

LA128-30 Understanding Law in Context

22/23

Department

School of Law

Level

Undergraduate Level 1

Module leader

Maggie O'Brien

Credit value

30

Module duration

20 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This foundational module aims to provide students with a sound introduction to the study of Law at Warwick. It aims to explore the meaning of Law in Context as a concept and approach. It will also incorporate an understanding of English legal method within the institutional context of the English Legal System and engage with the importance of legal theory in this regard.

Particular attention is given to considering sources of law, the techniques of reading critically both academic material and legal texts (cases and statutes), understanding legal rhetoric, the role of theory, and how to make an argument and essay writing.

These various aspects of the module will provide a critical overview of the machinery of justice at the heart of the English legal system and provide students with a fluency in fundamental legal techniques and an understanding of law and theory. The subjects will be developed through participatory and problem based exercises in workshops (of approximately 25-30 students) whereby students will have the opportunity to test and develop their fundamental legal skills as well as other core skills, which they will utilise throughout their legal studies. They will be complemented by regular lectures.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

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Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

The problem based workshop format supported by regular focused lectures (addressing both the practices and theories of law) will address the following topics through problem based learning and a focus on real and constructed cases:

1. The meaning and value of law in context
2. Encountering gender, race, class and sexuality
3. The operation of legal systems and the English system in particular
4. Sources of law including human rights and international law as well as traditions, literature (academic and otherwise) and other forms of thought
5. Theories of law
6. Legal skills, their form and application: from critical reading and interpretation to problem analysis and solving to oral and written presentation.
7. Understanding the political, economic, historical, international, social and other contexts through the examination of particular cases and materials.

Each 'case' or 'problem' will provide the basis for exploring these issues by developing scenarios and providing the opportunity for students to engage with both theory and practice, allowing them to apply skills in this context whilst also analysing and reflecting on that application.

The lecture series will provide insights into the practices and theories of law, framing the subject matter, whilst the facilitated workshops will engage students in learning about these matters through group analysis of problems.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Ability to demonstrate good knowledge of Law in Context as a concept, including what can be learned from adopting such an approach in the analysis of law
- Ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the English legal system, including its institutions, procedures and sources of law
- Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying concepts, values and principles associated with law, justice and ethics, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within their multiple contexts
- Show knowledge and understanding of the cultural, political, social and philosophical underpinnings and contexts of the law
- Think systematically about the role of law in politics and society
- Develop written and oral presentation skills in the analysis, preparation and presentation of legal theory and philosophy
- Understand and critically evaluate the English Legal system
- Explain coherently current developments relating to the areas studied in the module
- Demonstrate good problem solving, research and writing skills, including analytical skills and the ability to construct and substantiate a comprehensive scholarly argument
- Demonstrate good discussion and communication skills, including the ability to work collaboratively with others

Indicative reading list

Yet to be determined

Research element

Legal research required into topics covered by problem based learning scenarios and cases

Interdisciplinary

Students will consider some philosophical, political and other disciplines as they impact on law and legal systems

International

Students will consider the impact and influence of international legal standards and debates on the UK legal system

Subject specific skills

Written and oral presentation skills in the analysis, preparation and presentation of legal theory and philosophy.

Legal research

Legal analysis

Legal writing

Transferable skills

Written and oral presentation skills.

Critical analysis.

Problem solving, research skills, including analytical skills and the ability to construct and substantiate a comprehensive scholarly argument.

Discussion and communication skills.

Working collaboratively with others.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	8 sessions of 1 hour (3%)
Seminars	32 sessions of 1 hour (11%)
Fieldwork	1 session of 3 hours (1%)
External visits	1 session of 3 hours (1%)
Online learning (independent)	8 sessions of 30 minutes (1%)
Private study	218 hours (73%)
Assessment	32 hours (11%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Students will prepare for seminars in their small groups and individually, carrying out assigned readings, preparing for problem based learning exercise and case studies.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Court Reflection	10%	5 hours	No
Court Visit Reflection: Students will arrange visits to a Courtroom and write a 750 word personal reflection which comprises 10% of portfolio mark.			
Submission in week 10/Term one			
Opportunity for Formative Feedback in Week 5/Term One			
Feedback Week2/Term Two			

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Group Presentation on Carceral Justice	15%	7 hours	No
Students will upload a Group Video Presentation. The group presentation will receive a single mark for this element comprising presentation 60% of the total, with the personal reflection being 40%. Presentation in Week 10/Term one. Opportunity for Formative feedback in Week 8 or 9(in seminar). Summative feedback in week 2/term two.			

Reassessment component

CARCERAL JUSTICE	No
An essay question on the same subject matter as the presentation - Carceral Justice - will be set instead of the group presentation. Submission with final portfolio.	

Assessment component

Judgement - Property Law	30%	7 hours	No
A judgement exercise will be set comprising a factual situation to which the student must apply precedents drawn from the in-seminar case study. Submission in Term Three with summative feedback in Term Three. The word limit is 1250			

Reassessment component is the same

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
FREE SPEECH	35%	11 hours	No
Essay will explore theoretical foundations of ideas around free speech. Submission in Term Three.			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Reflection on Presentation	10%	2 hours	No
Students are required to submit an individual reflection on the Group Presentation experience.. The word limit is 500. This is linked to the Group presentation, the split between the presentation and reflection - 60/40			
Reassessment component			
Discussion of Theory used for Group Presentation			No
Re-assessment Essay will replace the Group Presentation/Presentation reflection and comprise 25% weighting.			

Feedback on assessment

Assessment Portfolio Breakdown.

Court Reflection: Opportunity for formative feedback provided in Week 7 e.g. draft submission on Tabula , comments and indicative mark. Summative Assessment Feedback provided through Tabula in Term Two.

Group Presentation. Formative Feedback provided in week 9 preparation Seminar. Summative Assessment Feedback provided through Tabula in Term Two.

Reflection on Group Presentation. Formative Feedback provided in week 9 preparation Seminar. Summative Assessment Feedback provided through Tabula in Term Two.

Judgement; Opportunity for formative feedback in week 5 seminar, incorporating an in-seminar formative exercise and oral feedback. Summative feedback through Tabula post submission in Term Three

Essay: Opportunity for Formative Feedback on Essay plan in week 8. Summative Feedback

through Tabula following submission at end of Term Three

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of ULAA-M105 Undergraduate Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M106 Undergraduate Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M108 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M10A Undergraduate Law with French Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M10C Undergraduate Law with German Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M111 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 1 of ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)