



SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE

**POLITICS AND LAW
GENERAL YEAR 12**

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Sample course outline

Politics and Law – General Year 12

Semester 1 – Unit 3 – Democracy and the rule of law

Week	Key teaching points
1–2	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • operating principals of a liberal democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ equality of political rights ▪ majority rule ▪ political participation ▪ political freedom • development of the operating principles of a liberal democracy in Australia with comparison to one other modern liberal democracy such as the USA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ political rights and freedoms ▪ types of ‘majorities’ used ▪ extent and nature of political participation
3–5	<p>Task 1 Part A: Investigation – separation of powers doctrine in Australia and the USA Commence research and analysis</p> <p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roles of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ nature of the power each arm wields ▪ checks and balances each arm has over the other two • the institutions in Australia that perform the legislative, executive and judicial functions of government • the extent to which the doctrine of separation of powers exists in Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ parliamentary Executive ▪ independence of the judiciary ▪ parliament as a rubber stamp? • the operation of the rule of law in Western Australia or Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ examples of public officials abusing their power ▪ legal consequences for those officials <p>Task 2: Explanation – operating principles of a liberal democracy</p> <p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structure and processes of the political and legal system in Australia, including federalism <p>Political and legal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State’s rights within the Australian federal system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperative vs coercive federalism ▪ Issue: Introduction of the National Curriculum
6–7	<p>Political and legal research skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and analysis • Communication <p>Task 1 Part A: Investigation – research due Task 1 Part B: Investigation – validation in-class report</p> <p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key influences on the structure of the political and legal system in Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Westminster system of government ▪ English common law ▪ the American federal system ▪ the Canadian federal system ▪ the Swiss referendum process

Week	Key teaching points
8–10	<p>Task 3: Source analysis – influences on the political and legal system in Australia</p> <p>Political and legal research skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and analysis • Communication <p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • structures and processes of the political and legal system in Iraq as an example of a theocracy <p>Political and legal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the rule of law in a non-democratic political and legal system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ women and the Iranian legal system ▪ non-Muslims in the Iranian legal system
11–13	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the court hierarchy in Western Australia with reference to both criminal and civil law <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ benefits ▪ jurisdictional limits • the process of civil and criminal trials in Western Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ pre-trial procedures ▪ trial procedures ▪ post-trial outcomes • the trial process in a non-common law legal system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the inquisitorial trial process ▪ pre-trial, trial and post-trial procedures <p>Task 4: Externally set task</p>
14–15	<p>Revision</p> <p>Task 5: In-class test on a representative sample of the content from Unit 3.</p>

Semester 2 – Unit 4 – Representation and justice

Week	Key teaching points
1	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Western Australian and Commonwealth electoral systems since Federation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ compulsory voting ▪ the extension of the franchise ▪ electoral frequency at the State and Commonwealth level ▪ group ticket voting (GTV)
2–3	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voting systems used in Australia since Federation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ first past the post ▪ preferential ▪ optional preferential, such as used in Queensland and New South Wales ▪ proportional representation <p>Task 6: Explanation – In-class essay on compulsory voting</p>
4–6	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advantages and disadvantages of the current voting systems used in Australia/Western Australia, including reference to one vote one value and the extent to which the will of the people is represented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ type of majority required ▪ vote wastage ▪ winner’s bonus ▪ level of informal vote ▪ simplicity vs complexity ▪ micro vs minor vs major parties <p>Political and legal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the electoral and voting system in Australia in terms of the principles of fair elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ periodical ▪ genuine choice ▪ informed voters ▪ confidence in the system ▪ secret ballot ▪ universal suffrage <p>Task 7: Source analysis – voting systems used in Australia</p>
7–9	<p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an examination of a recent (the last ten years) election in Australia with reference to the influence on the outcome of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the campaign ▪ policies ▪ personalities ▪ media, including social media ▪ the voting and electoral systems
10–13	<p>Task 8 Part A: Investigation – a criminal trial in Western Australia Commence research and analysis</p> <p>Political and legal systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengths and weaknesses of the trial process of the adversarial system in Western Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ role of parties ▪ role of judges (are they impartial or biased?) ▪ rules of evidence ▪ contest hides or exposes the truth? • an examination of a recent (the last ten years) civil or criminal trial in Western Australia – the Lloyd Rayney murder trial

Week	Key teaching points
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengths and weaknesses of the trial process of a non-common law legal system in one other country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ role of parties ▪ role of judges (are they too powerful?) ▪ rules of evidence <p>Political and legal research skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and analysis • Communication <p>Task 8 Part A: Research due In</p> <p>Task 8 Part B: Class presentation on investigation findings</p>
14–15	<p>Political and legal research skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and analysis • Communication <p>Political and legal issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the extent to which justice prevails in the judicial system in Western Australia <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ construct reasoned arguments For or Against justice prevailing <p>Task 9: In-class test on a representative sample of the content from Unit 4</p>