

Module Descriptor



UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON

INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMMES

GENERAL INFORMATION

Module title	Legal system and method
Module code	LA1031
Module level	4
Contact email	The Undergraduate Laws Programme courses are run in collaboration with the University of London International Programmes. Enquiries may be made via the Student Advice Centre at: www.enquiries.londoninternational.ac.uk
Credit value	30
Courses on which this module is offered	CertHE, LLB, EMFSS
Module pre-requisite	None
Notional study time	300 hours

MODULE PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

Legal system and method is a compulsory part of the LLB and CertHE Common Law and students must select it on first registration. The module is an introduction to the English legal system and describes the distinctiveness of the common law approach as a legal methodology. The module is vital in initiating students into the process of legal research and the understanding of legal reasoning.

MODULE AIM

To achieve an overview of the central institutions and processes of the English Legal System and to introduce students to techniques of legal interpretation and legal research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: KNOWLEDGE

On successful completion of the module students should be able to:

1. Understand the structure and operation of the central institutions and processes of the English legal system;
2. Explain the purpose and basic structure of the civil justice system and the place and value of alternative methods of dispute resolution;
3. Explain the purpose and basic structure of the criminal justice system and the tension between the objectives of crime control and protection of civil liberties and human rights;
4. Describe the role and constitutional position of judges and in particular the Law Lords and the Supreme Court;
5. Understand judicial approaches to statutory interpretation and the influence of European law on those approaches;
6. Understand the essential ingredients of the rule of law, and the importance to fairness and justice in social and legal systems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: SKILLS

Students completing this module should be able to:

7. Apply the techniques of legal reasoning covering precedent and statutory interpretation;
8. Identify key issues in a case and summarise points clearly and accurately;
9. Conduct basic legal research tasks using primary and secondary sources;

10. Respond coherently to straightforward questions about the law using legal referencing appropriately;
11. Locate legal sources;
12. Demonstrate understanding of legal terminology;
13. Understand the principles of good academic practice.

BENCHMARK FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) benchmark statement for Law (2015).

MODULE SYLLABUS

- (a) *The nature of the common law tradition, with particular reference to human rights.*
- (b) *Sources of law and principles of legal research with an emphasis on case noting, reading cases/statutes and essay writing.*
- (c) *Conduct of legal research and retrieval of legal information, with particular reference to the use of the London online library and web based resources in finding cases, statutes and journal articles.*
- (d) *The doctrine of precedent and the principles of statutory interpretation.*
- (e) *Judicial reasoning in relation to (i) cases, and (ii) statutes.*
- (f) *The judiciary, with particular reference to the role of the judges and the Human Rights Act.*
- (g) *The criminal justice process (in outline) and the role of rights in the process, with particular attention to the jury and the impact of the Human Rights Act.*
- (h) *The civil justice process (in outline), with particular attention to reform and the role of rights.*

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Subject guide

Subject guides are the student's primary learning resource. The subject guide covers the entire syllabus and provides the student with the grounding to complete the module successfully. The subject guide sets out the learning outcomes that must be achieved as well as providing advice on how to study the module. The guide also includes the essential reading and a series of self-test activities together with sample examination questions, designed to enable students to test their understanding. The subject guide is supplemented each year with 'Recent Developments in Law', made available on the VLE.

The Laws Virtual Learning Environment

The Laws VLE provides one centralised location where the following resources are provided:

- a module page with news and updates, provided by legal academics associated with the Laws Programme;
- a complete version of the subject guides;
- online audio presentations;
- recent developments in law;
- past examination papers and reports;
- discussion forums where students can debate and interact with other students;
- Computer Marked Assessments – multiple choice questions with feedback are available for some modules allowing students to test their knowledge and understanding of the key topics.

The Online Library

The Online Library provides access to:

- the professional legal databases LexisLibrary and Westlaw;
- cases and up-to-date statutes;
- key academic law journals;
- law reports;

- links to important websites.

Core Reading

Students should refer to the following core text:

Holland, J.A. and J.S. Webb *Learning legal rules: a student's guide to legal method and reasoning*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) ninth edition [ISBN 9780198728436].
<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780198728436.do>

Please note that references in the subject guide refer to the eighth edition but you will be able to use the section headings and the index to find the relevant readings in the new edition.

ASSESSMENT

There are self-assessment questions at the end of each section of the Subject Guide designed to test knowledge and understanding. There are additional interactive online activities in the form of multiple choice questions and other on-line tasks, which test skills outcomes 7-13. These activities prepare students to demonstrate learning outcomes that are formally tested in the summative assessment.

Summative assessment includes:

1. A case note submitted prior to formal examination.
2. A three hour and fifteen minute unseen examination paper divided into three parts:
 - Part A of the examination is a compulsory set of questions based on the case note activity;
 - Part B requires students to answer two essay questions out of eight;
 - Part C is a set of compulsory questions on a statute that has been previously made available to students on the VLE.

Permitted materials

None. The statute relating to Part C is provided as part of the examination paper.