.16 - 5.23; Ch. 6 - entire Chapter</p> <p>Mark Leeming, <i>Authority to Decide - The Law of Jurisdiction in Australia</i> 2d ed (2020), Chapter 7 [available on Leganto]</p>

Week 3	<p>Forum Selection Agreements (Party Autonomy) and Forum Non Conveniens</p> <p>Casebook: Ch. 7 §§ 7.1 - 7.52; Ch 8 - entire chapter</p> <p>Ronald Brand & Scott Jablonski, <i>Forum Non Conveniens - History, Global Practice and Future</i> (2007), Chapter 6 [Available on Leganto]</p> <p>Formative Quiz 1 is available this week on iLearn</p>
Week 4	<p>Anti-Suit Injunctions</p> <p>Casebook: Ch. 9</p> <p>Giles Cuniberti, <i>Conflict of Laws - A Comparative Approach</i> (2017) Ch 4 [available on Leganto]</p>
Week 5	<p>Choice of Law Theory (Part 1)</p> <p>Casebook: Chapters 12, 13 (13 - not emphasised) & 14</p> <p>Franco Ferrari & Diego Arroyo, <i>Private International Law</i> (2019) Ch 1 [available on Leganto]</p>
Week 6	<p>Choice of Law Theory (Part 2) - including Renvoi</p> <p>Casebook: Chapters 15, 16 & 17 (17 - not emphasised)</p> <p>Cuniberti, <i>Conflict of Laws</i> Ch 3 p. 94 - 112</p>

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Exclusion of Foreign Law and Doctrine of Depeceage</p> <p>Casebook Ch. 18</p> <p>Somerset's Case</p> <p>Christopher Stevenson, 'Depeceage: Embracing Complexity to Solve Choice of Law Issues' 37 <i>Indiana Law Review</i> 303 (2003)</p> <p>Willis Reese, 'Depeceage: A Common Phenomenon in Choice of Law' 73 <i>Columbia Law Review</i> 58 (1973)</p> <p>These articles are of limited value because they are entirely American-centric</p> <p>For depeceage, Please read:</p> <p>Rataplan P/L v Commissioner of Taxation [2004] FCA 920</p> <p>Hebrew University v General Motors, 903 F.Supp.2d 932 (CD Cal. 2012)</p> <p>Chen v. L.A. Truck Centers, 22 July 2019 - Supreme Court of California [disregard reversed Court of Appeal decision on Leganto]</p> <p>Paper Assignments will be distributed on iLearn. Papers are due on 30 September at 11:59PM.</p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Contracts Choice of Law</p> <p>Casebook: Ch.19</p> <p>Michael Douglas et al, <i>Commercial Issues in Private International Law</i> (2019) Ch 12 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>Alex Mills, <i>Party Autonomy in Private International Law</i> (2018) Ch 7 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>Papers Due on 30 September 11:59 PM</p> <p>Mid-Term Exam Quiz on Saturday 3 October 1PM - 3:30 PM (includes reading time)</p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Choice of Law – Torts</p> <p>Casebook: Ch. 20</p> <p>Cuniberti, <i>Conflicts of Law</i> Ch 10 [available on Leganto]</p>

Week 10	<p>Conflict of Laws and comity - a potentially over-riding factor that is still in its legal infancy</p> <p>X v Twitter [2017] NSWSC 1300</p> <p>Animal Science products v Hebei Welcome, U.S. Supreme Court, Slip Opinion (14 June 2018)</p> <p>and Google v Equustek</p> <p>All available on Leganto</p>
Week 11	<p>Enforcement of Foreign Judgments at Common Law and by Statute</p> <p>Casebook Chapters 40 and 41</p> <p>Ferrari et al, <i>Private International Law</i> Ch 14 [available on Leganto]</p>
Week 12	<p>Conflict of Laws and the Internet Part 1 - Jurisdiction and Choice of Law</p> <p>Dan Svantesson, <i>Private International Law and the Internet</i> (3rd ed 2016) Ch 2 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>Dan Svantesson, <i>Solving the Internet Jurisdiction Puzzle</i> (2017) Ch 4</p> <p>Horatio Watt et al, <i>Global Private International Law</i> 2019) Ch 19</p>
Week 13	<p>Conflict of Laws and the Internet Part 2 (enforcement of judgments)</p> <p>Uta Kohl, <i>Jurisdiction and the Internet</i> (2007) Ch 6 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>Dan Svantesson, <i>Private International Law and the Internet</i> (3rd ed 2016) Ch 9 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>Dan Svantesson, <i>Solving the Internet Jurisdiction Puzzle</i> (2017) Ch 3 [available on Leganto]</p> <p>additional materials on Leganto</p> <p>Please note that during the Tutorial we will be putting it all together:</p> <p>Jurisdiction - Forum Non Conveniens - Cross Vesting - Injunctions - Choice of Law - Enforcement of Judgments - The Internet</p> <p>Wrap-Up: Reflection, Confusion, Exam Readiness</p>

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-centr](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-centr)

al). 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](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

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

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

Changes from Previous Offering

An integral aspect of this course is the discussion of new caselaw from Australian, Canadian, American, British or EU Courts - this necessarily changes each year.

In addition, the content in Weeks 12 and 13 is constantly being updated to deal with conflict of laws as applied to situations where the underlying dispute relates to the internet, including social media. This year, social media will receive continuing attention throughout the course