



LAWS5084

Media Law

Session 1, Online-scheduled-weekday 2025

Macquarie Law School

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Adjunct Fellow, Lecturer, Tutor
Harry Melkonian
Contact via iLearn
see iLearn

Credit points
10

Prerequisites
(130 cp in LAW or LAWS units) or (130cp including MMCC2014 or MAS214)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

How do different countries decide who should control the media, as well as what they should and should not show? If we value free speech, how should we regulate material such as political debate, defamation, privacy, pornography, vilification and advertising? How do we hit the right balance between state media control and the right of individuals to free expression? These issues are regulated under Media Law. While focusing on Australia, this unit takes an international and comparative perspective to analysing how media issues are regulated. Students will examine topics such as the day-to-day legal restrictions on the media and what it is like to advise on media content.

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: Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of how Australia regulates important aspects of the media.

ULO2: Apply key and relevant aspects of Australian media laws and regulation to resolve real or hypothetical situations

ULO3: Provide advice in relation to potential legal challenges encountered by, for example, media creators, users or publishers in Australia.

ULO4: Critically analyse the relevance of different theoretical frameworks and/or different jurisdictional approaches as they apply to aspects of media law

General Assessment Information

All written assessments submitted electronically must be submitted through the link provided in iLearn. This unit will utilise Turnitin plagiarism detection software. Students should carefully check that they submit the correct file for an assessment, as re-submissions will not be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students upload an incorrect file in error.

The design, moderation and feedback of all assessments is in accordance with the Macquarie University Assessment Procedure (link provided under 'Policies and Procedures' below).

Late Submission Policy

A maximum penalty of five (5) percentage points of the total possible marks will be applied per day to late submissions, for up to a maximum of seven calendar days. Tasks that have not been submitted within the maximum number of additional late days will receive a mark of zero. This provision does not apply to online exams or other assessment with a time limit of less than 24 hours.

Penalties for late submission will be applied consistently and equitably to all students enrolled in the unit. Where short-term, serious and unavoidable circumstances have affected their ability to submit an assessment task, a student must submit a formal application for Special Consideration as per the Special Consideration Policy. Students should not request an informal arrangement from their tutor, lecturer or Unit Convenor.

Where an application for Special Consideration is approved, and the outcome is an extension to the due date of a task, submissions that are received after the new due date will be subject to late penalties that are calculated from the new due date. This only applies where the outcome is an extension to the due date – see the Special Consideration Policy for a schedule of all possible outcomes.

Special Consideration

Students should submit applications for Special Consideration electronically via the Service Connect portal, along with the supporting documentation. Before submitting their applications, students should refer to the Special Consideration Policy (link provided under 'Policies and Procedures' below).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Research Essay</u>	40%	No	12/04/2025
<u>Professional advice</u>	40%	No	01/06/2025
<u>Professional Skills</u>	20%	No	Ongoing

Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **12/04/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will be asked to submit an essay analysing topics in media law. This task may (or may not) take place in timed conditions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of how Australia regulates important aspects of the media.
- Critically analyse the relevance of different theoretical frameworks and/or different jurisdictional approaches as they apply to aspects of media law

Professional advice

Assessment Type ¹: Professional writing

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **01/06/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

Students will be asked to prepare professional advice (for example, legal advice to a client or proposal for law reform). This task may (or may not) take place in timed conditions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of how Australia regulates important aspects of the media.
- Apply key and relevant aspects of Australian media laws and regulation to resolve real or hypothetical situations
- Provide advice in relation to potential legal challenges encountered by, for example, media creators, users or publishers in Australia.

Professional Skills

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will engage in classroom activities including mootings, presentations or demonstrations, structured discussion and problem solving, doctrinal analysis, simulated client consultations, and collaborative legal research. Through these activities students will develop skills in oral advocacy, legal analysis, critical reasoning, teamwork and team leadership, and/or strategic problem-solving. These activities are designed to strengthen students' ability to communicate legal concepts verbally and engage professionally within a supportive learning environment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate an advanced knowledge of how Australia regulates important aspects of the media.
- Apply key and relevant aspects of Australian media laws and regulation to resolve real or hypothetical situations
- Provide advice in relation to potential legal challenges encountered by, for example, media creators, users or publishers in Australia.
- Critically analyse the relevance of different theoretical frameworks and/or different jurisdictional approaches as they apply to aspects of media law

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

Delivery

Lectures: There will be one two hour lecture during Weeks 1-12. Tutorials will run in Weeks 2-13. The lectures will be recorded on ECHO by the Convenor. In principle, lectures should be available by Monday of the designated week.

Tutorials: Tutorials are conducted both face to face and online. Your Professional Skills grade will be based on performance in tutorial exercises. Consequently, attendance and participation are essential.

This unit is worth 10 credit points, which equates to 150 hours of work. Therefore, students should expect to commit an average of 10 hours per week to this unit, including all scheduled and unscheduled activities and preparing and executing the assessment tasks.

Resources

The required textbook/s is/are:

David Rolph, **Media Law 3rd ed** (Oxford University Press 2022)

Students can purchase this textbook online.

Additional readings will be accessible through iLearn.

Students require access to a computer, internet with decent speed and a secure/reliable server. The iLearn page contains all Unit requirements and a weekly schedule for teaching, readings and tutorials. Information about all assessment tasks is also available on iLe

Unit Schedule

Our goal is to learn law in a very contemporary context. Topics of focus are subject to change depending on current events and vary from year to year. Details for 2025 will be provided on the iLearn page. Topics covered might include:

- The Nature of Media
- Freedom of Expression
- Defamation Law
- Intellectual Property Issues related to ownership and use of media content
- Law of Confidential Information, Privacy, Data Protection
- Open justice, contempt of court and suppression orders
- Offensive publications
- Censorship
- Recent privacy legislation
- Liability for online content
- Issues raised by artificial intelligence
- Issues raised by social media

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.smq.edu.au\)](https://policies.smq.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/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) 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

As per University and departmental policy, students should not send emails to faculty members but should exclusively communicate through the iLearn communication facilities:

- Any questions about the unit content, classes or assessments should be posted in the discussion forum - not in private messaging. Please ensure you have read the Unit Guide and instructions on iLearn carefully before posting questions about textbooks or assessments. The unit convenor will check the forum regularly and will endeavour to respond to questions within 2 working days.

Tutorials will take place in weeks 1 -12 following the topic of lectures.

