

## Law A-Level



### Why study Law?

Despite the urban myth to the contrary, A Level Law provides an excellent platform for study of the subject at degree level. It is certainly not a prerequisite for a law degree but, if a student has a desire to become a legal professional, it is a subject they should consider. At best, harnessing their early interest may help boost those A Level grades. At worst, a student may at least have some knowledge to base their future study plans on.

Law also compliments a number of other A Level subjects. As it relates to the running of the country, there is considerable overlap with Government and Politics. It is clear too that many of the analytical and research skills developed studying Law lend themselves well to studying History. Alternatively, Law may be chosen by a student who is just curious to learn about the rules that govern our society and looking to inject a little variety into their timetable

### Entrance Requirements

Law is a subject which requires students to have a good grasp of the English language. After all, words are a lawyer's weapon of choice! Indeed, a proportion of the marks available for the AQA exam papers are actually awarded solely for the use of English. As a result, in addition to the college's standard entrance requirements, **a grade 6 in GCSE English is required**. However, while there will be the odd short essay answer to write, A Level Law is primarily a "problem-solving" subject. As such, it offers a chance to develop skills that can be of value to future undergraduate students of any subject.

### Course Content

Students will ultimately be assessed by means of three exams at the end of a two-year programme. Each exam will be two hours in duration and carries an equal portion of the overall mark. Students will be expected to answer questions on the nature of Law and the English legal system in all the papers but, additionally, each paper then has a large body of questions focused on a particular topic.

#### Paper 1: Criminal Law

We start by considering the underlying principles of criminal liability. What is it that makes someone's behaviour criminal? We then move on to applying these principles to non-fatal offences against the person and eventually homicide. Students learn to distinguish between murder and the various forms of manslaughter, applying the law and relevant defences in the process. Finally, there is a brief glimpse of the law governing offences against property such as theft and robbery.

### **Paper 2: Tort**

A tort is a legal wrong that is not a matter for the criminal law or a breach of contract. When those adverts ask if “you have ever been injured at work”, they are touting for business in this area of law. However, the subject goes further than merely analysing and applying the law behind those negligence claims. It requires knowledge of other areas of tort such as occupiers’ liability, nuisance and the defences to all those.

### **Paper 3: Law of Contract**

There are very few areas of modern society where the law of contract does not play an important role. It governs every purchase you make from a chocolate bar to a new home. Students will learn what is needed to make a valid contract, how to interpret its “terms and conditions” and what protection is afforded to the ordinary consumer by statute. They will then learn how to apply this knowledge to tackle problem questions.

### **How are lessons organised?**

A-Level law is assessed purely by means of examination and the lessons reflect that. From an early stage, there is an emphasis on tackling examination style questions and a short test follows the completion of each topic. Law is, however, a dynamic subject. A case decided today could overturn law that is centuries old. Therefore, we also look to embrace modern media and technology. Students will often be asked to carry out guided research of their own direct from many of the online primary resources.

As the students’ own legal knowledge and skills increase, the nature of the teaching also develops. Alongside lessons, second year students will be expected to conduct moots (mock appeal cases) and make presentations relating to a particular legal topic.

### **What careers might Law lead on to?**

The knowledge and skills acquired through undergraduate study of the law lend themselves to all manner of careers in addition to the obvious legal options.

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| ✓ Barrister       | ✓ Local Government          | ✓ Business Management |
| ✓ Solicitor       | ✓ Police & Law Enforcement  | ✓ Broadcasting        |
| ✓ Legal Executive | ✓ Health & Safety Inspector | ✓ Civil Service       |
| ✓ Paralegal       | ✓ Accountancy               | ✓ Teaching & Academia |

### **Further information**

For further information contact the Head of Law, Ray Hopkins (mrh@stdoms.ac.uk)