



# ECON2044

## Labour Markets, Artificial Intelligence and Inequality

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

*Department of Economics*

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Contact via email

Room 427, Level 4, 4ER Building, 4 Eastern Road Macquarie University

Monday 2pm-3pm

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

(ECON1020 or ECON111) and (ECON1021 or ECON110)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides a deep dive into the various factors that affect how firms and economies create different types of jobs and remunerate workers. It addresses current issues such as why wages levels vary between jobs, training and the returns to skills, discrimination and income inequality using examples drawn from Australia and abroad. The unit also covers how artificial intelligence and other technologies have and will likely affect labour market wage and employment outcomes over time. Students have the opportunity to debate approaches to these issues within a highly interactive setting.

## 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 a solid understanding of labour market theory.

**ULO2:** Recognise how labour market theory aids decision-making by individuals, business and government.

**ULO3:** Communicate effectively within a team on labour market, technology and inequality issues.

**ULO4:** Identify key concepts and causes of inequality and the consequent trade-offs in

devising policy interventions.

## General Assessment Information

### 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
<a href="#">Formal and observed learning: Exam</a>	50%	No	During examination period
<a href="#">Professional practice: Written report</a>	30%	No	06/06/2025
<a href="#">Skills development: Problem sets</a>	20%	No	Week 2-Week 13

### Formal and observed learning: Exam

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Examination

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 30 hours

Due: **During examination period**

Weighting: **50%**

The purpose of this assessment is for you to demonstrate the expertise you have gained in the unit Labour Markets, Artificial Intelligence and Inequality. You will participate in a 2-hour exam held during the University Examination period. Important information about the exam will be made available on the unit iLearn page. You should also review the [MQ Exams website](#) for general tips. **Deliverable:** Formal exam Individual assessment

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of labour market theory.
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- Communicate effectively within a team on labour market, technology and inequality issues.
- Identify key concepts and causes of inequality and the consequent trade-offs in devising policy interventions.

## Professional practice: Written report

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Report

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 30 hours

Due: **06/06/2025**

Weighting: **30%**

The purpose of this assessment is for you to work collaboratively to address key policy aspects and present their findings. You will work in teams to deliver a group project report. **Skills in focus:** - Analytical Skills - Critical thinking skills - Collaboration skills - Research skills  
**Deliverable:** Written report Group assessment

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of labour market theory.
- Recognise how labour market theory aids decision-making by individuals, business and government.
- Communicate effectively within a team on labour market, technology and inequality issues.
- Identify key concepts and causes of inequality and the consequent trade-offs in devising policy interventions.

## Skills development: Problem sets

Assessment Type <sup>1</sup>: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task <sup>2</sup>: 20 hours

Due: **Week 2-Week 13**

Weighting: **20%**

The purpose of this assessment is for you to develop expertise in crafting solutions to provided problem sets, and in the communication of these solutions. You will be given a set of questions each week, and will be provided with an opportunity to present a solution for feedback in a chosen week before submitting a written answer. **Skills in focus:** - Problem solving - Communication skills - Applied knowledge **Deliverable:** Presentation and written answer  
Individual assessment

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Demonstrate a solid understanding of labour market theory.
- Recognise how labour market theory aids decision-making by individuals, business and government.
- Communicate effectively within a team on labour market, technology and inequality issues.
- Identify key concepts and causes of inequality and the consequent trade-offs in devising policy interventions.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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

**This unit is organized through 2-hour lectures (in person) and 1 hour tutorials. We will meet every Monday afternoon for three hours.**

Students must engage with the material (readings and lecture notes) weekly so they can participate in the **in-person** weekly meetings. These meetings will provide opportunities to review the weekly lectures. **In order to facilitate this discussion and the group work, you are asked to review the weekly slides and the essential readings *before* coming to class.**

Apart from reviewing the key concepts, theories and issues discussed **in** the recorded lecture and slides, we will have opportunities to learn together through group work and class discussion. Because of the centrality of in-class discussion and participation, **the successful completion of this unit requires attendance of at least 80% of all meetings (lectures and tutorials).**

Resources students will use in this unit comprise journal articles and book chapters about the weekly topics. The unit does not require a textbook, but references to useful textbooks for specific topics will be provided to assist students' learning.

## Unit Schedule

The material developed in ECON2044 builds on key concepts used in introductory economics units to investigate the basic workings of labour markets in contemporary economies in contexts characterized by technological change and widespread wage inequality. ECON2044 is structured in 4 parts as below:

### **Part 1: Labour markets and Socio-Economic Trends**

### **Part 2: Understanding market and non-market factors impacting on labour and inequality**

### **Part 3: Technological Change, AI and the Labour Markets**

### **Part 4: Policy debates concerning labour market inequality and technological change**

The structure of this unit reflects the need to devote attention to the specific features of current technological change (e.g., AI, GenAI, Automation) in both advanced and developing economies, to understand contemporary policy challenges.

ECON2044 aims to provide students with a critical appraisal and understanding of current economic debates concerning policy interventions such as minimum wages, education and training. Ample time will be devoted to develop critical understanding of these issues, communication skills and group-work capabilities.

### **Part 1: Labour markets and Socio-Economic Trends**

Week 1, Feb. 24 | Understanding the evolution of inequality in the last half a century

Week 2, March 3 | Technological revolutions

Week 3 | March 10 | Labour incomes, technological change and the evolution of inequality

### **Part 2: Understanding market and non-market factors impacting on labour and inequality**

Week 4, March 17 | How do labour markets work?

Week 5, March 24 | Wages and Power

Week 6, March 31 | Labour market in developing countries

### **Part 3: Technological Change and AI and the Labour Markets**

Week 7, April 7 | Technological change, employment and wages effects

### **RECESS: APRIL 14-APRIL 27**

Week 8, April 28 | Polarization of the wage distribution

Week 9, May 5 | What is Artificial Intelligence? How does AI change the Labour Markets?

## Part 4: Policy debates concerning labour market inequality and technological change

Week 10, May 12 | Key interventions: Institutions, Laws and Minimum Wages

Week 11, May 19 | Artificial Intelligence and its Policy Challenges

Week 12, May 26 | Technological Change and Labour Markets: Global Policy challenges

Week 13, June 2 | Review and Final Exam Discussion

## 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](https://connect.mq.edu.au) or if you are a Global MBA student contact [globalmba.support@mq.edu.au](mailto: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/](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.

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