



ECON3000

Public Economics

Session 1, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2025

Department of Economics

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

UC and Lecturer

Pundarik Mukhopadhaya

pundarik.mukhopadhaya@mq.edu.au

Lecturer

David Orsmond

david.orsmond@mq.edu.au

Lecturer

Peter Abelson

peter.abelson@mq.edu.au

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

ECON2003 or ECON203

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit outlines the key roles that the government sector plays in a market-based economy. The unit discusses traditional public financial issues as well as emerging issues relating to public economics within a globalised economy. Students learn how public sector responsibilities interact with activities undertaken by the private sector and how they can reflect preferences of the society in which they operate. Topics may include taxation, public expenditure, public sector pricing, cost-benefit analysis and fiscal federalism. The unit also covers areas of research into a national's cultural assets, indigenous policy and political economy considerations.

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: Examine critical issues in the economics of the public sector.

ULO2: Review changing national and global government intervention issues, structures and policies.

ULO3: Explain the working of public policy issues in the wider democratic process.

ULO4: Analyse the roles of the public sector in a decentralised market economy.

ULO5: Evaluate the necessity and effects of government fiscal decisions and the consequent trade-offs in how they affect different groups in society.

General Assessment Information

Late submissions of assessments

Late Assessment Submission Penalty (written assessments)

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 grade of '0' 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 concern.

For any late submissions of time-sensitive tasks, such as scheduled tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, and/or scheduled practical assessments/labs, students need to submit an application for [Special Consideration](#).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Assessments	30%	No	Week 5 and Week 9 (tentative) [in person]
Essay	20%	No	02/05/2025
Final exam	50%	No	University time table

Assessments

Assessment Type ¹: Quiz/Test

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **Week 5 and Week 9 (tentative) [in person]**

Weighting: **30%**

There will be two or three quizzes, with equal weighting.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain the working of public policy issues in the wider democratic process.
- Analyse the roles of the public sector in a decentralised market economy.
- Evaluate the necessity and effects of government fiscal decisions and the consequent trade-offs in how they affect different groups in society.

Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **02/05/2025**

Weighting: **20%**

The 2,500 word essay is designed to develop your understanding of the different ways in which government policies affect the economy.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Examine critical issues in the economics of the public sector.
- Review changing national and global government intervention issues, structures and policies.
- Explain the working of public policy issues in the wider democratic process.

Final exam

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **University time table**

Weighting: **50%**

A two-hour exam will be held during the end of session formal exam period.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Examine critical issues in the economics of the public sector.
- Review changing national and global government intervention issues, structures and policies.
- Explain the working of public policy issues in the wider democratic process.

- Analyse the roles of the public sector in a decentralised market economy.
 - Evaluate the necessity and effects of government fiscal decisions and the consequent trade-offs in how they affect different groups in society.
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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

Delivery and Resources

Prescribed textbook

Students are recommended to purchase the following textbook:

- Gruber, J, (2023) *Public Finance and Public Policy (7th edition IE)*, Macmillan Higher Education.
- Abelson, P. (2018) *Public Economics: Principles and Practice (4th edition)*, Open access: <https://appliedeconomics.com.au/>

Additional weekly readings and resources will be made available on the unit iLearn site during the session.

Technology used and required

The unit uses the learning management system (iLearn) that can be accessed via iLearn.mq.edu.au.

The iLearn site is also used to post important notices. You should check this regularly. The iLearn web page has the facility to allow peer to peer discussion and also allows students to put questions to the teaching staff.

Zoom will be used for all remote consultation sessions. More information about accessing your MQ student Zoom account can be found [here](#)

Learning and teaching activities

All internal students are expected to attend the weekly two-hour f2f sessions. The recordings of these sessions will be available on the iLearn unit page. Every week, an additional pre-recorded lecture will be made available. The Final Exam and the Quizzes will be conducted in person (Special consideration may apply for external students). The classes will consist of a mix of lecture material, tutorial questions and discussions (details to be provided on iLearn at the

start of the Session). All recorded lectures and discussions will be available on iLearn-ECHO360. It is suggested that weekly lecture material be reviewed in advance of the lecture sessions.

Unit Schedule

Tentatively following topics will be covered (subject to changes) [Further details are available on the iLearn unit page]

Week1: Preliminary Concepts

Week 2: Optimal Social Welfare

Week 3: Externality

Week 4: Public Goods

Week 5: Effective Government Policy

Week 6-8: Cost Benefit Analysis

Week 9: Australian Federal Accounts/Debts

Week 10: Taxation

Weeks 11: Redistribution, Inequality and Poverty

Week 12: Political Economy

Week 13: Review

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.

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