



GEOP4070

Social Impact Assessment

Session 1, Online-flexible 2025

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor, lecturer, tutor

Fiona Miller

fiona.miller@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

Arts Precinct, 25B WW, Rm B264

By appointment only

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Social impact assessment (SIA) is an important assessment tool with wide application in land use planning. This unit provides an introduction to and broad overview of SIA in urban and regional environments, and addresses both the processes needed to accomplish a diligent assessment and the resources available to inform the assessment process. Through the use of current case studies, the unit provides an insight into practical difficulties, common mistakes and ethical issues that are frequently encountered. Students will learn how to recognise and respond to these problems, apply social science research methods to impact assessment and present impact issues to non-specialist audiences.

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: Explain the practice and requirements of SIA in planning systems

ULO2: Recognise key social impact issues that occur in planning practice

ULO3: Apply knowledge and key concepts from social impact assessment to critical evaluation of planning decisions

ULO4: Identify and discuss ways of integrating social issues into planning discourse and planning decisions

ULO5: Research and discuss complex ideas about social change, social process and assessment of social impacts

ULO6: Recognise ethical issues and risks in impact assessment

General Assessment Information

Late Submission Penalty

Circumstances that affect your ability to complete assignments by the deadline must be discussed with the unit convenor prior to the due date. Extensions will be granted only in unforeseen or exceptional circumstances according to the University Special Consideration policy. Students must apply online via AskMQ and provide appropriate supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate).

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 non-time sensitive assessment (incl. essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special Consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Social impact issues	30%	No	19/03/2025
Critique of case study	40%	No	30/04/2025
Presentation of key SIA issue	30%	No	04/06/2025

Social impact issues

Assessment Type ¹: Report

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **19/03/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

1000 word report identifying social impact issues raised by a proposed project

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the practice and requirements of SIA in planning systems
- Recognise key social impact issues that occur in planning practice

Critique of case study

Assessment Type ¹: Case study/analysis

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **30/04/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

2000 word review of a social impact assessment or similar document

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Apply knowledge and key concepts from social impact assessment to critical evaluation of planning decisions
- Identify and discuss ways of integrating social issues into planning discourse and planning decisions
- Research and discuss complex ideas about social change, social process and assessment of social impacts
- Recognise ethical issues and risks in impact assessment

Presentation of key SIA issue

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **04/06/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

Presentation of social impact issues in a form suited to an identified audience plus 600 word written commentary

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify and discuss ways of integrating social issues into planning discourse and

planning decisions

- Research and discuss complex ideas about social change, social process and assessment of social impacts
- Recognise ethical issues and risks in impact assessment

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

Lectures and tutorials will be offered via a 3 hour block of teaching on Thursdays 9am-12pm in 08SCO 117 Tutorial Room.

Lectures (1.5 hours) will be delivered face to face and be recorded and available via Echo360 on iLearn.

GEOP4070 has a full schedule of online and on-campus (1.5 hours) tutorials that enhance your general and discipline-specific skills and knowledge. It is important that you attend all tutorials for GEOP4070.

Unit webpage

The webpage for this unit can be found at iLearn, the Macquarie University online learning system at <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au>. iLearn has both a discussion board and an internal email system. The webpage will provide you with access to lectures through the University's echo360 lecture recording facility, as well as to follow-up discussion, links, readings and forum discussions. Access to the website is essential to complete GEOP4070.

Unit Schedule

Wk	Date	Lecture and tutorial topic	Lecturer	Assessments
Module I – Introduction to and Guiding Concepts in SIA				
1	27/02/2025	Unit overview and orientation to Social Impact Assessment in planning	FM	
2	06/03/2025	Key moments in the development of SIA and why we need SIA?	FM	

3	13/03/2025	What are the social issues in SIA?	AZ	
Module II –Methods and Process in SIA				
4	20/03/2025	Uses and abuses of SIA	AZ	*Social impact issues report Wed 19/03/2025 (11:55pm)
5	27/03/2025	Methods, data, ethics and power in SIA	FM	
Module III – SIA in Practice				
6	03/04/2025	SIA in Transport Planning	FM	
7	10/04/2025	SIA in Energy Projects	FM	
Mid-semester break (14/04/25-25/04/25)				
8	01/05/2025	SIA in Disaster Contexts	FM	*Critique of case study Wed 30/04/2025 (11:55pm)
9	08/05/2025	<i>Guest lecture</i>	TBC	
10	15/05/2025	SIA in Extractive Industries	FM	
11	22/05/2025	SIA in Mine Closure	FM	
12	29/05/2025	SIA of loss, damage and compensation	FM	
Module IV – Conclusion and review				
13	05/06/2025	Conclusion and review	FM	Presentation of SIA issue 4/6/2025 (11:55 pm)

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.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) (<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) (<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 connect.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 the [Service Connect Portal](#), 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.

Changes from Previous Offering

Reflecting the change in convenor for the unit this year a number of new lectures, tutorial topics and activities, and readings have been added.

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Unit information based on version 2025.02 of the [Handbook](#)