VCE Legal Studies

Year 11

Unit 1: Students examine the need for laws in society. They investigate the key features of criminal law, how it is enforced and adjudicated and possible outcomes and impacts of crime. Through a consideration of contemporary cases and issues, students learn about different types of crimes and explore rights and responsibilities under criminal law. Students also consider the role of parliament and subordinate authorities in law-making, as well as the impact of the Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities on law enforcement and adjudication in Victoria. Students investigate the processes and procedures followed by courts in hearing and resolving criminal cases. They explore the main features and operations of criminal courts and consider the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in achieving justice.

Unit 2: Students examine the rights that are protected by civil law, as well as obligations that laws impose. They investigate types of civil laws and related cases and issues and develop an appreciation of the role of civil law in society and how it affects them as individuals. The unit also focuses on the resolution of civil disputes through judicial determination and alternative methods in courts, tribunals and independent bodies. Students examine these methods of dispute resolution and evaluate their effectiveness.

Year 12

Unit 3: In this unit students develop an understanding of the institutions that determine our laws, and their law-making powers and processes. They undertake an informed evaluation of the effectiveness of law-making bodies and examine the need for the law to keep up to date with changes in society. The students look at the key features and operation of parliament, and influences on law-making, with a focus on the role of the individual. Students develop an understanding of the importance of the Constitution and the High Court of Australia. Students investigate the nature and importance of courts as law-makers and undertake an evaluation of their effectiveness as law-making bodies. They also investigate the relationships that exist between parliaments and courts. Throughout this unit, students examine relevant cases to support their learning and apply legal principles to these cases.

Unit 4: Students examine the institutions that adjudicate criminal cases and civil disputes. They also investigate methods of dispute resolution that can be used as an alternative to civil litigation. Students investigate the processes and procedures followed in courtrooms and develop an understanding of the adversary system of trial and the jury system, as well as pre-trial and post-trial procedures that operate in the Victorian legal system. Using the elements of an effective legal system, students consider the extent to which court processes and procedures contribute to the effective operation of the legal system. They also consider reforms or changes that could further improve its effective operation.

Assessment: Each unit has two to four outcomes that must be satisfactorily completed in order to achieve a satisfactory pass.

Suggested Pre-requisites: There are no pre-requisites for the study of Art. It would be beneficial however, if the student had completed the Criminal and Civil Justice Course in Year 10.