



Highfields State
Secondary College

Semester 2 Course Overview

Faculty: Humanities
Subject: Legal Studies
Year level: 11

Legal Studies focuses on the interaction between society and the discipline of law. Students study the legal system and how it regulates activities and aims to protect the rights of individuals, while balancing these with obligations and responsibilities. An understanding of legal processes and concepts enables citizens to be better informed and able to constructively question and contribute to the improvement of laws and legal processes. This is important as the law is dynamic and evolving, based on values, customs and norms that are challenged by technology, society and global influences.

Legal Studies explores the role and development of law in response to current issues. The subject starts with the foundations of law and explores the criminal justice process through to punishment and sentencing. Students then study the civil justice system, focusing on contract law and negligence. With increasing complexity, students critically examine issues of governance that are the foundation of the Australian and Queensland legal systems, before they explore contemporary issues of law reform and change. The study finishes with considering Australian and international human rights issues. Throughout the course, students analyse issues and evaluate how the rule of law, justice and equity can be achieved in contemporary contexts.

Unit 2:

In Unit 2, students consider legal concepts, principles and processes within the Australian and Queensland civil justice systems. They develop an understanding that civil law regulates the rights and responsibilities that exist between individuals, groups, organisations and governments. They explore dispute resolution methods, including judicial determination and alternatives in and out of courts. Through a consideration of contemporary cases and legal issues, students evaluate the effectiveness of civil law and how it affects individuals within society.

Topics include:

- Topic 1: Civil law foundations
- Topic 2: Contractual obligations
- Topic 3: Negligence and the duty of care

Assessment:

FA3: Examination – combination response

FA4: Investigation – argumentative essay

Unit 3:

In Unit 3, students examine the complexities of the Australian legal system and its capacity to deal with the diversity of competing needs. They explore the role of legal institutions and law-making bodies in creating laws that reflect the views of society. Students consider the range of forces that create catalysts for change and reform, and how laws are changed or reformed to reflect shifting societal demands. This unit encourages and informs critical thinking about Australian and Queensland laws, and the importance of society and individuals engaging in law-making processes.

Students will study law, governance and change through relevant contemporary issues involving matters of governance and law reform. Examples of issues could arise from areas, for example, family law, technology law, criminal law, counter-terrorism laws, employment law, and corporate law.

Topics include:

- Topic 1: Governance in Australia
- Topic 2: Law reform within a dynamic society

Assessment: *Summative assessment to be submitted in Year 12*

- Summative internal assessment 1: Examination — combination response
- Summative internal assessment 2: Investigation — inquiry report