
VCE UNITS INFORMATION

VCE Legal Studies Units 3 and 4

CONTENT

Unit 3: Rights and Justice

The Victorian justice system, which includes the criminal and civil justice systems, aims to protect the rights of individuals and uphold the principles of justice: fairness, equality and access.

In this unit, students examine the methods and institutions in the justice system and consider their appropriateness in determining criminal cases and resolving civil disputes. Students consider the Magistrates' Court, County Court and Supreme Court within the Victorian court hierarchy, as well as other Victorian legal institutions and bodies available to assist with cases. Students explore matters such as the rights available to an accused and to victims in the criminal justice system, the roles of the judge, jury, legal practitioners and the parties, and the ability of sanctions and remedies to achieve their purposes. Students investigate the extent to which the principles of justice are upheld in the justice system. They discuss recent reforms from the past four years and recommended reforms to enhance the ability of the justice system to achieve the principles of justice.

Unit 4: The People and The Law

The study of Australia's laws and legal system involves an understanding of institutions that make and reform our laws, and the relationship between the Australian people, the Australian Constitution and law-making bodies.

In this unit, students explore how the Australian Constitution establishes the law-making powers of the Commonwealth and state parliaments, and protects the Australian people through structures that act as a check on parliament in law-making. Students develop an understanding of the significance of the High Court in protecting and interpreting the Australian Constitution. They investigate parliament and the courts, and the relationship between the two in law-making, and consider the roles of the individual, the media and law reform bodies in influencing law reform. Throughout this unit, students apply legal reasoning and information to actual scenarios.

OUTCOMES

Unit 3

- Students should be able to explain the rights of the accused and of victims in the criminal justice system, discuss the means used to determine criminal cases and evaluate the ability of the criminal justice system to achieve the principles of justice
- Students should be able to analyse the factors to consider when initiating a civil claim, discuss the institutions and methods used to resolve civil disputes and evaluate the ability of the civil justice system to achieve the principles of justice

Unit 4

- Students should be able to discuss the significance of High Court cases involving the interpretation of the Australian Constitution and evaluate the ways in which the Australian Constitution acts as a check on parliament in law-making
- Students should be able to discuss the factors that affect the ability of parliament and courts to make law, evaluate the ability of these law-makers to respond to the need for law reform, and analyse how individuals, the media and law reform bodies can influence a change in the law