

<b>1</b>	<b>Awarding institution/body</b>	University of Oxford
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching institution</b>	University of Oxford
<b>3</b>	<b>Programme accredited</b>	as a qualifying law degree by The Law Society of England and Wales and The General Council of the Bar of England and Wales
<b>4</b>	<b>Final award</b>	BA (Hons)
<b>5</b>	<b>Programme</b>	Jurisprudence [course 1]
<b>6</b>	<b>UCAS code</b>	M100
<b>7</b>	<b>Relevant subject benchmark statement</b>	Law
<b>8</b>	<b>Date of Programme Specification preparation</b>	June 2004

<b>9</b>	<b>Educational aims of the programme</b>
	<p>The BA in Jurisprudence is a three year undergraduate law degree programme. The programme aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ bring students into direct intellectual engagement with the law, an engagement distinguished by rigour, depth and conceptual sophistication, focusing mainly but not exclusively on English law, and emphasising the use of primary sources;</li> <li>▪ furnish students with advanced skills suitable for legal practice or graduate study, but also transferable to a wide range of employment contexts and life experiences outside the law;</li> <li>▪ encourage and enable in students a critical and reflective attitude to the law, and more generally a capacity and propensity for sustained independent study, thought and argument;</li> <li>▪ constitute an intense learning experience characterised by close and frequent individual or small-group contact with tutors, a demanding schedule of independent study, and non-trivial exposure to academic disciplines other than law;</li> <li>▪ provide a humane education appropriate to a student's first years of university study.</li> </ul>

<b>10</b>	<b>Programme outcomes</b>
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<i>10A</i>	<i>Knowledge and understanding</i>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
	An understanding of the nature of law, and of its central concepts, values, principles and institutional features.	All courses in the programme are taught with an eye to the broader and deeper lessons to be learnt, and with a focus on problems that are apt to recur across different times and places. This is the programme's distinctive ethos. In all courses students are encouraged to think not only about what the law is but also about how it came to be that way and what it ought to be. This typically involves some comparison with the law of other jurisdictions and some encounter with disciplines such as philosophy and economics. In addition all students take a compulsory course in jurisprudence (philosophy of law) which tackles the problems of commonality and difference in philosophical perspective.
	An understanding of the character and uses of legal reasoning and argument	The dialogic method of the tutorial is well-suited to teaching legal argumentation by example and by practice and this lies at the centre of our approach. Problem and essay questions are typically used to structure discussion. All the courses on the programme are taught with an emphasis on the explication and testing of judicial arguments, and the furnishing of rival arguments by students. The compulsory jurisprudence course tackles legal reasoning in philosophical perspective.
	An understanding of the range of legal sources and how to use them	Teaching on year 1 courses is oriented towards the acquisition of a second-nature familiarity with legal sources. Independent study skills are prized, and library/ICT use is emphasised, throughout the programme. The Bodleian Law Librarians and Faculty IT officers advise and train students in access to legal information. Reading lists, tutorial discussions and exam questions emphasise familiarity with primary source material. The compulsory Legal Research Skills course in year 1 provides certification of technical aptitude in the use of legal sources.

<p>A thorough knowledge and understanding of the constitution of the United Kingdom, including its relationship to the European Union.</p>	<p>In the compulsory year 1 course in Constitutional Law, students are exposed to the major movements of UK constitutional history as well as the contemporary legal position (including the import of EU membership under the UK constitution). It also covers the fundamentals of EU constitutional law and its claims over Member States (including but not limited to the UK). Students later take a compulsory course in European Community Law which builds upon this foundation.</p>
<p>A thorough knowledge and understanding of at least six core areas of English law</p>	<p>The compulsory courses in Criminal Law, Tort, Contract, Land Law, Trusts and Administrative Law secure this outcome for all students.</p>
<p>A thorough knowledge and understanding of some more specialised areas of law, and/or some legally-related subjects.</p>	<p>Students choose either two standard optional courses or one standard optional course and two half-courses ('special subjects'). The options available include several legal specialisms as well as various legally-related non-law subjects (see next entry).</p>
<p>An understanding of how law is seen through the lens of at least one academic discipline other than law itself, and hence a working knowledge of that other discipline's methods and assumptions</p>	<p>The compulsory Jurisprudence course ensures that every student has studied the law in philosophical perspective and hence has a working knowledge of the methods and assumptions of philosophers. The optional course in Ethics (provided in collaboration with the Philosophy Faculty) allows students to refine their philosophical skills. Other optional courses cross over into other disciplines: History of English Law allows students to see the law through an historian's eyes, while Criminal Justice and Penology introduces a social-scientific approach. In keeping with the programme's distinctive ethos, most other courses also introduce ideas from other disciplines, notably from history, sociology, politics, economics, and philosophy.</p>

*Assessment*

Summative: The formal assessment of knowledge and understanding is by written examinations, held at the end of the second term on a distinction/pass/fail basis and the end of the ninth term (third year) for degree classification purposes. The exception is the Legal Research Skills course which is assessed on a pass/fail basis, using database searching and online tests, book searching and oral presentations, and groupwork activities. These assessments take place in years 1 and 2.

Formative: There is also much assessment of a less formal character. Understanding in particular is assessed on a continuous formative basis through the weekly tutorial. Weekly tutorial essays are sometimes presented orally by the student in the tutorial, or alternatively read by the tutor and discussed in the tutorial. Tutors' feedback may therefore be provided orally and/or in writing. There are also opportunities for students to comment orally on each other's work.

Knowledge and understanding of the student's most recent term's work is tested by tutors' setting of practice examinations (usually at the start of the term following). Again detailed feedback may be provided orally and/or in writing. Performance in both tutorials and practice examinations is recorded by tutors, and may be used later in the writing of references, something of which students are regularly reminded. There is a tutorial report from each tutor each term. Students see their tutors regularly to hear and discuss their tutorial reports. These continuous assessments are not, however, part of the degree classification process. They are part of a personal trust-based tutorial relationship which would be fractured by giving the tutor an official role in degree classification.

<i>10B</i>	<i>Intellectual Skills</i>	<i>Teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
	An ability to read and assimilate complex legal and legally-related texts	Students are given a reading list for each tutorial, devised by the tutor (using an agreed reading list as a basis). The emphasis is normally on primary materials, including cases, statutes, and scholarly articles. The student is expected to work out how the materials relate to each other and (where relevant) which materials represent the current state of the law. Naturally textbooks are used for support but over-reliance on textbooks tends to inhibit success in the tutorial system, which calls for independence of thought, and this is well-known among students.
	An ability to bring together information derived from a number of different sources, distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant, and create a coherent synthesis	Each weekly reading list is matched by an essay question (or choice of essay questions). The bread-and-butter of an Oxford law student's life is working through the reading list and writing the associated essay. This necessitates the isolation of only the relevant themes and debates from the material studied and their deployment in a continuous and organised argument.

<p>An ability to analyse complex issues so that they can be tackled in smaller steps</p>	<p>This is the other side of the essay-writing exercise. The student is expected to sever issues that may have become confused in the law, and to deal with the severed issues severally. The problem question (see next entry) particularly encourages such analysis.</p>
<p>An ability independently to identify the legal issues that are raised by a question or factual situation</p>	<p>In addition or as an alternative to essay questions, tutors may set 'problem' questions in which imaginary fact-scenarios are used to test a student's grasp of the legal doctrines and their interrelations. Usually such cases are legally arguable both ways. Some tutors use such questions as the framework for the tutorial itself. Tutors and lecturers will often vary the details of these imaginary fact scenarios to test legal doctrines, and students are encouraged to do the same in their essays.</p>
<p>An ability to conduct the legal research necessary to tackle even an unfamiliar legal problem independently</p>	<p>The regime of the tutorial reading list with its emphasis on primary materials teaches students where to begin looking for the law on any subject. Over time, they become extremely familiar with law libraries and legal research tools and learn to depart from their reading lists and go off on their own when a troublesome essay topic so demands. Students are equipped with the skills to do this in the Legal Research Skills course.</p>
<p>An ability to make a reasoned choice between rival answers to legal questions</p>	<p>It is hard to write a successful tutorial essay or to have a productive tutorial while fence-sitting. In particular, 'problem' questions generally require the resolution of legal questions as more than one answer is generally arguable.</p>
<p>An ability to think critically about the law and envisage its reform</p>	<p>Wide-ranging tutorial reading lists, including dissenting judgments and critical academic articles, are designed to encourage critical thinking about legal doctrine. More specifically, tutors prescribe the reading of Law Commission reports and similar reform documents (from the UK and overseas) when they are pertinent to the tutorial topic. In the compulsory Jurisprudence course several topics are devoted to standards by which the law may be criticised and the ethical expression of dissent.</p>

*Assessment*

The University examinations strongly emphasise the use of critical, analytical and synthetical skills under pressure, but this summative mechanism only represents the conspicuous tip of the assessment iceberg. Under the surface, the formative assessment of the weekly tutorial and its associated essay plays a major role in monitoring as well as cultivating the student's wider intellectual skills. Close contact with tutors allows for an individualised sense of each student's intellectual development which tutors convey to students via their tutorial reports, and attempt to cater for in tutorial planning (e.g. by grouping intellectually complementary students together).

<i>10C</i>	<i>Practical skills</i>	
	An ability to communicate legal information and ideas for a variety of audiences and in a variety of contexts	Communication skills, both written and oral, are at the heart of the tutorial system. Students must explain themselves for the benefit not only of their tutor but also their tutorial partners. General communication skills – clarity, fluency, economy – are valued alongside technical ability in legal writing. At College level students live and work among students of other disciplines and are often asked to explain legal points in that context. Some students participate in the Oxford Students' Legal Advice Service which helps other students with legal problems.
	An ability to read and digest legal materials accurately at speed	This essential requirement of legal practice is also a central feature of every Oxford law student's life. Reading lists are long by comparison with other undergraduate courses. Students acquire the skill to prioritise reading and to distinguish the central from the peripheral.
	An ability to use the latest legal research technology	This is ensured by the compulsory Legal Research Skills course. Excellent ICT provision in the Bodleian Law Library and at College level helps to ensure that computer-aided research comes naturally to students from an early stage. Networked computers within the ox.ac.uk domain have access to a suite of legal research tools including Lexis and Westlaw, for which training is provided.
<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>The third of these skills is assessed via the separate Legal Research Skills course. The other two are necessary conditions of achieving the intellectual outcomes mentioned in 10A and 10B above, and are therefore assessed indirectly through the assessment mechanisms already mentioned.</p>		

10D	<i>Transferable Skills</i>	
	An ability effectively to plan and organise the use of one's time	The law student's life is a busy one and getting through the reading in time for tutorials and classes takes careful management if social and recreational time is to be preserved. Tutorials are fixed deadlines every week that can only be shifted with great difficulty and students quickly learn that they must be ready in time. Most law students become adept at the very full use of their week.
	An ability to work constructively as a member of a group or team	The typical tutorial is a team effort involving two or three students who help each other out, share problems, and engage in constructive mutual criticism. Students are grouped in colleges and pool their expertise in this setting. The college law libraries are often a focus for this activity. In addition to tutorials there are collegiate and intercollegiate classes in which larger groups come together, especially at revision time. This makes revision more of a collaborative enterprise. The Legal Research Skills course also has a specific teamwork exercise in it.
	An ability to work independently	Independent reading and writing remains the core activity of the law student.
	An ability to adapt to technological change	The emphasis on computer-aided research, formalised in the Legal Research Skills course, as well as our increasing use of the web for course delivery and support, helps to make our students adaptable to new technologies
	An ability to tackle everyday problems constructively	Because the programme has a large legal problem-solving component, it encourages students to take a pragmatic problem-solving attitude in non-legal matters as well, including their own progress with the course.
	An ability to present one's arguments confidently and clearly	Both oral and written confidence and presentation skills are increased by the regular diet of tutorials. The programme is unusual among law degrees in the amount of writing and oral argument that it requires. In tutorials, students are required to defend their ideas in dialogue with an established academic and one or two other students. In addition they write on average three essays every two weeks.

An ability to locate information quickly	The programme ensures that students are highly skilled in library and computer use, and in maintaining notes and files. Our legal research skills course is again an important training in these skills.
An ability to think on one's feet	The relatively quick-fire character of many tutorials and classes means that students must advance, refine, abandon and reformulate their arguments as the tutorial develops. The process is intellectually experimental and makes for imaginative and lively participants in other settings (e.g. committees, working groups) as well as good advocates.
An ability to maintain critical distance from one's own arguments and ideas	The encouragement of quick thinking is not at the expense of a self-critical perspective. Students are given critical perspective on their own discipline. Through the tutorial system, students learn to make arguments without commitment as well as arguments with commitment, and hence learn to appreciate the impersonal force of ideas, reasons, and arguments.
<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>These transferable skills are necessary conditions of achieving the intellectual outcomes mentioned in 10A and 10B above, and are therefore assessed indirectly through the assessment mechanisms already mentioned. Their presence or absence is the focus of much of the regular comment provided by tutors in their weekly contact with students and in their termly reports as communicated to the students. The technology-use and information-retrieval skills are, however, separately assessed in the compulsory Legal Research Skills course.</p>	



10E	<i>General teaching/learning methods and strategies</i>
	<p>Each course on the programme has its own distinctive teaching and learning strategy, to reflect its distinctive subject-matter and its distinctive place in the cumulative process of learning over three years. Each course falls under the jurisdiction of a 'subject group' comprising members of academic staff teaching and/or researching in the field of the course. These 'subject groups' take charge of customising the delivery of the course to suit its subject matter and pedagogical role. However most courses use a blend, in different proportions, of tutorials and lectures, sometimes reinforced by classes.</p> <p><b>Tutorials:</b> An hour-long meeting, at which a member of academic staff expert in the relevant subject at hand meets with one, two or three students. The tutorial system, managed and budgeted at College level, is central to the learning experience for most courses on this programme (the optional half-courses being the main exception). It is normal to provide seven or eight tutorials in a subject, with each course being completed in a term of weekly tutorials or (less often) split across two terms of fortnightly tutorials. The average load of tutorials for a student on this programme is 1.5 a week. Eight tutorials may cover only seven substantive topics to allow for introduction or consolidation time. As mentioned above, each tutorial topic is associated with a reading list distributed in advance (typically a consolidated reading guide for the whole course is distributed at the start of term). The Faculty-level subject group that supervises each course provides an agreed reading list annually which individual tutors use for guidance in building their own reading lists. Each tutorial topic is also associated with an essay question or a legal problem question (or a choice of such questions) prescribed by the tutor, which might be drawn from a past examination paper or specially devised. Normally every student writes an essay or problem answer for every tutorial. This essay may be taken in for marking by the tutor and/or may be presented in the tutorial. In either case the object of the exercise is to make the students' own work the starting-point for discussion (usually taking turns among the students from week to week). The students' writings are criticised rigorously and constructively in a conversation involving everyone present that draws out some of the major themes of that week's reading and probes some of the major problems. The students raise questions that arose during their reading or writing. The tutorial is thus flexible in dealing with the varying needs of individual students as identified by both the tutor and the student.</p> <p>The tutorial is the main setting in which the learning outcomes of this programme are secured. Although lectures are used for the acquisition of a good deal of knowledge, tutorials are the main engine of understanding, and also the main occasion for the development of key intellectual and practical skills. The system encourages a high degree of independence on the part of the student. A reading list is in effect a map of primary sources and a student still has to identify the material relevant to the question set and produce an analysis-critique of that material in essay form. The student's independence in approaching the essay is counterbalanced by the intensive collaboration of the tutorial itself. The dominance of the tutorial method leads to a great deal of regular contact between students and a variety of different members of academic staff (intercollegiate swops are usual) thus exposing students to a wide range of teaching styles and intellectual approaches.</p>

**Lectures:** Because the tutorial is the core mode of learning in most courses on this programme, the role of lectures (provided by the Faculty and open to students from all colleges) is often to supplement and reinforce tutorial teaching by concentrating on particular points of difficulty within the course. This provides students with access to a wider range of information and stimulates further investigation by the student. Most college tutors are also Faculty lecturers, and vice versa. The Faculty does not have a policy that every aspect of every course be dealt with in lectures, and the subject groups responsible for individual courses are left free to determine the appropriate balance and relationship between lectures and tutorials. More complete coverage by lectures is offered in appropriate cases. For example:

- first-year students need as much help as possible in coming to terms with a new subject and are therefore provided with a more comprehensive lecture programme.
- in the two philosophy courses, Jurisprudence and Ethics, a 'core' lecture series is used to provide a foundation for the course, so that tutorial time may be freed up to explore areas of interest to the students, in keeping with the nature of the subjects.
- in the case of half-courses, teaching is usually provided through lectures and classes, but not tutorials.

In general lectures are not talking textbooks, so much as living examples of how complex materials can be organised into persuasive patterns, so as to enhance the development of intellectual and practical skills as well as communicating knowledge.

**Classes:** Tutorials may be supplemented by college classes, especially for revision purposes. This is at the initiative of individual tutors. Classes are also sometimes provided by the Faculty, either as the main teaching vehicle (in the case of half-courses) or to allow more interactive presentation of material otherwise destined for lectures (in the case of full courses). Again subject groups are given discretion to determine what mode of learning would best suit their course. Both college and Faculty classes give students formal and sustained experience of working co-operatively in somewhat larger groups.

**Other mechanisms:** Online provision is heavily used in the jurisprudence (philosophy of law) course, with an award-winning website dedicated to advising students and assisting them with electronic resources. This reflects the fact that students are adapting to a new discipline when they embark on the Jurisprudence course, and this may seem intimidating without additional academic support. The Legal Research Skills course includes a mixture of online tutorials, practical exercises, peer teaching, and group problem-solving and research.

<b>11</b>	<b>Programme structures and features</b>
<p>The programme is a three-year course leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts with honours. In exceptional circumstances a two year version of the degree is available to postgraduate applicants. This carries exemption from one year of the programme, in accordance with the University statutes and regulations for 'senior status' students.</p> <p>In spite of its different labelling, the degree is structurally similar to what in some other UK universities would be called the LLB, or Bachelor of Laws. In particular it serves as a 'qualifying law degree' for the purposes of practice as a barrister or solicitor in England and Wales.</p> <p>The degree is non-modular. Although there is a limited collaboration with the Philosophy Faculty, students otherwise take all their courses from within the Law Faculty's own list and in an order prescribed by their tutors. Examinations are taken at two prescribed points in the programme, rather than taken at the end of each course. This method of assessment gives time for the maturation of the students' understanding and encourages them to draw connections between the materials studied in different courses. It offers the maximum opportunity for cross-pollination between different subjects and the disciplines upon which they touch.</p> <p>The programme is divided into two stages. Examinations called 'Law Moderations' are taken at the end of the second term of year 1. For Law Moderations students take three courses.</p> <p>Students who pass Law Moderations are entitled to proceed to a second set of examinations known as the 'Final Honour School of Jurisprudence' at the end of year 3. This set of examinations covers nine courses (or eight courses and two half courses) studied over seven terms. All examination papers are taken together at the end of year 3. Seven of the Final Honour School courses are compulsory. The remaining courses are chosen from a list of options and half options (or 'Special Subjects').</p> <p>In addition, a 'Legal Research Skills' course is taken in year 1. It is tested separately (on a pass/fail basis) at the time at which it is taken, and does not contribute to degree classification.</p>	

<i>11A</i>	<i>Learning in the first two terms</i>	
<p>Students take three courses over the first two terms, examined in Law Moderations just before Easter of year 1. Typically students study one and half courses in the first term, and one and a half in the second. The exact sequencing is however determined by tutors who make tutorial arrangements at College level. Students also begin the Legal Research Skills course during this period.</p>		
<i>Course</i>		<i>Comment</i>
<p>1. Roman Law <i>or</i> Introduction to Law</p>		<p>The two alternative courses fulfil the same pedagogical function (that of introducing the working of legal systems) in very different ways. The Roman Law course introduces legal thought by using the example of civilian Rome to show in microcosm how the parts of a legal system fit together and interact. The Introduction to Law course instead</p>

	emphasises contemporary legal culture and legal processes as a way of setting the scene for the rest of the programme. Often the decision about which of these courses a student will study is made by their College, because it is hard for newly arrived students to grasp what is at stake in the choice, but some Colleges ask students to choose for themselves and the faculty does provide students with guidance for this choice.
2. Criminal Law	This course emphasises the close reading of cases and statutes and encourages fine-grained analysis, often using problem questions as a medium. It conveys the idea of the common law and its complex interplay with statute law. The intellectual and practical skills acquired here are transferred directly to many of the courses taken in later years.
3. Constitutional Law	This course mixes intriguing conceptual questions and historical puzzles with important points of contemporary law, including some relating to the interplay of the UK constitution and the constitution of the EU, and some relating to the Human Rights Act. It encourages abstract reflection about law and its nature as well as introducing law's political context and historical momentum.
4. Legal Research Skills	This course takes place in year 1. It consists of a number of exercises and workshops conducted episodically, and tested online and through group work. It aims to equip students with the practical skills needed to conduct successful legal research using a range of resources, including libraries as well as computers.
<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Summative assessment consists of three written examinations (in courses 1-3) taken at the end of the second term (resits in the third term if required). A pass is required to proceed. A distinction is awarded for strong performance. Practice exams are organised at the start of the second term, covering material studied in the first term. Formative assessment in tutorials is ongoing, as outlined under 10A and 10B above. On assessment of course 4 see 11B below.</p>	

11B	<i>Learning in terms 3 to 6</i>	
<p>Having passed Law Moderations students begin work towards the Final Honour School examinations. They take nine (or eight and two halves) examination papers at the end of year 3. They must also complete the Legal Research Skills course. The last term of year 1 and the whole of year 2 are devoted to study for compulsory Final Honour School papers. Again the exact sequencing of the courses is a matter for individual tutors to determine. The sequence below is for illustration only.</p>		
<i>Course</i>		<i>Comment</i>
1. Legal Research Skills (completion)		The final session and the assessment continued from the first two terms.
2. Tort		<p>These subjects represent the core areas of English private law. A serious legal education must provide a solid appreciation of them all and of the relationships among them. On the Oxford BA programme, cross-reference between these subjects is encouraged and vacations are exploited as an opportunity for directed reading and consolidation.</p> <p>The teaching typically emphasises the reading of cases and statutes unabridged, highlights conceptual difficulties as well as technical points of law, and makes use of problem questions as well as essay questions. In general, the tradition is to dig deep into the fundamentals of the subject rather than to spread thinly over a wide area.</p>
3. Contract		
4. Land Law		
5. Trusts		
6. Administrative law		<p>This course picks up and develops themes already encountered in the year 1 constitutional law course. It affords an opportunity to reflect further on the relations between law and politics, and to develop a critical appreciation of the rule of law and the separation of powers as encountered daily in the courts and in the work of tribunals, regulators, agencies and official inquiries. Again the study of cases and statutes unabridged lies at the centre of the course.</p>
7. Jurisprudence		<p>This course thoroughly acquaints students with certain key philosophical debates about law, and provides a basic education in philosophical technique more generally.</p>
<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>The Legal Research Skills course is self-contained and is assessed by a combination of online testing, oral presentations and group work.</p> <p>For assessment of courses 2-7 see under 11C below.</p>		

<i>IIC</i>	<i>Learning in terms 7-9</i>	
<p>In the final year of the programme students conclude their studies for the Final Honour School examinations. The overall load of new work is lighter than in the previous four terms to allow for consolidation and revision before the examinations. Again the exact sequencing of the courses is a matter for individual tutors to determine. The sequence below is for illustration only.</p>		
1. European Community Law	<p>In this course students are immersed in the constitutional and substantive case law of the EC courts, which differs in style and mode of argument from the English legal materials emphasised elsewhere in the programme. To master this material requires the development of new interpretative skills and sensitivities. The course also emphasises theoretical and practical problems of conflict and harmonisation as between diverse legal systems.</p>	
2. One optional course (Standard Subject)	<p>A range of full and half courses (Special Subjects) are available to choose from. Students may substitute two half courses for one full course. Both full and half courses in European Community Law are available – either suffices for professional exemption. Other available optional courses include Company Law, Comparative Law (French), Criminal Justice and Penology, Ethics, Family Law, History of English Law, International Trade, Labour Law, Principles of Commercial Law, Public International Law, and Roman Law (Delict). Available half courses include Commercial Leases, Introduction to the Law of Copyright and Moral Rights, Lawyer's Ethics and Personal Property. Senior status students may use slots 2 and 3 for Criminal Law and Constitutional Law (thus attaining professional exemption in spite of not having been examined in these subjects in Law Moderations).</p>	
3. One optional course (Standard Subject) or two half courses (Special Subjects)		
<p><i>Assessment</i></p> <p>Formative: Student progress is monitored continuously in the tutorial. Students will receive a great deal of (written or oral) commentary on their written and oral contributions. At the beginning of each term students will sit practice exams in their colleges, set by their tutors, on courses studied in the previous term and reading done over the vacation. They will then receive diagnostic feedback.</p> <p>Summative: The Final Honour School examinations at the end of year 3 (ninth term) consists of unseen papers sat over a period of about two weeks. When set in the context of the continuous informal assessment of the tutorial system, this intensive exercise provides a robust all-round picture of student progress and achievement in relation to the learning outcomes listed under heading 10 above.</p>		

12	<b>Support for students and their learning</b>
	<p><b>Libraries:</b> Reflecting the centrality of primary sources to this programme, students have use of multiple library facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Bodleian Law Library, a research library of international importance, provides all students with access to a book and journal collection covering all of their conceivable academic needs, almost all on open shelves. It also has many CD-ROM and web resources on site-license. In term time, the Library is open into late evening during the week and during the day at weekends. It also remains open weekdays until 7pm during the vacations. The professional library staff provide induction tours for newly arrived students, as well as ongoing help and advice.</li> <li>▪ Each College also maintains a separate law library, often accessible 24 hours a day 7 days a week, containing materials to meet the students' daily needs (major UK law reports, major law journals, leading monographs and edited collections, major reference works). Unlike the Bodleian Law Library these libraries typically allow borrowing, but are unlikely to have staff on duty. College librarians may generally be sought out if required.</li> <li>▪ For the purposes of cross-disciplinary subjects (Jurisprudence, Ethics, Criminal Justice and Penology, History of English Law) students also have access to the extensive collections of the main Bodleian Library and of various Faculty and College libraries in philosophy, social studies, and history. The Bodleian Law Library and College law libraries also maintain extensive holdings in these areas where regular access by law students is expected.</li> </ul> <p><b>Information and communication technologies:</b> There is extensive use of ICT, and provision of ICT resources, for the support of student learning across the Faculty, the University and the Colleges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Faculty maintains an IT room in the Bodleian Law Library for student use, in addition to the library's public access workstations for catalogue searches, CD-ROM use, and online research.</li> <li>▪ The Faculty has two IT officers working on interactive learning and other web developments, as well as catering for the ICT aspects of the Legal Research Skills course, and offering other occasional training to students.</li> <li>▪ Both email and the web are widely used in the Faculty for communication with students. The student handbook is available online and some subject groups have their own web-sites for delivery of course materials. There are general email circulation lists for students on all programmes, as well as a bulletin board.</li> <li>▪ The University Computing Service provides a wide range of services available to all members of the University, including public access workstations at its own site, computing courses, site-licensed software, special deals for the purchase of hardware and peripherals, and of course email and web-space accounts for all.</li> <li>▪ Many students have ethernet points provided in their College accommodation, for connection to their own personal computers. Colleges have computing officers to assist with networking and provide other help and advice, as well as computer rooms with public access workstations connected to the University network.</li> </ul>

**Academic advice and support:** An enduring strength of the tutorial system is the availability of highly personalised academic advice and support on a day-to-day basis. Students and academic staff often inhabit the same buildings in College and may well see each other daily in passing, as well as weekly for tutorials and termly for induction and again for the communication of reports. Apart from the ongoing feedback on tutorial work and practice examinations, tutors provide a number of specific services at crucial stages in the programme. They are responsible for detailed and tailored academic induction at the start of year 1 (including pre-enrolment reading suggestions and briefings). They also advise on choice of optional courses, and arrange the necessary tutorials (on an intercollegiate basis if necessary). In association with College Secretaries they oversee examination entries and the passing of medical information and other mitigating circumstances to the examiners. They write references and nominate students for prizes and scholarships on the strength of exam results or tutorial performance. Where necessary they provide additional contact hours with individual students to tackle academic difficulties, on top of the regular tutorials.

Colleges also have Senior Tutors who oversee the management and budgeting of the tutorial system and are available to students to deal with academic problems that cannot be resolved with the law tutors, or in the event of a law tutor's absence.

Being relatively small academic communities, colleges also have a strong tradition of peer support in academic matters and the existence of college law libraries set apart from the rest of the college library often intensifies this tradition in the case of law.

The Faculty augments all this personalised provision with a great deal of more general information and advice. There is a comprehensive student handbook (distributed on paper to all at the start of the academic year and continuously available online) laying out full details of the programme. The Faculty also offers year 1 induction in respect of matters uniformly applicable to all students. The Faculty Office (next to the Bodleian Law Library) maintains stocks of lecture handouts and similar course paperwork. Some courses on the programme also have information, advice and documentation online.

**Pastoral and welfare support:** Academic tutors also have a significant pastoral role built into their function and often assist with personal guidance and practical problem-solving (e.g. in dealings with agencies outside the college on behalf of students when so requested by students). In some colleges, each student has a designated 'moral tutor' in addition to subject tutors. Colleges also have various appointees with specific pastoral and welfare responsibilities, e.g. advisors to women students, chaplains, resident assistant deans appointed from the postgraduate community, etc. There are often part-time college nurses on site and all students are registered with college doctors based at nearby surgeries. Domestic bursars are charged with meeting special living needs, e.g. in respect of students with disabilities or students who fall ill or students in need of emergency accommodation. The head of college also often plays a role in ensuring that students are settled and adequately supported. The Junior Common Room (college student union) often has its own welfare officer who acts as a source of information and an advocate. The tradition of extensive college-level peer support in academic matters extends to non-academic matters as well. In general the relatively communal aspect of college life makes for extremely easy access to confidential support in respect of non-academic matters, including support from people who know the student well, as well as more anonymous advice and support from professionals when necessary.

The University Counselling Service provides advice and support both immediate and long-term to students in need, and makes referrals to more specialist services beyond the University. Both the University and the colleges dispense hardship funds.



13	<b>Criteria for admission</b>
	<p>Successful applicants for admission to the programme possess the following qualities and the admissions process is designed to identify which applicants possess them in the greatest measure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application: motivation and capacity for sustained and intense work.</li> <li>• Reasoning ability: ability to analyse and solve problems using logical and critical approaches, ability to draw fine distinctions, ability to separate the relevant from the irrelevant, capacity for accurate and critical observation, capacity for sustained and cogent argument, creativity and flexibility of thought and lateral thinking.</li> <li>• Communication: willingness and ability to express ideas clearly and effectively; ability to listen; ability to give considered responses.</li> </ul> <p>Candidates apply to a college, not to the Faculty. The Faculty participates in the general formulation of admissions policy (including the above criteria) but the decisions are made at college level. Offers are made on the basis of the applicant's academic record as shown on the UCAS form, together with the results of the Law National Admissions Test (LNAT) and an interview. The LNAT is taken in early November and the interview is administered by the colleges in December. An increasing number of colleges require AAA at A-level or (or a level of attainment adjudged to be equivalent in the Scottish examinations system, the International Baccalaureate, the Abitur, or analogous school leaving certificate), but it is unusual for candidates to be offered lower than AAB at A-level or equivalent.</p> <p>Since a very large proportion of applicants meet these A-level expectations, and have otherwise impeccable academic records, the written test and interview are needed to make the final selection. The interview serves as a mini-tutorial, with a problem-solving component and an element of argument and counter-argument between interviewers and candidate. Applicants who demonstrate an aptitude and enthusiasm for problem-solving and extended analytical dialogue score highly on the interview. The written test is mainly a test of analytical, critical and synthetical abilities. For further information on the LNAT see: <a href="http://www.lnat.ac.uk">http://www.lnat.ac.uk</a> .</p> <p>Sometimes students with school examination records below the expectations set out above are admitted if they score highly at interview and in the accompanying written test. Candidates suitable for interview in spite of examination result lapses are often identified by explanations provided by teachers in UCAS references, or by their participation in the University's Access Scheme or other outreach projects run by the Faculty or colleges. Admissions tutors go out of their way to ensure that candidates with apparent academic potential are seen and assessed in December even if for some special reason their past achievement fails to match their potential. Special arrangements exist for mature students. Harris Manchester College holds a special brief for the admission of mature students holding unorthodox academic records, but other colleges also customise their admissions criteria in such cases.</p> <p>Applicants nominate or are assigned to second- and third-choice colleges as well as first-choice colleges. Information is shared and considerable efforts are made to ensure that students who meet our standards are not refused admission merely because they applied to a college with a bumper application. In some cases such candidates are interviewed by second- and third-choice colleges and in other cases not. Such decisions about the process are made on a case-to-case basis depending on what information is already provided and what further information is sought.</p>

14	<b>Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning</b>
	<p><b>Staff appointment, training and appraisal:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teaching ability is directly assessed as part of recruitment and selection process for academic posts carrying tutorial responsibilities. Candidates make a brief presentation on a topic of their choosing. Normally the instruction given to candidates is to address the selection panel as if it were a year 2/3 student audience. Some colleges are experimenting with having selected year 3 students (close to leaving the college, and hence not apt to be taught by the appointee) attend these presentations and comment to the selection panel on the virtues and vices of the presentation as a learning experience.</li> <li>▪ Newly appointed members of academic staff are required to attend a training programme organised by the University's Institute for Teaching and Learning.</li> <li>▪ A senior member of academic staff is also assigned to each more junior appointee as an advisor, with a brief to provide advice and support pro-actively on teaching matters as well as other aspects of professional development.</li> <li>▪ Teaching by recently appointed members of academic staff is witnessed and evaluated by a more senior member of academic staff (not the advisor) before the appointment is confirmed at the five-year-point.</li> <li>▪ Teaching assessment and self-assessment also play an important part in the Faculty's system of continuing staff appraisal.</li> <li>▪ Colleges operate parallel and complementary systems of quality assurance for tutorial teaching, generally supervised by their Senior Tutors.</li> </ul> <p>Current research students are occasionally asked to provide tutorials at College level. They are permitted to do so only on condition that they have been placed on the Faculty register of graduate students eligible to teach. To be on that register, students must first participate in a series of Faculty workshops on teaching and learning.</p> <p><b>Curriculum review and course management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Subject Groups, reporting to the Faculty's Undergraduate Studies Committee, have responsibility for keeping individual courses under review. They meet at least annually to update and if necessary redraw the syllabus, to co-ordinate lectures and classes, to review the 'model' reading list for tutorial use, and to plan ahead for the following year. They take account of student feedback as well as input from individual teachers. Each Subject Group has a convenor who organises meetings, writes reports, and where necessary implements changes.</li> <li>▪ The Director of Undergraduate Studies receives reports from Subject Groups on behalf of the Undergraduate Studies Committee and satisfies himself or herself of their effective operation. The Undergraduate Studies Committee also has responsibility for keeping the programme as a whole under review, e.g. by considering amendments to the regulations, approving the establishment of new courses, reviewing the student handbook, and securing and reacting to general student feedback.</li> <li>▪ The Faculty's Director of Undergraduate Studies chairs the Undergraduate Studies Committee and exercises some executive powers on its behalf (notably during the summer vacation). He or she also performs many informal functions involving liaison with Subject Groups and responding to student concerns, etc.</li> </ul>

- The Undergraduate Studies Committee reports to the Law Faculty Board, which reports in turn to the Social Sciences Divisional Board. These Boards take an active interest in major curriculum changes as well as academic appointments. However, routine supervision of the curriculum is delegated to the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Director of Undergraduate Studies.
- Examination Boards may also comment in their reports on the programme as a whole and/or on the conduct of particular courses as evidenced by performance in the public examinations. Such reports are taken very seriously by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, by the Examinations Committee, and by Subject Groups.
- An ad hoc internal committee set up by the Faculty Board to review the programme recently reported and proposed some structural changes which have been implemented in the programme as described in this specification.
- The University prescribes procedures for changing examination regulations.

**Student feedback:**

- The Faculty has been participating in trials of the new University-wide Student Course Experience Questionnaire and the Undergraduate Studies Committee has been taking careful note of results received, which are contributing to the ongoing review of programme structure, learning practices, and examination systems.
- In addition the Faculty operates a system of feedback on individual lecture and seminar series using a standard questionnaire (format under review). Evaluations and comments are subsequently drawn to the attention of the lecturer.
- Colleges operate questionnaire systems for receiving student feedback on tutorials, administered by their Senior Tutors.
- The Undergraduate Studies Committee includes student representatives for much of its business. Student representatives also serve on a Joint Consultative Committee that exists specifically to discuss student concerns. Representatives to these Committees are appointed by a student body (known as the LJCC) made up of one member representing each college. Representations concerning the programme are often made by or on behalf of the LJCC.
- The Director of Undergraduate Studies and other officers of the Faculty often engage in informal liaison with students and their representatives.

**Review beyond the faculty:**

- The reports of external examiners a major source of insight into the programme's strengths and weaknesses.
- The Divisional Board and the University's Educational Policy and Standards Committee issue guidance and provide general supervision.
- The Faculty is subject to six-yearly reviews by the University as well as the currently prevailing review systems of the Quality Assurance Agency.
- Although the Law Society and Bar Council do not directly appraise teaching and learning standards in the programme, the very high expectations that the legal professions have of this programme exert pressure for continuing high standards.

15	<b>Regulation of Assessment</b>
	<p>The formative assessment of the tutorial system is governed by the academic authorities at college level (generally senior tutors and tutorial committees), which take attendance at tutorials and diligent completion of work extremely seriously and apply sanctions, which may culminate in expulsion, to those in repeated default.</p> <p>The summative assessment of the first and second public examinations is regulated by the University's Examination Regulations, and compliance with these is supervised by the University Proctors (a judicial authority appointed independently of the administration). In addition the University and the Social Science Division have general policy guidelines relating to the examination process. Examination conventions specific to this programme, governing matters not dealt with in the Regulations, are approved by the Faculty's Examinations Committee, chaired by the Faculty's Director of Examinations and reporting to the Faculty Board. That Committee also nominates Boards of Examiners and supervises the conduct of examinations.</p> <p>Boards of Examiners are responsible for the setting of papers and for the marking of scripts. University Regulations permit them to be assisted in setting and marking by Assessors, and in the Law Faculty most members of academic staff serve as Assessors every year in either the first public examination or the second. Assessors submit marks to the Board of Examiners but do not participate in classification, which is undertaken by the Board of Examiners acting alone. The markers in each subject meet to determine how they expect questions in the paper to be tackled and outline model answers are used where appropriate. Double marking takes place to determine assessment standards and to check consistency between markers. Scripts with borderline marks and unusual features are also double marked. During the classification process further double marking of scripts takes place where marks for scripts are close to classification borderlines and a minor change may affect the candidate's overall classification, or where a rogue mark (significantly out of line with marks for the candidate's other scripts) has been given, or where a failing mark has been given, or in order to determine the best script for the award of a prize.</p> <p>Boards of Examiners report fully on the process and substance of each cycle of examinations over which they preside. Their reports are considered by the Faculty's Examinations Committee, by the Undergraduate Studies Committee, by the Faculty Board, by the Divisional Board, and by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee of the University. Such consideration feeds back into curricular reform and into teaching and learning practice, as well as the conduct of future examinations.</p> <p>A key role in the process is played by the external examiners who serve on each Board of Examiners whose verdicts are relevant to degree classification. External examiners report annually and separately to the Vice-Chancellor. Their reports are also considered by the Faculty, the Division, and the University. They serve two functions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To confirm that standards are appropriate to the degree awarded, in part by comparison with the standards of comparable institutions, and to ensure that the assessment procedures and the regulations and conventions governing them are fair;</li> <li>2. To ensure that the conduct of the examination and the determination of awards has been fairly conducted, and in particular that individual student performance has been judged in accordance with the applicable regulations and conventions. The external examiner signs the Class List to indicate that the latter standards were met.</li> </ol> <p>The Faculty's Examinations Committee and Undergraduate Studies Committee, and where appropriate the Faculty Board, gives extremely careful attention to any adverse comment by external examiners.</p>

The following marking scales and conventions of assessment apply to this programme.

15A	<i>Assessment criteria for the year 1 examination</i>		
	Class	Mark (%)	Qualities
	Distinction	≥70	<p>Distinction answers represent a level of attainment which, for a first year undergraduate, can be regarded as unusually good. They show several of the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• close attention to the question asked;</li> <li>• extensive knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed;</li> <li>• impressive comprehensiveness and accuracy, with few substantial errors or omissions;</li> <li>• notable clarity and appropriateness of structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and expression;</li> <li>• identification of more than one possible line of argument;</li> <li>• good appreciation of theoretical arguments concerning the topic and substantial critical analysis.</li> </ul>
	Pass	40-69	<p>Pass answers represent a level of attainment which, for an undergraduate, can be regarded as in the range between good and only just acceptable. To an extent varying with their place within this range, they show the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attention to the question asked;</li> <li>• knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed;</li> <li>• comprehensiveness and accuracy, albeit possibly marked by some substantial errors or omissions;</li> <li>• a clear and appropriate structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and expression, though possibly without theoretical or critical treatment.</li> </ul>
	Fail	<40	Some or all of the qualities required for a pass answer are absent.

15B	<i>Assessment criteria for the final examinations (and hence for degree classification)</i>		
	Class	Mark (%)	Qualities
	First	≥70	<p>First class answers represent a level of attainment which, for an undergraduate, can be regarded as exceptionally good. They show several of the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acute attention to the question asked;</li> <li>• a deep and detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed and its place in the surrounding context;</li> <li>• excellent comprehensiveness and accuracy, with no or almost no substantial errors or omissions, and coverage of at least some less obvious angles;</li> <li>• excellent clarity and appropriateness of structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and expression;</li> <li>• identification of more than one possible line of argument;</li> <li>• good appreciation of theoretical arguments concerning the topic, substantial critical analysis, and (especially in the case of high first class answers) personal contribution to debate on the topic.</li> </ul>

Upper second	60-69	<p>Upper second class answers represent a level of attainment which, for an undergraduate, can be regarded as in the range reasonably good to very good. To an extent varying with their place within this range, they show at least most of the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attention to the question asked;</li> <li>• a clear and fairly detailed knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed and its place in the surrounding law;</li> <li>• good comprehensiveness and accuracy, with few substantial errors or omissions;</li> <li>• a clear and appropriate structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and expression;</li> <li>• identification of more than one possible line of argument;</li> <li>• reasonable familiarity with theoretical arguments concerning the topic, and (especially in the case of high upper second class answers) a significant degree of critical analysis.</li> </ul>
Lower second	50-59	<p>Lower second class answers represent a level of attainment which, for an undergraduate, can be regarded as in the range between reasonable, and acceptable but disappointing. To an extent varying with their place within this range, they generally show the following qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• normally, attention to the question asked (but a lower second class answer may be one which gives an otherwise upper second class treatment of a related question rather than the question asked);</li> <li>• a fair knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed and its place in the surrounding law;</li> <li>• reasonable comprehensiveness and accuracy, possibly marked by some substantial errors or omissions;</li> <li>• a reasonably clear and appropriate structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and expression, though the theoretical or critical treatment is likely to be scanty or weak.</li> </ul>

Third	40-49	Third class and pass answers represent a level of attainment which, for an undergraduate, can be regarded as acceptable, but only barely so. They generally show the following qualities:  • the ability to identify the relevant area of the subject, if not necessarily close attention to the question asked;  • some knowledge and understanding of the topic addressed and its place in the surrounding law, notwithstanding weakness in comprehensiveness and accuracy, commonly including substantial errors and omissions;  • some structure, argument, integration of information and ideas, and lucidity of expression, though these are likely to be unclear or inappropriate and to offer negligible theoretical or critical treatment.
Pass	30-39	
Fail	<30	Some or all of the qualities required for a pass answer are absent.

<b>16</b>	<b>Indicators of quality and standards</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The independent Teaching Quality Assessment of the Faculty of Law undertaken in 1993 by HEFCE concluded that teaching quality on the programme was excellent.</li> <li>▪ A Review of Law was undertaken by the University in 1997 under the chairmanship of Dr John Rowett, Warden of Rhodes House. The review committee reported that 'the Law Faculty has established an outstanding national and extremely high international reputation in teaching, research and scholarship.'</li> <li>▪ Returns from the Student Course Experience Questionnaire report a very high degree of satisfaction with programme delivery, with especially widespread praise for the tutorial system as the key mechanism for teaching and learning.</li> <li>▪ External examiners regularly point to the very high standards attained in both the public examinations. Under the supervision of external examiners, 15% of students are awarded first class degrees and 75% are awarded degrees in the upper second class (averaged over the last three years).</li> <li>▪ A less formal measure of the quality of the graduates from the programme is the success that they enjoy in the employment market, including but not limited to the very high esteem that leading law firms and bar chambers are prone to attach to a graduate of this programme.</li> <li>▪ The similarly high premium attaching to the programme in applications for postgraduate study at other institutions also testifies to the high standards achieved on the programme and its strong national and international reputation.</li> </ul>