# MMCC2100

## Public Relations and Social Media: Foundations and Cases

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2024

*Department of Media, Communications, Creative Arts, Language and Literature*

# Contents

# General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Convenor, Lecturer, Tutor
Lauren Gorfinkel
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Mondays 11am-12pm (after the lecture)

Tutor
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Credit points
10

Prerequisites
40cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

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Unit description

This unit is an introduction to the theory and practice of Public Relations (PR) and Social Media. Students will explore the dominant perceptions of PR and Social Media, while investigating its presence in our everyday life. We will examine the relationship between PR and Social Media with a focus on media relations, crisis communication, corporate social responsibility and not-for-profit campaigns. The unit will enable you to be informed about the role that PR and Social Media plays in our social, political and cultural environments. It will also help develop strong conceptual and analytical foundations as well as creative and presentation skills in preparation for a career in public communications and the media.

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## 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:** analyse and demonstrate knowledge of the role and place of PR and Social Media in contemporary society.

**ULO2:** evaluate the principles and theories of PR and Social Media.

**ULO3:** communicate, present and debate your own ideas to a group.

**ULO4:** exhibit high level English writing skills in academic and professional forms.

**ULO5:** construct a campaign or project that demonstrates your ability to apply knowledge, analyse issues and solve a problem in a creative way that is understandable to others.

**ULO6:** communicate your understanding of PR and Social Media in written form.

# General Assessment Information

## Late Penalty

*Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved,* ***a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted****, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of '0' (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only.* ***Late submission of time sensitive tasks*** *(such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs* ***will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application****.*

If you find you cannot submit your assignment on time, please apply for Special Consideration

through AskMQ. Make sure you read Macquarie University's policy regarding Special Consideration requests before you apply: https://students.mq.edu.au/study/assessment-exams/special-consideration

**Additional information**

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

To achieve the full benefit of learning in this unit towards successful completion of assessment tasks, it is crucial to engage with the lectures, read the set readings, and actively participate in the tutorials. The tutorials will be heavily focused on discussing important knowledge and understandings of the industry introduced in the lectures, workshopping ideas, working through scenarios, and developing projects that will form the basis of your assessments, as well as practicing important related skills relevant to a career in public relations and social media.

# Assessment Tasks

| Name | Weighting | Hurdle | Due |
|------|-----------|--------|-----|
| Media Relations Campaign | 60% | No | Part A 23:55 29/03/24 (Wk6); Part B 23:55, 12/04/24 (Wk8) |
| PR and Social Media Essay | 40% | No | 23:55 31/05/24 (Wk13) |

## Media Relations Campaign

Assessment Type [1]: Presentation
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 48 hours
Due: **Part A 23:55 29/03/24 (Wk6); Part B 23:55, 12/04/24 (Wk8)**
Weighting: **60%**

For this assessment, you will prepare a media relations campaign for a client (an organization or individual). The campaign may include such items as an email pitch to a journalist, a media release and a video for your client explaining your choice of media outlet, journalist, angle and other background research. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- communicate, present and debate your own ideas to a group.
- exhibit high level English writing skills in academic and professional forms.
- construct a campaign or project that demonstrates your ability to apply knowledge,

analyse issues and solve a problem in a creative way that is understandable to others.

• communicate your understanding of PR and Social Media in written form.

## PR and Social Media Essay

Assessment Type [1]: Essay
Indicative Time on Task [2]: 37 hours
Due: **23:55 31/05/24 (Wk13)**
Weighting: **40%**

For this assessment you will write an essay analysing an organisation's use of social media in a crisis or for awareness and action. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

• analyse and demonstrate knowledge of the role and place of PR and Social Media in contemporary society.

• evaluate the principles and theories of PR and Social Media.

• exhibit high level English writing skills in academic and professional forms.

• communicate your understanding of PR and Social Media in written form.

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[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

**Lectures and Tutorials** MMCC2100 consists of a 1-hour live lecture (online) and a 1-hour tutorial (online or on-campus depending on tutorial, check timetable). Lectures begin in Week 1, while tutorials begin in Week 2.

Students are expected to engage in the lecture (live or recorded), read the assigned readings, and engage with any set tutorial/workshop tasks prior to their tutorial to ensure they are prepared for class discussions and activities. All details will be provided on ilearn and/or in the lectures.

**Audio-Visual Materials**

Audio-visual materials including recorded lectures, lecture slides, tutorial materials and online

readings will be available via iLearn.

## Readings

All required readings will be available electronically and linked to the weekly topics in Leganto/ ilearn. It is recommended that you start with the set textbook first where listed and move on to other readings to assist with your assessment tasks if you have more time. A weekly reading guide will be available on ilearn.

## Textbook

The following book is the set texbook for this unit:

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

The chapters in the book form the weekly readings for most weeks. Knowledge of content from both the lectures and this book will provide a solid basis for the assessment tasks and may be referenced in assessments along with any other readings relevant to your specific project or case study.

The textbook will be **available via ilearn/Leganto/the library** as an **e-book**. As a limited number of students will be able to access the book at any one time, it is highly recommended that students purchase their own copy in case they are unable to access the library copies when needed.

If you are relying on the library copies please download relevant chapters early (there will be a download limit based on copyright restrictions) or read online (if you have reached the download limit) and log off ASAP to give everyone an opportunity.

If you'd like to purchase your own **e-book** you can get 20% off the e-book by using the code SAVE20 at the checkout:

https://www.oup.com.au/books/higher-education/media,-journalism-and-public-relations/9780190 304614-public-relations-and-strategic-communication-ebook?id_op=rQl9OuV-3o90

If you would like to purchase the book **in print**, you may try the following distributers.

Booktopia

Amazon

## Technology required

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

You will be required to create a video capturing face-to-camera as well as slides. The suggested platforms for recording this assessment are Zoom, Echo360, or PowerPoint. If you have any issues with access to technology, please consult with the unit convenor or your tutor as soon as

possible. You are advised to test out technology in the first week of the unit (don't wait until the week your assignment is due). If you have any technical difficulties please contact onehelp@mq.edu.au for assistance.

# Unit Schedule

PR FOUNDATIONS, ETHICS AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

**Week 1:** Introduction to PR and the Unit

**Week 2:** History of PR, PR Ethics and Key PR Theories

**Week 3:** Key Concepts and Best Practice Principles in PR: Organisation, Agency, Publics, Reputation, Relationships, Channels, Objectives, Messages

**Week 4:** Issue and Crisis Communications: Theories and Cases

MEDIA RELATIONS

**Week 5:** Earned/Media Relations Strategies: How to engage with journalists

**Week 6:** Technology in PR: AI and Media Release Writing (Assessment 1 – Part A: Media Relations Strategy Video Due 30%)

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

**Week 7:** Social Media, Owned Media and Earned Media in a Crisis

**Week 8:** Review / Crisis Simulation (Assessment 1 - Part B: Media Release/Reflection on AI Due 30%)

MID-SEMESTER BREAK

PROACTIVE CHANGE CAMPAIGNS

**Week 9:** Community, NGO and Activist PR

**Week 10:** Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

**Week 11:** Government PR

**Week 12:** PR Research, Analysis and Essay Writing Skills

Week 13: No class (Assessment 2 - Essay Due 40%)

# Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central (https://policie

s.mq.edu.au). 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
- Assessment Procedure
- Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public
- Special Consideration Policy

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

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit Policy Central (https://policies.mq.edu.au) and use the search tool.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/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

# Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe academic integrity – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free online writing and maths support, academic skills development and wellbeing consultations.

# Student Support

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

## The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- Workshops
- Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader
- Access StudyWISE
- Upload an assignment to Studiosity
- Complete the 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

Macquarie University offers a range of Student Support Services including:

- IT Support
- Accessibility and disability support with study
- Mental health support
- Safety support to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues
- Student Advocacy provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

## Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via AskMQ, or contact Service Connect.

## 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.

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Unit information based on version 2024.01R of the Handbook