

LA390-30 Public Legal Education

26/27

Department

School of Law

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Rebecca Munro

Credit value

30

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module aims to introduce students to the ideas and practice of public legal education through a clinical and experiential programme, while also providing support to our local community.

At a time when the legal sector is in flux, particularly with significant cuts to legal aid, and many communities experiencing extreme levels of exclusion from the legal system, public legal education provides a holistic and innovative way to provide support. Public legal education addresses legal need arising from lack of awareness of the legal system and reduced access to sources of assistance at a community level, rather than through case specific or individual legal advice. Public legal education can take many forms, from information campaigns to theatre performances. This module will focus primarily on workshop-based teaching, but may also provide other opportunities.

The module gives students a unique introduction to this growing area of provision and develops key skills they can carry with them in their careers. The module provides an opportunity for students to contribute to their community while learning in the process.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

1. To provide students with an experiential learning opportunity in the field of public legal education, in which students provide workshops and legal information for the public in

partnership with community organisations, on specific topics within social welfare law and other relevant areas.

2. To develop students' ability to communicate about the law with a wider public, and give them an awareness of some of the tools and methods of critical pedagogy, and to consider the specific function of community-based education with adults from diverse backgrounds.
3. To introduce students to changing dynamics within the legal sector, particularly loss of legal aid, the increasing emphasis on 'DIY justice', and rising numbers of litigants in person. In addition, the module aims to historicize and critically analyse these changes and evaluate options for supporting communities. The module will introduce them to the idea of 'legal need' and the relationship between law and other kinds of social relation.
4. To enable and encourage students to reflect on the relationship between knowledge and law from a theoretical perspective, their own role as students of law and future practitioners, and the political implications of the public dissemination (or lack thereof) of laws.
5. To provide a service to the local community that is valuable and meets their needs.

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.

Term One

The first term will provide key background and context for thinking about public legal education and the role public knowledge of the law within broader social and political dynamics.

Introduction: A Changing Legal Sector (Week 1)

This session will introduce students to some of the most prominent issues and questions facing the legal sector in the UK, including the effects of the most recent cuts to legal aid and the rise in litigants in person, and the proposed introduction of online courts. This session will also look at the general proliferation of law and regulation in recent years, and the challenges this presents for public legal education. Knowledge, Law and the History of Public Legal Education (Week 2-3)

This week will consider who is allowed to know and speak about the law, and how this has shifted historically through the development of the legal profession, through the development of legal aid and the advice centre movement. Students will consider why law has developed a privileged form of knowledge in society, and whether or not this relative privilege is required for its operation. Students will learn about the history of public legal education in the UK and elsewhere, and its current challenges, while also challenging their own assumptions (as law students) about the nature of legal knowledge and expertise.

The Need for Law (Week 4-5)

This week will introduce students to the literature on legal need, examining the contours of widespread legal need in the UK, as well as how the idea of 'legal need' is constructed. Students will critically examine what it means to 'need' the law and the relationship this has to public legal education. Is it possible to differentiate between types of relationship to and experiences the law (and thereby complicate the idea of legal need)? How do we relate law to other frameworks through which we create meaning and navigate the world?

Social Welfare Law and Legal Capability (7-10)

Students will be introduced to key areas of social welfare law (welfare benefits, employment and housing) from a PLE perspective, with an overview of how these areas of law work, key issues and common problems. They will be tasked with finding information and resources for this area of

law and the topic they would like to focus on based on a range of topics provided by community groups. Student will engage with the idea of legal capability, or the knowledge, skills and capacities someone should have in order to deal with law-related issues. What role does knowledge play relative to other capacities? How do we communicate about the law to a broad audience? We will also focus on the key difference between legal advice and legal information, and examine the forms public legal education can take.

Term Two (Preparation for Teaching)

In term two, the module will turn to a more explicit focus on

developing and delivering public legal education, including the ethics of working with diverse communities, curriculum design and the particulars of teaching. Students will be placed or scheduled to observe and deliver community sessions and support as early as possible (and observation may happen in the first term as well if opportunities arise) in order to structure their progression over the course of this term. Students will begin workshopping their teaching plans and ideas for activities from the second week.

Approaches to Teaching and Curriculum Design (Critical Pedagogy) (Weeks 1-3)

Students will be introduced to key concerns in critical pedagogy and how these concerns shape how we develop community-based teaching interventions. They will consider the particularities of working with adults and working in communities. Lessons from work-based education will be transferred to the PLE context. Students will consider ethical dilemmas arising in the context of the classroom, how to ensure the quality and integrity of the information they provide, and troubleshoot solutions to common issues arising. Students will also consider how to design activities using the "backwards design" methodology.

Teacher Training (Weeks 4-5)

Students will be provided with practical aspects of teacher training to prepare them for being in a classroom, leading a workshop. Topics will include presentation skills, facilitating discussion and problem-solving. Working in groups students will do role plays and present aspects of the curricula they have designed, integrating feedback from their colleagues to produce the final product.

Community-Based Teaching (Weeks 7-10)

The last few weeks will see students primarily focused on teaching in the community, at their respective placements. They will still check in weekly in groups to discuss progress and any difficulties. The intention will be for students to be able to give the same workshop at least twice, if opportunity allows.

Learning outcomes

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

- Identify and critically analyse key issues relating to public legal education, including: a. The relationship between knowledge and law (historically and in the present) b. The concept of legal need c. Contemporary changes in the legal sector (legal aid, online courts, etc.) d. The role of public legal education and legal advice e. What it means to have 'legal capability' f. How law is experienced in relation to everyday problems
- Communicate about potentially complex legal issues in a way that is accessible to the public a. Reflect on their own role as lawyers b. Simplify legal jargon c. Identify aspects of an issue that are most important from the perspective of the 'user' d. Integrate skills and practical aspects of dealing with law-related issues (legal capability) alongside legal knowledge

- Teach about the law in a community setting. Align teaching methods with needs of specific groups and desired outcomes. Plan a workshop from beginning to end and develop teaching notes. Develop specific teaching tools. Identify or develop accessible information resources to support teaching. Identify and demonstrate good teaching practices, using the tools of critical pedagogy and insights of adult education. Conduct a workshop for community participants. Communicate clearly and professionally. Facilitate participation. Support learning processes. Critically reflect on and evaluate their own performance

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

Subject specific skills

No subject specific skills defined for this module.

Transferable skills

No transferable skills defined for this module.

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Tutorials	18 sessions of 3 hours (100%)
Total	54 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

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

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
3000 word essay	50%		No

Reassessment component is the same

Assessment component

Reflective essay and Portfolio 50% No

This will be submitted using myPortfolio/Mahara and should contain:

An overview of your placement and the work undertaken (500 words) - this may be jointly authored with your group.

Documentation of the project and any materials produced - this may be jointly authored with your group.

Justification of approach (500-1500 words) - this may be jointly authored with your group.

Reflective essay (1000 words).

Evaluations.

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Feedback on assessments will be provided via Tabula and Mahara through comments on written work, observation of teaching session and a response to reflective evaluation.

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law
- ULAA-M105 Undergraduate Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 2 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 3 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)

- ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
 - Year 2 of M131 Law (4 year)
 - Year 4 of M131 Law (4 year)
- ULAA-M106 Undergraduate Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 3 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 4 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M108 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 2 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law
- ULAA-M136 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
 - Year 2 of M136 Law with Humanities (3 year)
 - Year 3 of M136 Law with Humanities (3 year)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
 - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
 - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
 - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
 - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 4 of ULAA-ML35 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- ULAA-M135 Undergraduate Law and Sociology
 - Year 3 of M135 Law and Sociology
 - Year 4 of M135 Law and Sociology
- Year 4 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 4 of ULAA-M10A Undergraduate Law with French Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law
- Year 4 of ULAA-M10C Undergraduate Law with German Law (Qualifying Degree)

This module is Option list B for:

- ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 3 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
 - Year 4 of ML34 Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law

This module is Option list E for:

- Year 2 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law