



All the information you need to complete the following tasks can be found on the SYN Guide to Understanding defamation .

TASK ONE

All broadcasters must follow strict rules about what they can and can't say on air. Presenters have a responsibility to act responsibly and ethically on air to avoid any legal trouble and potentially being pulled off air.

What is defamation?

Even if the person is not named, is it still defamation?

Not only people can be defamed, give 3 examples of other entities that can be defamed

Read the following scenarios and comment on whether or not you think they are cases of defamation

- a) Sarah tells a story about her co-worker Mariam on air. Sarah discloses Mariam's role and the retail store that they work at. Sarah speculates that Mariam is stealing goods at the store but doesn't mention her name.

Would this be considered defamation? Why or why not?

- b) On his music show Mark reviews the latest album by Muse. Mark isn't particularly a fan of the band, and scores them a 1 out of 5, discussing his opinion of the album.

Would this be considered defamation? Why or why not?

- c) Dave covers a news story about Lady Gaga wearing fur. He states wearing fur is wrong and that as role model Lady Gaga should avoid wearing fur as it makes her young audience think it's acceptable. He backs up his opinion with facts on the issue and states that it's personal view on the matter.

Would this be considered defamation? Why or why not?

- d) Mark and Liam present a radio comedy sketch where they impersonate a popular Australian politician. They play some "leaked" "behind the scenes" and "secretly" recorded audio of the politician contradicting their publicly known view of climate change. The politician admits that they do in fact believe climate change is real, they admit they don't care because they are old and that it simply won't affect them. The voice of the politician is over the top and it's clear that is not actually the politician.

Would this be considered defamation? Why or why not?

Who can get in trouble for defamation?

- a) The presenter
- b) The broadcaster
- c) A guest on the program
- d) All of the above

What can be used as defence if you are accused of defaming someone?

- a) I was being funny with my own warped sense of humour
- b) I was only exaggerating
- c) It was based on true facts and my opinion, I stated it as my opinion and included the facts
- d) I heard a rumour

Broadcasters cannot use language deemed as discriminatory, give 2 examples of the kind of discrimination that is not acceptable.

EXTENTION

Have a read of this article regarding social media and defamation and answer the following questions. You may be surprised by what you find!!

Social media and defamation: <http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2010/12/23/qa-social-media-and-defamation>

In the eyes of the law are social media users, bloggers and online commenters publishers?

Are social media users subject to the same laws as media professionals?

Can you be held responsible in the “real world” for you actions online?

How can you protect yourself from potential lawsuits when posting online?