

## Module 1: Introduction to Law and Legal Skills

### Headline Information about the module

<b>Module Number</b>	1	<b>Module Title</b>	Introduction to Law and Legal Skills					
<b>Stage of Principal Programme</b>		1	<b>Semester</b>	1 / 2 <sup>1</sup>	<b>Duration.</b> (Weeks F/T)	6	<b>ECTS</b>	5
<b>Mandatory / Elective (M/E)</b>	M	<b>Hours of Learner Effort / Week<sup>2</sup></b>	3					
<b>Analysis of required hours of learning effort</b>								
<b>Teaching and Learning Modalities</b>					<b>✓if relevant to this module</b>	<b>Approx. proportion of total (hours)</b>		
<b>Contact Hours</b>								
In person face-to-face					✓	4		
Synchronous					✓	18		
<b>Indirect/Non-Contact Hours</b>								
Asynchronous					✓	3		
Work Based								
Other - Independent						100		
<b>Total</b>						125		

<b>Pre-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A	
<b>Co-Requisite Module, if any. Module # and Title</b>	N/A	
<b>Maximum number of learners per instance of the module</b>	80	
<b>Specification of the qualifications (academic, pedagogical and professional/occupational) and experience required of staff working in this module.</b>		
<b>Role e.g., Tutor, Mentor, Lecturer, Research Supervisor, etc.</b>	<b>Qualifications &amp; experience required</b>	<b>Staff - Learner Ratio X:Y</b>
Lecturer	Lecturers expected to hold at minimum a Level 8 legal qualification, preferably with a professional legal qualification. It is an advantage to have completed the Certificate in Education, Learning and Development provided by Griffith College. Industry experience is beneficial but not a requirement.	1:80
Tutor	Tutors expected to hold at minimum a Level 8 legal qualification, preferably with a professional legal qualification.	1:40

<sup>1</sup> Please note, the module will also run in Semester 2 for learners in the February intake. The same curriculum and assessment strategy will be employed.

<sup>2</sup> Average (over the duration of the module) of the contact hours per week i.e. effort while in contact with staff

Assessment Techniques – percentage contribution					
Continuous Assessment	40	Proctored Exam – in person		Practical Skills Based	60
Project		Proctored Exam - online		Work Based	
Capstone (Y/N)?		If Yes, describe			

### Minimum Intended Module Learning Outcomes (MIMLOs)

MIMLO	Related MIPO #
<b>On completion of this module a learner will be able to:</b>	
1. Explain the structure and historical development of the Irish legal system and its core institutions.	1
2. Analyse and interpret primary and secondary sources of Irish Law, including the Constitution, statute, case law and EU legislation.	2
3. Apply statutory interpretation principles and the doctrine of precedent to factual problem questions.	4
4. Collaborate effectively in a group setting to interpret and apply statutory/constitutional provisions.	6
5. Conduct legal research using authoritative sources and present written work references in compliance with OSCOLA Ireland.	3
6. Communicate legal analysis clearly and persuasively in written and oral formats.	3
7. Critically reflect on their own performance in the workshop to identify strengths and areas for improvement.	7

### Indicative Module Content, Organisation and Structure

The Introduction to Law and Legal Skills is a 5 credit module taught by way of 3-hour lectures over the course of 12 weeks in the first semester. It is additionally supplemented by one 4x hour workshop session delivered in-person. The module is split into an examination of core elements of the Irish Legal System with additional time devoted to the development of key legal skills.

Specifically, the topics covered are as follows:

1. **An Introduction to the Irish Legal System:**
  - a. The Nature and Classification of Law
  - b. The Common Law System vs. the Civil Law System
  - c. The Historical Development of the Irish Legal System
2. **Sources of Law:**
  - a. The Constitution of Ireland (Bunreacht na hÉireann) 1937 (including interpretation).
  - b. Statute (including Statutory Interpretation)
  - c. Case Law and Precedent
  - d. EU Law
  - e. Secondary Sources of Law (International Law, Customary Law, etc.)
3. **The Doctrine of Precedent**
4. **The Structure and Hierarchy of the Irish Courts System**
5. **Legal Professions:**
  - a. Overview of Legal Personnel
  - b. Codes of Conduct

- c. Overview of Regulatory and Compliance Obligations
- 6. **Conducting Legal Research:**
  - a. How to Conduct Legal Research
  - b. Evaluating Research Sources
  - c. Reading Case Law
  - d. Identifying Precedent
- 7. **Academic Writing:**
  - a. Legal Writing
  - b. Critical Thinking Skills
  - c. Academic Integrity – Avoiding Plagiarism
  - d. Referencing with OSCOLA Ireland
- 8. **Answering Problem Questions with ILAC**

### **Work-based learning and practice-placement (if applicable)**

There is no work-based learning or practical placement in the module.

### **Specific module resources required (if applicable)**

Requirements are for a fully equipped classroom. The classroom has Wi-Fi access and is equipped with a PC with Zoom and Microsoft Office. In addition the classroom has digital recording facilities and digital projector. No other software is required for this module. The College library has a dedicated law section and online legal research tools including V-Lex Justis, Westlaw, Bloomsbury Professional and Hein Online.

### **Application of programme teaching, learning and assessment strategies to this module**

The module is delivered using participative lectures that introduce the fundamental structures and sources of Irish law. Lectures include short interactive tasks such as reviewing statutory provisions, identifying the *ratio* of a judgment or discussing recent developments in the courts, where appropriate and relevant to the module content. These structured activities encourage active engagement and help learners begin practising legal analysis from the outset.

Additional typical activities include preparing short ILAC responses, conducting basic research using library databases, or working in pairs to identify issues within a sample factual scenario. Learners also receive support in developing academic writing conventions, including referencing according to OSCOLA and avoiding plagiarism, with opportunities to practise these in low-stakes tasks. Skills introduced here directly support later drafting and procedural modules.

Weekly online activities such as short quizzes, reflective prompts or issue-spotting exercises help maintain consistent engagement. The hybrid format ensures that learners participating online contribute fully to group discussions through breakout rooms and structured dialogue prompts. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles are supported through providing materials in multiple formats (text, visual examples and short recorded explanations) to ensure accessible engagement with foundational legal skills.

Formative assessment is woven throughout the module, enabling learners to develop core professional skills in statutory interpretation, case reading and legal research. These skills are applied in the final workshop assessment, where learners work in assigned groups as either an appellant or respondent to construct a written interpretive argument and then complete an individual reflection piece on the interpretive process and group collaboration. Learners are also guided towards

independent engagement with professional regulatory issues through a short, applied project, allowing for deeper exploration. The research record assessment is completed in respect of the learner's chosen Contract Law or Law of Torts essay, ensuring early integration of assessment across substantive modules.

### Summative Assessment Strategy for this module

<b>MIMLOs</b>	<b>Technique(s)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>2, 5, 6</b>	<b>Research Record</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>1-4, 6 - 7</b>	<b>Practical Workshop &amp; Reflection</b>	<b>60%</b>

### Sample Assessment Materials

See Section 1 of the Assessment Materials Supporting Documentation.

### Indicative reading lists and other information resources

1. Byrne & McCutcheon on *The Irish Legal System* (7<sup>th</sup> edn, Bloomsbury Professional 2020).
2. Brian Hunt, *The Irish Statute Book: A Guide to Irish Legislation* (Bloomsbury Professional 2007).
3. Ruadhán Mac Cormaic, *The Supreme Court* (Penguin Ireland 2017).
4. Tanya Ní Mhuirtilte, Catherine O'Sullivan & Liam Thornton, *Fundamentals of the Irish legal System; law, policy and politics* (Round Hall 2016).
5. Jennifer Schweppe, Rónán Kennedy and Lawrence Donnelly, *How to think, write and cite: Key skills for Irish law students* (2nd edn, Round Hall 2016).
6. Edana Richardson and Ollie Bartlett, *Legal Research & Writing Skills in Ireland* (Clarus Press 2021).
7. Steve Foster, *Legal Writing Skills: A Guide to Writing Essays and Answering Problem Questions* (5th edn, Pearson 2019).
8. Anthony Bradley and Fiona Cownie, *How to Study Law* (9th edn, Sweet & Maxwell 2021).