



SOCX1030

Introduction to Justice and Punishment

Session 2, Online-flexible 2026

School of Communication, Society and Culture

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

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Tutor

Helen Easton

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by appointment

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit covers the social, moral and political relationships that underpin 'justice' and 'punishment'. Students will explore the purpose, aims and operation of criminal justice in New South Wales. The 'cycle of justice' is unpacked, including: concepts of justice; the politics of justice; what happens in court; how people are punished and what we expect to happen afterwards. Students re-examine the socially constructed nature of both justice and punishment, questioning the purpose of law, the rule of law and the social contract. Students will analyse the role of these concepts in maintaining, or disrupting, established notions of justice. Students will observe justice in action and report back on their findings.

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 scholarly understanding of the criminal justice system

ULO2: distinguish between personal opinion and scientifically verified evidence

ULO3: use social research skills to identify, analyse and assess the quality of different data sources and types of evidence

ULO4: express key concepts clearly and accurately in both spoken and written format

ULO5: conduct independent non-participant observations in the field, then combine theory with both primary and secondary data to write up a formal report

ULO6: prepare for and engage effectively in online and classroom activities

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Online quiz	15%	No	04/10/2026	Individual	No	Open
Justice Report	50%	No	08/11/2026	Individual	Yes	Open
Participation	10%	No	Ongoing	Individual	No	Open
Reading Reflection	25%	No	18/10/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Online quiz

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 4 hours

Due: **04/10/2026**

Weighting: **15%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

The online quiz will test basic knowledge on the course content for the first 6 weeks of the unit. Students will spend 1 hour on the quiz, plus at least 1 hour of preparation (including focused reading and online research).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate a scholarly understanding of the criminal justice system
- use social research skills to identify, analyse and assess the quality of different data sources and types of evidence
- express key concepts clearly and accurately in both spoken and written format

Justice Report

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 40 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Reports are often used as assessment tasks because well-developed report writing skills are important in many professional contexts. Reports are written based on gathering and analysing information using a discipline-specific methodology and format. If courts are open to the public students will visit court to gather primary data, if courts are closed to the public they will research using secondary data. Updated FAQs will be provided in iLearn

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- conduct independent non-participant observations in the field, then combine theory with both primary and secondary data to write up a formal report
- prepare for and engage effectively in online and classroom activities

Participation

Assessment Type ¹: Reflection task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 12 hours

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

Students must read in preparation for their active participation activity. This may include: preparation by reading and note-taking and engaging in online learning activities (e.g. wiki/discussion board) Active participation (15 skill-based tasks over 13 weeks) is used in this unit with a strict marking rubric and a careful alignment of each activity to the skills needed for the unit assessments.

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Reading Reflection

Assessment Type ¹: Reflection task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 14 hours

Due: **18/10/2026**

Weighting: **25%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

Students will submit 2 reflections during the session. Reflection is a means to separate opinions from evidence. Students will engage with deep reflection on the topics of readings and explore how they have changed from exposure to new knowledge.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate a scholarly understanding of the criminal justice system
- distinguish between personal opinion and scientifically verified evidence
- use social research skills to identify, analyse and assess the quality of different data sources and types of evidence
- express key concepts clearly and accurately in both spoken and written format
- prepare for and engage effectively in online and classroom activities

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

UNIT REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

- You should spend an average of 8-10 hours per week on this unit. This includes listening to lectures in-person or online prior to seminar or tutorial, reading weekly required materials as detailed in iLearn, participating in iLearn discussion forums and preparing assessments.
- Internal students are expected to attend all seminar or tutorial sessions, and external

students are expected to make significant contributions to online activities.

REQUIRED READINGS

- The citations for all the required readings for this unit are available to enrolled students through Leganto. Electronic copies of required and further readings may be accessed through the library or will be made available by other means.

TECHNOLOGY USED AND REQUIRED

- Computer and internet access are essential for this unit. Basic computer skills and skills in word processing are also a requirement.
- This unit has an online presence. Login is via: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/>
- Students are required to have regular access to a computer and the internet. Mobile devices alone are not sufficient.
- Information about IT used at Macquarie University is available at http://students.mq.edu.au/it_services/

SUBMITTING ASSESSMENT TASKS

- All text-based assessment tasks are to be submitted, marked and returned electronically. This will only happen through the unit iLearn site.
- Assessment tasks must be submitted as a MS word document by the due date.
- Most assessment tasks will be subject to a 'Turnitin' review as an automatic part of the submission process.
- The granting of extensions is subject to the university's Special Consideration Policy. Extensions will not be granted by unit conveners or tutors, but must be lodged through Special Consideration: <https://students.mq.edu.au/study/my-study-program/special-consideration>. If you have been awarded an extension via this process, you must add this approval information within your submission at the top of the first page of the assessment document.

LATE SUBMISSION OF ASSESSMENT TASKS

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 non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special

Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

WORD LIMITS FOR ASSESSMENT TASKS

- Stated word limits include citations, but not bibliography (reference list), or title page.
- Students must not use footnotes for references, refer to reference guidance for in-text referencing (APA7/Harvard) on the library website.
- Word limits can generally deviate by 10% either over or under the stated figure.
- If the number of words deviates from the limit by more than 10%, then penalties will apply.
- *The application of this penalty is at the discretion of the course convener.*

REASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS DURING THE SEMESTER

- Macquarie University operates a Final Grade Appeal procedure as part of the Assessment policy in cases where students feel their work was graded inappropriately: <https://policies.mq.edu.au/document/view.php?id=277>
- *In accordance with the Grade Appeal procedure, individual works are not subject to regrading.*

STAFF AVAILABILITY

- Department staff will endeavour to answer student enquiries in a timely manner. However, emails or iLearn messages will not usually be answered outside of standard office workhours (Monday-Friday. 9-5), nor over the weekend or during public holiday periods.
- Students are encouraged to read the Unit Guide and look at instructions posted on the iLearn site before sending email requests to staff.

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.

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