

Legal Studies

“There is a lot of loose talk in Australia about democracy, the rule of law and basic rights. Yet unless we educate future citizens concerning the broad outline of our laws, they may grow up feeling that law is alien to their experience. I want them to grow up insisting that the law must be just and modern and accepting the citizen’s responsibility to ensure that this is so.”

Michael Kirby AC CMG

Former Justice of the High Court of Australia

Our society is regulated by a complex set of rules and regulations which both guide and protect individual and community rights. Being well informed about legal issues, including the rights and responsibilities integral to our society, is part of being an active and informed citizen. Students of Legal Studies will develop an understanding of legal concepts and the way the law functions in our society. The syllabus focuses on the way in which law is generated, how it is structured and how it operates in Australian and international contexts.

Students will develop an understanding of the implications that legal decisions can have for Australian society and the ways in which the legal system can affect the lives of Australian citizens. The Legal Studies course fosters respect for cultural diversity. It allows students to question and evaluate legal institutional structures in the domestic and international environments and to undertake a comparative analysis of other political and institutional structures.

Legal Studies enables students to have confidence in approaching and accessing the legal system and provides them with a better appreciation of the relationship between social and legal structures. The course will assist in the development of students’ knowledge of their basic legal rights and responsibilities in a broad selection of contexts which appeal to their interests.

This course also helps students gain the skills of critical analysis, independent research, collaboration, and effective communication. Legal Studies provides a context for the development of higher order thinking skills necessary for further education, work and everyday life, and a range of other employability skills. This course is not just about becoming a lawyer, but opens up possible careers in criminology, cyber security, human resources, social work, and government amongst many other possibilities.

The Preliminary Course

Part I: The legal system

Part II: The individual and the law

Part III: Law in practice

The HSC Course

Part I: Crime

Part II: Human rights

Part III: Option (choose 2)

Consumers*

Family

Shelter

World order

Global environmental protection

Indigenous peoples

Workplace*

(*Options HSC students in 2022 undertook at Inaburra School.)

See the NESA Legal Studies syllabus on the website below for more information:

<http://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/hsie/legal-studies>