



COMP6310

Digital Forensics

Session 2, In person-scheduled-weekday, North Ryde 2026

School of Computing

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Convenor

Muhammad Ikram

muhammad.ikram@mq.edu.au

Room # 214, 4RPD

Mondays 4:00 -- 5:00pm

Lecturer

Zeeshan Zulkifl Shah

zeeshanzulkifl.shah@mq.edu.au

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

COMP6013

Corequisites

COMP6170 and 10 CP of COMP 6000-level units

Co-badged status

COMP2310

Unit description

This unit offers an overview of digital forensics and incident response, covering methods, techniques, and tools. It places a significant focus on ethical considerations, legal aspects, and procedural aspects, ensuring that students gain exposure to forensic practices for data collection and recovery. The curriculum equips students with the skills to carry out digital investigations, adhering to the steps of preserving, acquiring, analyzing, and presenting digital evidence.

Learning in this unit enhances student understanding of global challenges identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals ([UNSDGs](#)) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

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: Adhere to the highest ethical standards, abide by legal regulations, and follow procedures at all times when collecting and dealing with digital evidence.

ULO2: Develop and follow suitable processes when performing incident response and conducting digital forensics investigations.

ULO3: Use appropriate tools and techniques to collect and recover data from a variety of digital sources.

ULO4: Communicate effectively the results of an investigation following professional standards.

General Assessment Information

Release Dates

- **Individual Project** - Sunday ending Week 2 23:55
- **Group Project** - Sunday ending Week 7 23:55

Descriptions of Assessment Activities and Other Information

- Submission of Assessments - Assessments need to be submitted via iLearn.
- Marking of Assessments - Marks and feedback will be provided via iLearn with a turnaround time of 2.5 weeks for the assignments.

Requirements to Pass this Unit

To pass this unit you must achieve a total mark equal to or greater than 50%

Late Submission Policy

- **5% penalty per day:** If you submit your assessment late, **5% of the total possible marks** will be deducted for each day (including weekends), up to 7 days.
 - *Example 1 (out of 100):* If you score 85/100 but submit 20 hours late, you will lose 5 marks and receive **80/100**.
 - *Example 2 (out of 30):* If you score 27/30 but submit 1 day late, you will lose 1.5 marks and receive **25.5/30**.
- **After 7 days:** Submissions more than 7 days late will receive a **mark of 0**.
- **Extensions:**
 - **Automatic short extension:** Some assessments are eligible for automatic short

extension. You can only apply for an automatic short extension before the due date.

- **Special Consideration:** If you need more time due to serious issues and for any assessments that are not eligible for Short Extension, you must apply for Special Consideration.

Assessments where Late Submissions will be accepted:

- **Individual Project, Group Project** – YES, Standard Late Penalty applies
- **Final Exam** - NO, unless Special Consideration is Granted

Special Consideration

The [Special Consideration Policy](#) aims to support students who have been impacted by short term circumstances or events that are serious, unavoidable and significantly disruptive, and which may affect their performance in assessment.

If you experience circumstances or events that affect your ability to complete the written assessments in this unit on time, please submit a Special Consideration request through <http://connect.mq.edu.au/>.

Final exam: If you miss the final exam due to a serious, unavoidable and significant disruption, contact your convenor and submit a Special Consideration request through <http://connect.mq.edu.au/>.

Generative AI

AI Open assessments: Students may use Generative AI to support learning, such as brainstorming, improving writing, or understanding digital forensic concepts. Students are responsible for verifying all AI-generated content and ensuring that all forensic analysis, evidence, and conclusions are their own. AI-generated or fabricated forensic evidence is strictly prohibited.

Observed assessments: Generative AI is not permitted during supervised assessments unless explicitly authorised by the Unit Convenor.

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
- [Academic Success](#) 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.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Individual Project	30%	No	04/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Final Exam	40%	No	Final Exam Period	Individual	No	Observed
Group Project	30%	No	30/10/2026	Individual and Group	No	Open

Individual Project

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **04/09/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

This project deals with the recovery of digital evidence for an event. It features a technical report detailing the investigative steps you followed, ensuring that a client or another analyst can replicate your process. The assignment is to be submitted online.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Adhere to the highest ethical standards, abide by legal regulations, and follow procedures at all times when collecting and dealing with digital evidence.
- Use appropriate tools and techniques to collect and recover data from a variety of digital sources.
- Communicate effectively the results of an investigation following professional standards.

Final Exam

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 30 hours

Due: **Final Exam Period**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

This final examination will assess your knowledge and understanding of the forensic and incident response methods, techniques and tools covered in the unit. This examination will be conducted

online.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Adhere to the highest ethical standards, abide by legal regulations, and follow procedures at all times when collecting and dealing with digital evidence.
- Develop and follow suitable processes when performing incident response and conducting digital forensics investigations.
- Use appropriate tools and techniques to collect and recover data from a variety of digital sources.
- Communicate effectively the results of an investigation following professional standards.

Group Project

Assessment Type ¹: Portfolio

Indicative Time on Task ²: 20 hours

Due: **30/10/2026**

Weighting: **30%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual and Group

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

In this group project, you will evaluate a practical case with respect to digital forensic investigations using appropriate tools and techniques to collect and recover data from a variety of digital sources. It features the submission of a report and a presentation. The assignment is to be submitted online.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Adhere to the highest ethical standards, abide by legal regulations, and follow procedures at all times when collecting and dealing with digital evidence.
- Develop and follow suitable processes when performing incident response and conducting digital forensics investigations.
- Use appropriate tools and techniques to collect and recover data from a variety of digital sources.
- Communicate effectively the results of an investigation following professional standards.

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Delivery and Resources

COMPUTING FACILITIES

Please note that this is a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) unit. You will be expected to bring your own laptop computer (Windows, Mac or Linux) to the workshop, install and configure the required software, and incorporate secure practices into your daily work (and play!) routines.

CLASSES

Each week you should complete any assigned readings and review the lecture slides in order to prepare for the lecture. There are three hours of lectures and a one-hour workshop every week. The hands-on exercises in works help to reinforce concepts introduced during the lectures. You should have chosen a practical on enrollment. You will find it helpful to read the workshop instructions before attending - that way, you can get to work quickly! For details of days, times and rooms consult the [timetables webpage](#).

WEEK 1 CLASSES

Lectures and workshops commence in week 1. You should have chosen a practical/workshop on enrollment. You will find it helpful to read the workshop instructions before attending - that way, you can get to work quickly! For details of days, times and rooms, consult the [timetables webpage](#).

DISCUSSION BOARDS

This unit makes use of discussion boards hosted within iLearn. Please post questions there; they are monitored by the staff on the unit.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

We will communicate with you via your university email and through announcements on iLearn. General queries (that concern the entire cohort or at least a subset) should be made via Discussion Forums, while queries specific to you should be raised via email.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- **Guide to Computer Forensics and Investigations, by Bill Nelson, Amelia Phillips, Christopher Steuart, 6th edition, Cengage Learning, 2019.**
- Digital Forensics and Investigations People, Process, and Technologies to Defend the Enterprise, by Jason Sachowski, 1st edition, 2018.

TECHNOLOGY USED

iLearn

[iLearn](#) is a Learning Management System that gives you access to lecture slides, lecture recordings, forums, assessment tasks, instructions for practicals, discussion forums and other resources.

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/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [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 <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

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

SGTAs/ Practicals have been increased from 1 hour to 2 hours in duration

Unit information based on version 2026.04 of the [Handbook](#)