

Here are some of the most important points from this unit to help you complete your poster:

A Important principles of law

- Everybody is equal before the law.
- Everyone, including the government, must obey the law.
- Judges are independent (no one can tell them what to decide).
- The jury consists of ordinary people.
- Adults have a say in making the laws by voting for parliament.

B Who makes the law?

- In Australia today **parliament**, which is elected by the people, makes the law and sets out the consequences for breaking the law.
- The courts decide whether someone has broken those laws or not.
- Laws are **handed down from the past** and the courts decide how these laws should apply in the present. The parliament can change these laws if it wishes to.

C Who enforces the law?

- The police have the job of **enforcing** the law by bringing people they think have broken the law before the courts. They have no say in the decision of the court.
- In courts, the decisions are made either by judges, magistrates, or judge and jury.
- Judges and magistrates are appointed by government, but cannot be sacked by government when government disagrees with their decisions. They are **independent**.
- Juries are selected **at random** from the general population. Where a jury is used it is the judge's job to make the law clear to the jury and advise them. The jury decides whether a defendant has been proven guilty or not. The judge decides on which punishment should be applied.

Note: If the government doesn't like a decision of the courts, it cannot change that particular decision. All it can do is change the law itself.