ABOUT THE UNIT

This workshop will examine the major current issues in consumer law and policy, including: the 2007 national review of Australian consumer policy; new laws prohibiting unfair contract terms; how we make laws and the role of interest groups; alternative dispute resolution and developments in misleading, deceptive and unconscionable conduct.

The unit is co-ordinated and led by UWA academic Eileen Webb. The unit will also feature a guest presentation from Chris Field, Ombudsman, Western Australia, Adjunct Professor, University of Western Australia and formerly, Chair in Consumer Law and Professor, La Trobe University and Chairman, Australian Consumers’ Association.

Additionally, several leading Western Australians will make guest presentations, including:

John Langoulant, CEO, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Western Australia
Lyndon Rowe, Chairman, Economic Regulation Authority, Western Australia
Pat Walker, Commissioner, Department of Consumer Protection and Employment

Classes will be held at The University of Western Australia. The Law School welcomes students from other LLM programs, practitioners wishing to extend their professional development and others wishing to participate in the unit.

Morning and afternoon refreshments will be provided.

University luncheon venues available; lunch is not included in the registration fee. Please register early to secure your place.
Day 1
Monday, 25th June

Morning

Introduction: Ms Eileen Webb, Subject Co-ordinator and Senior Lecturer, University of Western Australia

Guest Presenter: Chris Field, Ombudsman, Western Australia

- Who are consumers and what are consumer interests?
- What is consumer law and how is it made?
- The role of government, regulators, consumer affairs departments and interest groups.

Afternoon

Guest Presenter: Chris Field, Ombudsman, Western Australia

- An introduction to law and economics
- Theories of regulation and the role of interest groups, including consumer advocacy.
- Case Studies.

Guest Presenter: Mr John Langoulant, CEO, Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WA)

Guest Presenter: Mr Lyndon Rowe, Chairman, Economic Regulation Authority

- Economic Theory, Public Policy, Interest Groups, Regulation and Consumers

Day 2
Tuesday, 26th June

Lecturer: Ms Aviva Freilich, Lecturer, UWA

- An overview of the legal framework regulating Australian consumer markets.
- An overview of the law of unconscionability.

Day 3
Monday, 27th June

Lecturer: Ms Eileen Webb, Subject Co-ordinator and Senior Lecturer, University of Western Australia

- The introduction of unfair contract terms in Australia.
- Group exercise: examining the terms of a consumer contract.
- Group exercise: should Australia introduce laws prohibiting unfair contract terms?

Day 4
Tuesday, 28th June

Morning

Guest Presenter: Chris Field, Ombudsman, Western Australia

- Reviewing Australian consumer law and policy: an introduction
- Reviewing Australian consumer law and policy: the key issues.

Afternoon

Guest Presenter: Mr Patrick Walker, Commissioner, Department of Consumer and Employment Protection

- Reviewing Australian consumer law and policy: the key issues (continued).

Day 5
Monday, 29th June

Morning

Guest Lecturer: Tracey Atkins, co-author, Current Issues in Consumer Law and Policy and Researcher, Alternative Dispute Resolution in Victoria

- Alternative Dispute Resolution: Theory and Practice
- Consumer dispute resolution and access to justice, including a law and economics analysis
- Self-regulation, including industry codes of practice
- Industry dispute resolution and Industry Ombudsman schemes.

Afternoon

Lecturer: Ms Eileen Webb, Subject Co-ordinator and Senior Lecturer, University of Western Australia

- Conclusion.