



LAWS5087

Law of Armed Conflict

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

Macquarie Law School

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	4
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	6
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	7
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	8
<u>Changes from Previous Offering</u>	10
<u>Changes since First Published</u>	10

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Shireen Daft

shireen.daft@mq.edu.au

Contact via Please use iLearn messaging system

Room 208, 17 Wally's Walk

TBD

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp including LAWS2000 or LAWS259 or LAW459 or LAWS1010 or LEX101

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

War presents one of the most serious and enduring challenges to the practice of international law. This unit explores the field of international humanitarian law, the body of law that has developed to limit and regulate armed conflict. International humanitarian law seeks to balance military objectives and priorities against considerations of human suffering and priorities against considerations of human suffering and the humanitarian impact of conflict. This course will explore the role of international law in providing a framework to address contemporary challenges during armed conflict, including the protection of civilians, the status and treatment of combatants, and the protection of the environment and cultural heritage. It will also explore the rules relating to the means and methods of warfare, including the challenges faced by rapid technological development.

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: Articulate and apply the general characteristics and principles of international humanitarian law, and the global governance structures that address armed conflict

ULO2: Evaluate past and present international developments in the area of humanitarian law, and analyse, interpret, and critique such developments from an international law perspective

ULO3: Research, analyse, synthesise, and interpret legal principles from international legal sources relevant to international humanitarian law

ULO4: Investigate and analyse how the actors, institutions, and processes of international humanitarian law interact and operate in global governance

ULO5: Demonstrate capacity for autonomous research by developing a project that critically analyses a contemporary issue or development in international law's approach to armed conflict

General Assessment Information

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. All assessments are due at 11.55 pm.

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 ask.mq.edu.au, along with the supporting documentation. Before submitting their applications, students should refer to the Special Consideration Policy (link provided under 'Policies and Procedures' below).

Submission

All written assessments in the unit (discussion forums excepted unless specifically requested by convenor) are to be submitted electronically by way of Turnitin on the iLearn page. Plagiarism detection software is used in this unit to check all written assessments.

Students should carefully check that they submit the correct file for an assessment as no re-submissions will be accepted after the due date and time, including instances where students

upload an incorrect file in error. Re-submission is permitted prior to the deadline.

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

Format

All assessment tasks in this unit must be typed in **Word format** and be **double spaced** to facilitate marking in Turnitin. The font used should be Times New Roman, size 12 for main text.

Word Limits

Word limits are strictly applied. Work above the word limit will not be marked. Footnotes are to be used only for referencing. Referencing must conform to the requirements set out in the Australian Guide to Legal Citation.

Moderation

Detailed marking rubrics will be made available on iLearn. In addition, tutors will be provided with detailed marking guides to ensure consistency. All fail papers will be double marked. The Unit Convenor and Markers will meet to review final grades for the unit.

Use of AI

All uses of generated AI content in final production of work are prohibited in this unit. Any AI generated content detected will not be marked. Any false references or content not a student's own that is evidenced in final work will be subject to the Academic Integrity Policy. Students should refer to the University's policies on GAITs for further clarification about permitted uses.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Practice-Based Task	40%	No	09/06/2025
Professional Skills	20%	No	Ongoing
Policy Brief	40%	No	16/04/2025

Practice-Based Task

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **09/06/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

An assessment on professional skills and knowledge relevant to the unit. This could be a legal or policy brief, a report, an essay, a law reform proposal, legal pleadings or other related professional task. This assessment may require students to prepare a response through research and adhere to discipline-specific scholarly conventions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate and apply the general characteristics and principles of international humanitarian law, and the global governance structures that address armed conflict
- Evaluate past and present international developments in the area of humanitarian law, and analyse, interpret, and critique such developments from an international law perspective
- Research, analyse, synthesise, and interpret legal principles from international legal sources relevant to international humanitarian law
- Investigate and analyse how the actors, institutions, and processes of international humanitarian law interact and operate in global governance
- Demonstrate capacity for autonomous research by developing a project that critically analyses a contemporary issue or development in international law's approach to armed conflict

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:

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- Investigate and analyse how the actors, institutions, and processes of international humanitarian law interact and operate in global governance

Policy Brief

Assessment Type ¹: Report

Indicative Time on Task ²: 15 hours

Due: **16/04/2025**

Weighting: **40%**

This assessment will evaluate students understanding of international humanitarian law by critically engaging with its key principles, historical and contemporary developments, and interactions between actors and institutions within global governance frameworks.

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- Evaluate past and present international developments in the area of humanitarian law, and analyse, interpret, and critique such developments from an international law perspective
- Investigate and analyse how the actors, institutions, and processes of international humanitarian law interact and operate in global governance

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

There will be a weekly 2 hour F2F lecture for this unit, which will be recorded, and available to all students. It will be followed by a 1 hour tutorial on the topic for internal students, and online classes offered for those enrolled in that option (or in exceptional circumstances where required for those that have not been able to enrol online and cannot attend campus safely). Both lectures and tutorials will commence from week 1, though week 1 tutorials will be an introduction to the expectations of the unit and do not require preparation in advance.

Required Readings

There is no set textbook for this unit. Required readings will be available on Leganto and iLearn. Engagement with these readings will be necessary for effective contributions to the assessments, and in particular the online discussion forums will require demonstrated engagement with the recommended readings on Leganto, though there is flexibility on which of

those readings are chosen for use.

Recommended Readings

While all readings for the unit will be made available on Leganto, including recommended readings, the following books provide excellent overview of the subject as a whole:

1. Dieter Fleck, *The Handbook of International Humanitarian Law* (OUP, 4th ed, 2021)
2. Yoram Dinstein, *The Conduct of Hostilities under the Law of International Armed Conflict* (Cambridge University Press, 3rd ed, 2016)
3. Marco Sassoli, *International Humanitarian Law: Rules, Controversies, and Solutions to Problems Arising in Warfare* (Edward Elgar, 2019)
4. Andrew Clapham and Paola Gaeta (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict* (OUP, 2015)
5. Rain Livoja and Tim McCormack (eds), *Routledge Handbook of the Law of Armed Conflict* (Routledge, 2016)

Other recommended readings per topic will be provided on Leganto.

All Unit requirements and a weekly teaching schedule are outlined in iLearn.

Unit Schedule

Lecture (tutorial staggered 1 week behind)	Topic
Week 1	Introduction to International Humanitarian Law: History, Theory, and Scope
Week 2	Classification of Conflicts: International v Non-International Armed Conflicts
Week 3	Lawful Combatants
Week 4	Civilian and Civilian Objects in Armed Conflict
Week 5	Protected Persons
Week 6	Methods of Armed Conflict
Week 7	Means of Armed Conflict
MID-SEM BREAK	
Week 8	Protection of the Environment
Week 9	Protection of Cultural Heritage
Week 10	Role of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement

Week 11	Implementation and Enforcement
Week 12	Prosecuting War Crimes: The Role of International Criminal Law
Week 13	The Future of IHL

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 an](#)

[d 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

In order to align with the University Assessment Principles 2025, the research paper proposal assessment has been removed to reduce the total assessment number of the unit to 3.

Assessment that previously fell into the category of discussion forums has been altered and will now fall under the ambit of a 'policy brief'. Research Paper has been renamed Practice-based Task for the purposes of this unit guide, but its character remains fundamentally unchanged.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
12/02/2025	Changed to remove the extra assessment and to recharacterise class participation as the original unit guide was published before the Assessment Principles were released.

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