

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

INFO 548: Law Librarianship

Trimester 3, 2009

COURSE OUTLINE

Contact Details

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Please note that INFO 548 will be delivered online, with all materials (including readings and study guides) available on Blackboard only.

INFO 548 Law Librarianship, will be coordinated and taught by **Margaret Greville**, who has been a law librarian for over 30 years, in law firms (large and small), in two academic law libraries, and in a courts library -- all in New Zealand and Australia. This is a very exciting field of librarianship in which to practice, and INFO 548 is just a beginning -- it takes many years of practice to excel in law librarianship -- but there is nothing more satisfying than providing the right piece of information, at the right time, that truly makes the difference.

Course description

INFO 548 is an overview of law librarianship that includes the structure of the New Zealand legal system, the materials relevant to law librarianship, and topics on the management of law libraries.

This course is designed as an introduction to the practice of law librarianship

- for LIM students; or
- for working librarians with little or no knowledge of law libraries, but who are interested in exploring the field; or
- for those who have been working in a law library for a short time and need a framework to organise the new knowledge they are acquiring.

Learning objectives

By the conclusion of the INFO 548 course, students should have an understanding of:

1. The sources and structures of the New Zealand legal system and how they relate to other Commonwealth jurisdictions.
2. The structural framework of the law, and how topic areas relate to each other.
3. The range of primary and secondary materials, together with most of the key reference tools used in law libraries. How to use these materials in both paper and electronic formats for New Zealand.
4. How to apply the research model developed for New Zealand legal research to other jurisdictions.
5. Management and professional issues relevant to the effective operation of law libraries. This includes the importance of an awareness of high profile issues; i.e. hot topics in the law and law librarianship.

Time commitment and workload

You should expect to spend about 12 hours per week on this course. Part of this time commitment will be taken up in your weekly internal or Internet conference session. The remaining time should cover:

- reading set texts and articles — you are expected to have read these before the weekly session;
- reflecting on issues presented in the module and preparing assigned practical work for the weekly session; and
- researching and writing assignments.

Schedule

INFO 548 will be held in the third trimester (16 November-12 February) of the 2009 academic year. There will be no sessions for two weeks during the mid-trimester break (21 December-3 January). **Please note: this course will be delivered via distance learning only.**

There will be a 1-1/2 hour evening class each week on Tuesdays from 6.45-8.15 p.m. using [Internet conferencing](#).

If you are based in Wellington it is possible to book a computer lab for your use if required, but you will need to bring your own headset to participate in the classes; please contact Timothy Greig about this well before classes commence.

Week	Topic
1	System of law & government
2	Functional categories of legal information
3	Sources of Law: Legislation
4	Sources of law: Cases
5	Subjects of the law
Mid-trimester break 21 December-3 January	
6	Parliament & parliamentary information
7	Government agencies as sources of law
8	Legal research and training
9	The law library & its manager
10	Collection management
11	Professional issues: Ethics and liability

Students with special requirements

Students who have special requirements which are relevant to their successful completion of this course should speak to the Course Coordinator as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Assessment

This course is internally assessed, with the following assignments to be completed in order to satisfy the mandatory course requirements. **Full details, including explanatory notes and criteria, are available under "Assessment" on Blackboard.**

Assignments	Date due	Value	Length
1. Report on a visit to a law library	8 Dec. 2009	20%	1500 words max.
2. Research exercise	5 Jan. 2010	20%	1500 words max.
3. Essay/proposal/opinion	2 Feb. 2010	60%	2000-2500 words max.

Note: Your assessed work may also be used for quality assurance purposes, such as to assess the level of achievement of learning objectives as required for accreditation and audit purposes. The findings may be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of FCA programmes. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential, and the outcome will not affect your grade for the course.

Late assignments

Assignments submitted after they are due will have a 10% penalty imposed unless an extension has been granted by the course coordinator. Assignments submitted more than one week after they are due will not be accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances and the late submission has the prior approval of the course coordinator.

Submission

Electronic submission via Blackboard is required; instructions are available under '**Assessment**'. Remember to keep a hard and soft copy of each assignment you send us, just in case the original goes astray.

Word count

Each submitted assignment **MUST** contain a word count, easily available from your word-processing program. The word count should appear under your name. (Note: your name should appear only on the back of the last page of the assignment.) The penalty for not including your word count, or going over the word count, will be 5%.

Plagiarism

You should read and take heed of the statement on collaboration and plagiarism on the University website at <http://www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html> and also in the *Administration Handbook*; you **must** acknowledge all sources you use. While you are encouraged to work together while preparing for the weekly sessions, assessed work must be completed

individually, and collaboration confined to discussion of general points. You are expected to present information in your own words, based on your understanding of the background material you read. **Any assignment which is extensively plagiarised will receive an automatic fail grade.** **Note:** Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine turnitin.com.

Presentation

Details of the LIM Group's assignment policy, including presentation, will be found in the *Administration Handbook*.

Mandatory course requirements

To fulfil the mandatory course requirements for this course, you must:
attend a minimum of 75% of the scheduled class sessions, and participate in class discussions;
complete all of the assignments in the required timeframe.

Withdrawal dates: Information available via

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Prescribed text

Greville, M., Davidson, S. & Scragg, R. (2006). *Legal research and writing in New Zealand* (3rd ed.). LexisNexis. ISBN: 9780408718240. The price is approximately \$96.00.

The course text is available from Vic Books, PO Box 12-337 (or c/- Students' Union Building), Wellington, ph. (04) 463 5515 or freephone 0800 370 370, fax (04) 471 2124, email vuwtexts@vicbooks.co.nz. It is also possible to order texts through the Vic Books' [online book ordering service](#).

Recommended text

- Eagles, I., et al. (2006). *Law in business and government in New Zealand* (4th ed.). Palantine.
- McDowell, M. & Webb, D. (2006). *The New Zealand legal system: Structures, processes and legal theory* (4th ed.). LexisNexis.
- Palmer, G. & Palmer, M. (2004). *Bridled power: New Zealand's constitution and government* (4th ed.). Auckland: Oxford University Press.

All recommended texts will be placed on 3-day loan at the VUW Library.

Course resources

All course material, including study guides and readings, is on the Blackboard website for INFO 548; see 'Online information' below for further details. The study guides on Blackboard include work to prepare for the weekly session. Each week, discussion will be based on both:

- required readings from the material provided;
- introductory material, discussion points, exercises.

Since the course will be conducted as a series of seminars, in which I hope you will have as much to contribute as I do, it is important that you have done the reading and can bring an informed point of view to class discussions. In some sessions I may ask you to talk about a specific topic, or to share your experience in exploring the resources we are discussing with the rest of your seminar group. You should always be prepared for this.

Online information

The Blackboard Web-based learning environment will be used to post course information notices, and enable ongoing electronic discussion forums on topics or issues introduced in or out of class. Students are also encouraged to use Blackboard for information sharing, and to post questions for electronic and in-class discussion. You should also read the appropriate module Web pages in conjunction with the module readings and course notes. Details on how to access Blackboard are in the *Administration Handbook*, but if you have any difficulties logging on please contact the Help Desk, at:

its-service@vuw.ac.nz

All LIM students will be automatically enrolled in LIM Programmes Information on Blackboard. General announcements and information will be posted here, and students should check this site regularly.

Internet conferencing

Distance sessions are conducted via the Internet; in order to participate students will need an Internet-connected PC running Windows Vista, XP, or Windows 2000, microphone, and headphones/speakers. To connect, go to the Internet conferencing page (and read the “Getting Started” information) at

<https://conferencing.sim.vuw.ac.nz/>

There is also an 'Internet Conferencing' button linking to this page in Blackboard. *Some days before your first session, and at least 15 minutes before each subsequent session, you should test your system by going to the Echo Room.* Regular classes will be held in the LIM Room; additional Discussion Rooms are available for breakout groups, and as a "waiting room" if a class is proceeding in the main LIM room. Study groups can use the discussion rooms out of regular class times. For further information, follow the help links on the Internet Conferencing page; details, including screen name conventions, are also available on Blackboard under LIM Programmes Information.

LIM Students email list

Mass communication between the school and students is via the email list. It is your responsibility to ensure you are on the email list; subscription is essential.

The lim-students email discussion list is used to make important announcements and to share news and ideas relating to the LIM programmes. It is vital that all staff and students are subscribed. Please make sure that your current email address is subscribed – one that you check regularly. It is very important that students remain a member of this list until after graduation as the list is used as a main form of communication of important administration messages (including graduation messages). Emails are sent to lim-students often, so if you have not had contact for a few weeks it is a good idea to check if you are still subscribed. If an email is rejected by your email account, you will automatically be unsubscribed.

To subscribe, go to:

<http://lists.vuw.ac.nz/mailman/listinfo/lim-students>

Changing your e-mail address

If you change email addresses, you must unsubscribe from lim-students and re-subscribe with your new email address.

VUW ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

For the following important information follow the links provided:

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

General University Policies and Statutes

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcademic/Publications.aspx

Faculty of Commerce and Administration Offices

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fca/studenthelp/>

Manaaki Pihipihinga Programme

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/mentoring/