

Environmental Law and Sustainability

Module title			
Environmental Law and Sustainability			
Module NFQ level (only if an NFQ level can be demonstrated)	Module number / reference	ECTS Value	Duration
Level 8 NFQ	LLBH - ELS	5 ECTS	One semester: 12 weeks.
Parent programme(s). Principal programme title, and embedded(s) if relevant		Stage of parent programme	Semester No.
LL.B. (Hons)		3	1 or 2
LL.B. (Hons) in Criminal Justice		3	1 or 2
LL.B. (Hons) in Commercial Law		3	1 or 2
Teaching and Learning modes	Proportion (% of Total Directed Learning)		
Classroom / Face to Face	19%		
Workplace			
Online			
Other (Identify)	81% (Independent Research and Learning)		
Entry requirements (statement of knowledge, skill and competence)			
Fulfilment of entry requirements for programme or equivalent attainment from accredited prior experiential learning.			
Maximum number of learners per instance of the module	Sixty (60)		
Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours¹ per week	2		
Pre-requisite module title(s) (if any)	None		
Co-requisite module title(s) (if any)	No		
Is this a capstone module? (Yes or No)	No		
Module-specific physical resources and support required per centre (or instance of the module)			
Lecture room with internet access, audio-visual equipment and digital projector.			
Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.			
Role e.g. Tutor, Mentor etc	Qualifications & experience required:		# of Staff with this profile (WTEs²³)

¹ Effort while in contact with staff

² WTE is the whole-time equivalent number. The number 1 indicates a fulltime person fully dedicated to the programme.

³ .5 indicates a part-time person available to this programme half of the time.

Lecturer	Lecturing staff are required to hold at least a master's degree in a law or related discipline and/or an equivalent professional qualification. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.	0.25 WTE
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Analysis of required learning effort		
*Effort while in contact with staff	Minimum ratio teacher / learner	Hours
Classroom and demonstrations	1:60	24
Mentoring and small-group teaching	-	-
Other (specify)	-	-
Independent Learning		
Directed e-learning (hours)		-
Independent Learning (hours)		101
Other hours (specify)		-
Work-based learning hours of learning effort		-
Total Effort (hours)		125

Allocation of Marks					
	Continuous Assessment	Supervised Project	Proctored Practical Exam.	Proctored Written Exam	Total
Percentage Contribution	100%				100%

Module aims and objectives

Environmental Law and Sustainability module introduces learners to fundamental principles of environmental law (national, within the EU and internationally) from formation to termination including remedies, reforms and application of the law to a diverse range of practical situations developing the skills of research critical analysis evaluation and application. The module will begin with bringing the learners through the development of environmental law and sustainability to date. The module seeks to provide a fundamental understanding of new measures under the heading of law relating to Environmental, Social and Governance guidelines from the EU. This module will provide the necessary grounding of administrative structures, statutory instruments and applications necessary in the implementation and achievement of environmental objectives. This module also wishes to illustrate to the learners the basis for current litigation and show how this has developed off precedence already in existence.

Minimum intended module learning outcomes

On successful completion of this module, learners will be able to:

- (i) Analyse core legal and ethical principles employed in environmental and sustainability law;
- (ii) Interpret hard and soft law relating to environment and sustainability from Ireland, the EU and internationally;
- (iii) Effectively explain the development of law and principles that fall under the umbrella of environmental law
- (iv) Critique the enforcement mechanisms in place under each of these and the remedies available to the aggrieved parties;
- (v) Investigate and integrate key areas of debate, from a legal and ethical perspective, in respect of the areas of law relating to land use
- (vi) Relate environment law issues to a broader ethical and social context.
- (vii) Conduct efficient and effective research on issues of environmental law within the paradigm of law and ethics.
- (viii) Critically analyse and reflect upon the learning, knowledge and understanding developed by the learner during the course of the module.

Rationale for inclusion of the module in the programme and its contribution to the overall MIPLOs

Environmental law and sustainability is a new area of law that different jurisdictions are attempting to regulate giving how pressing climate change is and how ill-equipped the current legal framework is in terms of tackling this matter. Institutions such as the European Union are releasing new measures to allow the law to address the matters that are caused by climate change. This module will assist learners who wish to enter and work in this field in any national/international, regulatory or advocacy entity. This module recognises this fact and offers learners the opportunity to undertake more specialised learning in this area. In addition to introducing learners the role and impact of ethics on healthcare decision-making.

The learner is familiarised with a number of key topics, with a particular emphasis on how these new measures seek to address concerns caused by climate change. The Module also affords learners the opportunity to explore and analyse relevant legal and ethical principles between the conflicting rights, including the potential for reform.

The Module serves to directly underpin programme-learning outcomes (iii) conceptualising and communicating legal arguments with clarity and precision and (vii) participate constructively (contribute, collaborate and direct, if so charged) in both individual and group environments. This module re-enforces the module learning outcomes (iv) critically analysing the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of the law and (vi) effectively employ advanced research skills, including use of legal databases, to investigate, interrogate and critique the law. This module also directly underpins the Programme Minimum Learning Outcomes (i), (ii), (v), (vii), (viii), (ix), (x) and (xi).

Information provided to learners about the module

The learners will have in their possession their Faculty Handbooks from their previous year. The Faculty Handbook provides general information about the faculty, its staffing, resources, and operation. Detailed programme information is supplied through Moodle, including copies of the approved module descriptors from the accredited programme (detailing related teaching, learning and assessment) along with a programme timetable. Another copy will be provided to the learners upon their request.

During the first class of the Module, learners are given a detailed outline of the Module showing the schedule of delivery and the dates when assignments are released and due for submission.

Moodle is used to provide learners with ongoing access to module related information, from the handbooks and module outlines provided in advance of the module commencement, the lecture material and links to related resources provided on a scheduled basis in line with the module delivery.

Module content, organisation and structure

The topics covered in this Module are:

- Introduction to the Environmental Law and sustainability.
- Development of Environment Law and Sustainability
- Climate Change Law
- Policy Regulation and Governance
- International Biodiversity and Ecosystems Law and Policy
- Law relating to Land: land use, heritage protection and natural resources law
- Marine Environmental Law
- Environmental law relating to Human Rights Law
- Refugee and Forced Displacement Law
- Regulatory Agencies in Ireland, in the EU and internationally
- EU's Environmental, Social and Governance

Each topic comprises 8.3% of the indicative module content, being the equivalent of 10.5 hours of the allocation of learner effort hours required per module.

Each topic will comprise one academic week with a combination of eighty (80) minutes of pre-recorded lectures in addition to three live workshops during which learners will engage with problem based learning on a number of topics covered during each workshop, with learner engagement, participation, analysis and presentation.

Module teaching and learning (including formative assessment) strategy

The module uses participative lectures, which consist of tutorial-style discussions, group work sessions and exercises. The lectures are supplemented by structured on-line resources and directed reading. Formative assessment is provided in the form of interactive exercises such as directed class discussion topics which reference current affairs pertaining to Environmental Law and Sustainability at the time of instruction. Formative assessment is also provided through tutorial-style discussions, group work and exercises. These focus on specific case law and problem-based learning requiring learners to analyse the law and apply it to practical environmental law and sustainability disputes or issues. Learners are also encouraged to develop skills in legislative analysis, an important aspect of environmental law.

Learners also engage in collaborative work in pairs or small groups to brainstorm what learning has been achieved at the end of lectures. In order to support learners through the examination process, they engage in the answering of sample examination questions and correction of their own or peer's papers, thereby familiarising themselves with the marking criteria. Learners also engage in activities where they draft their own exam questions in order to recap and consolidate a particular topic.

Learners undertaking the course via blended learning benefit from varied and additional options for engagement to compensate their reduced attendance of campus. These include webinars, screencasts (recorded lectures), discussion fora, and increased use of the College's VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), Moodle.

In addition to what has been stated, classroom assessment and benchmarking techniques are deployed to encourage learners to develop more agency in terms of their own learning including inclass presentations, group work, peer-review exercises and reflective practice. The variety of teaching, learning and assessment techniques reflect an enhanced emphasis on skills acquisition to deepen practical knowledge. Finally, the attention of learners is drawn to current industry practice and technology used in the specific area of law to add a further dimension to learning, tracking the actual practice of legal professionals.

Work-based learning and practice-placement

Environmental Law and Sustainability Law is a class based 5 ECTS credit module and does not require work-based learning and practice placement.

E-learning

Moodle, the College Virtual Learning Environment is used to disseminate notes, advice, and online resources to support the learners. E-learning activities include learner feedback, forums where learners contribute, formative quizzes and video links. The learners will also have access to a number of other online resources through the library such as access to databases and research tools (Westlaw.ie, Westlaw.uk, JustisOne (vLex) and Hein Online) as well as access to online copies of books published from Bloomsbury Online.

Module physical resource requirements

Requirements are for the lecturer to utilise a PC with Microsoft Office, Zoom and access to the internet through which an individual can gain access to the Griffith College student intranet: Moodle. There are no further software requirements for this module. In relation to Microsoft Office the lecturer will require to use PowerPoint or Word to present the information to the learners. Zoom will be required in conjunction with Microsoft Office in order to record the lectures when the module is being delivered for block release or for the Blended Programme when organised in advance. Zoom will also be required for the seminars through which the module will be taught (block release).

Reading lists and other information resources

Primary reading

- *Gore-Grimes, J. (2011) Planning and Environmental Law in Ireland, Bloomsbury Professional.*
- *Jackson, A. (2023) Nature Law and Policy in Europe, Routledge.*
- *Fisher, E., Lange, B. and Scotford, E. (2019) Environmental Law: Text, Cases & Material, 2nd edition, Oxford University Press.*
- *Scannell, Y. (2006) Environmental and Land Use Law, Dublin: Thomson Round Hall.*
- *Kingston, S., Heyvaert, V. and Cavoski, A. (2017) European Environmental Law, Cambridge.*

e-Resources

- *Medical Law Review, Oxford Academic <https://academic.oup.com/medlaw>*
- *Bloomsbury Professional Online*

- *JustisOne – Vlex*
- *Westlaw.ie*
- *Westlaw UK*
- *Heinonline*
- *Griffith College Library Website*

Specifications for module staffing requirements

Lecturers qualified to at least a Level 8 legal qualification (LLB (Honours), preferably with a professional legal qualification or healthcare qualification and a third level teaching qualification (e.g. Certificate in Education, Learning and Development offered by Griffith College).

Module summative assessment strategy

Theoretical knowledge will be assessed by continuous assessment (100%). The continuous assessment shall consist of the analysis of a designated article (25%), analysis of a designated case (50%) and reflective journal (25%).

The following table indicates the module's learning outcomes' alignment with the assessment used for the module:

No	Description	MIMLOs	Weighting
1	Analysis of a designated article. (1,000 words)	i, ii, iii, iv	25%
2	Case Study (3,000 words)	v, vi, vii	50%
3	Reflective Journal (750 words)	vii	25%

Reassessment/Repeat assessment strategy: Griffith College regulations state that learners must pass all component elements of the module to be deemed to have passed the module.

- In the event of a learner failing components of / this module, they will be required to submit a new individual repeat assignment which will be made available on Moodle to learners, and which must be submitted as per faculty instructions.
- In the event of a learner failing the group assessment element of this module, a new individual repeat assignment will be made available on Moodle to learners which must be submitted as per faculty instructions.
- In the event of the learner failing the exam, learners will take the re-sit exam at the next available sitting, details of which will be made available to learners via Moodle.

Sample assessment materials

Please see sample assessment supplementary document.