Fundamentals of Telecommunications Regulation

1 – 5 November 2027
Amsterdam (Netherlands)

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Ref: 3255570_205334 **Date:** 1 – 5 November 2027 **Location:** Amsterdam (Netherlands) **Fees:** 5900 GBP

Telecommunications regulation is the set of rules and public oversight that decides who may run networks and services, how scarce radio spectrum is shared, how operators connect with one another and how customers are protected. This 1-week foundation course is for newcomers to the field in operators, public bodies and advisory firms, and its final deliverable is a one-page regulatory decision brief drafted on a simulated case.

Introduction

The course rests on three basic ideas. The objectives of regulation, namely fair competition, consumer protection and efficient use of scarce resources, explain why the sector is supervised at all. Authorisation models separate the individual licence, granted to a named operator, from the general authorisation that lets any qualifying firm enter after notification. Spectrum allocation and assignment describe how frequency bands are first set aside for a use and then given to users. The level is foundation, with no legal or engineering background assumed. Teaching uses plain-language case examples from mobile, fixed and satellite markets and a closing decision simulation.

Course Objectives

- Define the purpose of telecommunications regulation and the roles of regulators, operators, governments and consumers
- Distinguish an individual licence from a general authorisation and explain what each means for market entry
- Distinguish spectrum allocation from spectrum assignment and compare the main methods of assigning frequencies
- Interpret simple interconnection and tariff rules and explain why access to networks is regulated
- Apply basic consumer protection and quality of service ideas to a customer complaint scenario
- Select the questions a regulator would ask about a new service such as IoT connectivity or satellite broadband



Target Audience

- Graduates and new joiners in regulatory or legal affairs teams, who must decide which rules apply to a question they are asked
- Engineers and product staff at operators, who must judge when a network or service change raises a licensing issue
- Policy and public-sector officers new to the sector, who must interpret the reasons behind a regulatory proposal
- Customer service and compliance staff, who must determine which quality of service and complaint rules apply
- Consultants and analysts beginning telecom work, who must select the basic concepts that frame a client's question

Course Outline

Day 1: Why Telecommunications Is Regulated

- Monopoly vs Competitive Market: How Telecom Markets Moved from One Provider to Many
- Sector Overview: Fixed, Mobile, Satellite and Internet Services Explained Simply
- Objectives of Regulation: Competition, Consumer Protection and Efficient Use of Scarce Resources
- Stakeholders and Their Roles: Regulators, Operators, Governments and Consumers
- International Good Practice: Common Principles Shared by Regulators in Many Markets

Day 2: Institutions, Licences and Market Entry

- Individual Licence vs General Authorisation: Named Permission Compared with Notified Entry
- Institutional Structure: How Laws, Ministries and Independent Authorities Divide Responsibilities
- Regulatory Authority Duties: Rule-Making, Monitoring, Enforcement and Dispute Resolution
- Market Entry Conditions: Fees, Obligations and Coverage Commitments for New Operators
- Universal Service Concept: Funding Access for Remote and Low-Income Users

Day 3: Competition, Interconnection and Tariffs

- Retail vs Wholesale Markets: Services to Customers Compared with Services Between Operators
- Anti-Competitive Practices: Margin Squeeze, Refusal to Supply and Regulatory Responses
- Interconnection and Access: Why Networks Must Connect and Who Sets Terms
- Tariff and Pricing Principles: Cost Orientation, Price Caps and Transparency Explained
- Mobile Market Case Example: How Competition Rules Shaped Prices and Choice

Day 4: Spectrum and Consumer Protection

- Spectrum Allocation vs Assignment: Setting Bands Aside Compared with Granting Them to Users
- Radio Spectrum as a Limited Resource: Interference, Propagation and Value Explained
- Assignment Methods and 5G Challenges: Auctions, Comparative Selection and New Bands
- Consumer Rights in Telecommunications: Contracts, Billing Accuracy and Switching Providers
- Quality of Service and Complaints: Standards, Measurement and Compla[illegible]



Day 5: Emerging Services and a First Regulatory Decision

- Traditional Telecom Services vs Digital Platforms: Why Rules Differ for Each
- 5G, IoT and Satellite Services: New Questions for Licensing and Spectrum
- Cybersecurity Basics in Regulation: Network Resilience and Incident Reporting Duties
- Decision Simulation: Applying Licensing, Competition and Consumer Rules to One Case
- Regulatory Decision Brief and Review: Completing the One-Page Brief and Key Takeaways

Skills You Will Gain

- Licensing Model Identification
- Spectrum Terminology
- Interconnection Basics
- Tariff Principle Reading
- Consumer Protection Rules
- Quality of Service Measures
- Regulatory Question Framing

Why Attend This Course

- From hearing regulatory terms in meetings to explaining licensing, spectrum and interconnection in plain words
- From seeing regulation as paperwork to understanding the competition and consumer goals behind each rule
- From uncertainty about who decides what to knowing the roles of regulators, operators, governments and consumers
- From no practice in regulatory reasoning to a one-page decision brief drafted on a simulated case

Conclusion

Telecommunications regulation is the public framework that keeps networks open to competition, shares radio frequencies fairly and protects the people who pay for services. The course makes three distinctions clear: individual licence against general authorisation, spectrum allocation against assignment, and retail against wholesale markets. It is the right choice for newcomers from operators, public bodies and advisory firms who need first principles before moving on to longer study of regulatory frameworks and cost modelling.

Course FAQs

What is telecommunications regulation?

Telecommunications regulation is the body of rules and oversight that governs entry to the sector, the use of radio spectrum, connection between networks, prices and consumer protection, with the aim of fair competition and reliable services.



What is the difference between spectrum allocation and spectrum assignment in telecommunications regulation?

Allocation sets a frequency band aside for a type of use, such as mobile or satellite services. Assignment then gives a specific part of that band to a particular user, often through an auction or a comparative selection.

Which concepts does the fundamentals of telecommunications regulation course follow?

The course follows the core objectives of regulation, the distinction between individual licences and general authorisations, spectrum allocation and assignment, and basic interconnection and tariff principles, each explained from first principles.

Is the fundamentals of telecommunications regulation course right for a network engineer?

Yes, for network engineers new to regulation. It explains when a technical change raises licensing, spectrum or quality of service questions, without assuming legal knowledge, so engineers can work more easily with regulatory colleagues.

What do delegates produce in the fundamentals of telecommunications regulation course?

Delegates produce a one-page regulatory decision brief on a simulated case, setting out the question, the licensing, competition and consumer rules involved, the options and a recommended decision.

