



LAWS2060

The Politics of Human Rights Law

Session 1, Online-scheduled-weekday 2025

Macquarie Law School

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Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Ben Hightower

Contact via iLearn

see iLearn

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

60cp at 1000 level or above including LAWS1010 or LEX101 or LEX102 or LAWS1000 or LAW115

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Human rights are not simply a legal construct. They reflect powerful social and political movements that have transformed our political imagination since the mid 20th century. This unit explores human rights law with a view to analysing the diverse international and domestic political influences that have shaped its evolution and patterns of implementation. Students will examine changing political influences on a range of domestic and international human rights instruments and the roles they have played in anti-colonial, self-determination, civil rights and other liberation movements, as well as their place in supporting state authority. Particular attention will be paid to studying the power of geopolitical regions and the changing capacity of different national groups, countries and regimes to shape human rights law over time.

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 and reflect on contemporary political debates about human rights values and rights-based discourses and how they are represented in law.

ULO2: Explain and reflect on some major international and domestic political issues that have occurred in recent history and the role that human rights plays within these issues.

ULO3: Apply international and domestic law to policy formation in the area of human rights.

ULO4: Communicate your understanding of the subject verbally and in clearly written, well reasoned and well structured arguments.

ULO5: Conduct interdisciplinary research in law and international relations and appreciate the role played by these disciplines in influencing legal processes and policy-making forums.

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>Professional Skills</u>	20%	No	Ongoing and in class. To be advised by Unit Convenor.
<u>Research Essay</u>	40%	No	04/04/2025
<u>Take home exam</u>	40%	No	31/05/2025

Professional Skills

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **Ongoing and in class. To be advised by Unit Convenor.**

Weighting: **20%**

Students will engage in classroom activities including presentations or demonstrations, structured discussion and problem solving, and collaborative legal research. Through these activities students will develop skills in 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:

- Explain and reflect on contemporary political debates about human rights values and rights-based discourses and how they are represented in law.
- Explain and reflect on some major international and domestic political issues that have occurred in recent history and the role that human rights plays within these issues.
- Apply international and domestic law to policy formation in the area of human rights.
- Communicate your understanding of the subject verbally and in clearly written, well reasoned and well structured arguments.

Research Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Essay

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **04/04/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

Research Essay

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain and reflect on contemporary political debates about human rights values and rights-based discourses and how they are represented in law.
- Explain and reflect on some major international and domestic political issues that have occurred in recent history and the role that human rights plays within these issues.
- Apply international and domestic law to policy formation in the area of human rights.
- Communicate your understanding of the subject verbally and in clearly written, well reasoned and well structured arguments.
- Conduct interdisciplinary research in law and international relations and appreciate the role played by these disciplines in influencing legal processes and policy-making forums.

Take home exam

Assessment Type ¹: Problem set

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **31/05/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

Open book take-home exam of short questions covering topics discussed in the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain and reflect on contemporary political debates about human rights values and rights-based discourses and how they are represented in law.
- Explain and reflect on some major international and domestic political issues that have occurred in recent history and the role that human rights plays within these issues.
- Communicate your understanding of the subject verbally and in clearly written, well reasoned and well structured arguments.

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 at tutorials are delivered weekly starting in Week 1. Lectures are each Monday at 1pm. Consult your timetable for your tutorial time and venue.

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.

All readings are available via Legato on the Unit iLearn page. No textbooks are required for this Unit.

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 iLearn.

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](#)