



MMCC3031

Forensic Media

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

School of Communication, Society and Culture

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>General Assessment Information</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	5
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	5
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	6

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

Convenor

John Potts

john.potts@mq.edu.au

Lecturer, tutor

Uzma Aleem

uzma.aleem@mq.edu.au

25WW C327

Tuesday 4-5 pm

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit examines the crucial roles that forensic media play in news media organisations. It offers a brief history of the historical emergence of forensic media, tracking the development of the inked fingerprint, police mug shot, forensic photography and the establishment of criminal archives. It then examines the broad spectrum of contemporary technologies that are shaping the field of forensic media, including: forensic typical body charts, border technologies, satellite imaging and crisis mapping, CCTV, surveillance technologies and social media. It also examines the manner in which fictional television series, such as CSI, represent forensics and the manner in which they have influenced actual forensic practices. Forensic technologies have now become foundational for news organisations in order for them to illustrate and evidence their news stories – from social media apps to record and communicate unfolding newsworthy events to forensic satellite imaging to evidence humanitarian and environmental crises. This unit places forensic media within news media contexts in order to address the ethical, geopolitical and social questions that the use of such media raises.

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: research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.

ULO2: apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.

ULO3: analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.

ULO4: apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.

ULO5: communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.

ULO6: apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

General Assessment Information

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 mark of '0' (zero) 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 issue. This late penalty will apply to written reports and recordings only. Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs) will be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Tutorial Presentation	40%	No	Weekly from Week 3	Individual	No	Observed
Final Essay	60%	No	06/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Tutorial Presentation

Assessment Type ¹: Presentation task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 44 hours

Due: **Weekly from Week 3**

Weighting: **40%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Observed

A task that demonstrates a student's disciplinary knowledge and skills through verbal communication to the class. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.
- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
- analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.
- apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.
- communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

Final Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 54 hours

Due: **06/11/2026**

Weighting: **60%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

A formal essay that fulfils the conventions of the academic genre, including critical address of key issues, analytical argumentation and buttressing of all assertions with relevant evidence. Refer to iLearn for further information.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- research and evaluate the historical, political and technological forces that have been constitutive in the emergence of forensic media.

- apply critical and analytical skills in the examination and evaluation of the key concepts and arguments that underpin the use of forensic media across different platforms and news organisations.
- analyse local and international perspectives on forensic media.
- apply critical argumentation skills in order to articulate and evidence different viewpoints on the social, geopolitical and ethical uses of forensic media.
- communicate the key ideas, issues and disciplinary debates on the use of forensic media across diverse platforms and contexts.
- apply ethical and socially responsible skills that demonstrate the ability to analyse and reflect on the ethical implications generated by the uses of forensic media in their respective geopolitical contexts.

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](#).

Delivery and Resources

Teaching in this unit combines lectures, tutorials, scholarly readings and contemporary case studies to support critical engagement with forensic media.

Students are expected to complete the prescribed readings before attending tutorials and actively participate in class discussions.

Lecture materials, readings, announcements and assessment information will be available through the unit iLearn site.

Students are encouraged to engage with current journalism, documentary media, investigative reporting and digital verification resources throughout the semester to support both assessments.

Unit Schedule

Unit Schedule

MMCC3031 Forensic Media

Lecture Schedule – Session 2, 2026

Week	Lecture Topic
Week 1	28 July: Introduction to Forensic Media
Week 2	4 August: Forensic Photography, Mugshots and Visual Evidence
Week 3	11 August: Forensic Drones, CCTV and Body-Worn Cameras
Week 4	18 August: Crime Scene Documentation and Non-fiction Investigative Storytelling
Week 5	25 August: Forensic Media, Deathscapes and Human Rights
Week 6	1 September: Geospatial Technologies, Satellite Imagery and Crisis Mapping
Week 7	8 September: Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT), Social Media Verification and Digital Investigations
Week 8	15 September: Reading Week MID-SEMESTER BREAK
Week 9	6 October: Artificial Intelligence, Deepfakes and Synthetic Media
Week 10	13 October: Forensic Genetics, Biometrics and the CSI Effect
Week 11	20 October: Ethics of Forensic Media, AI and Digital Surveillance
Week 12	27 October: The Future of Forensic Media

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 \(https://students.mq.edu.au/su\)](https://students.mq.edu.au/su)

[upport/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>) 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.

Unit information based on version 2026.02 of the [Handbook](#)