

Module 1: Introduction to Law and Legal Skills

Stage		1					
Semester		1 & 2					
Module Title		LLBH-ILLS					
Module Number		1					
Module Status		Mandatory					
Module ECTS Credits		10					
Module NFQ level		6					
Pre-Requisite Module Titles		None					
Co-Requisite Module Titles		None					
Capstone Module?		No					
List of Module Teaching Personnel		Dr Tanya Ní Mhuirthile					
Contact Hours				Non-contact Hours			Total Effort (hours)
72 (60) ¹				128 (140)			200
Lecture	Practical	Tutorial	Seminar	Assignment	Placement	Independent Work	
48			24 (12)	30		98 (110)	200
Allocation of Marks (Within the Module)							
	Continuous Assessment	Project	Practical	Final Examination			Total
Percentage Contribution	50			50			100

Intended Module Learning Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate their knowledge of the Irish legal system including the principal functionaries within the legal professions and how the courts are accessed.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of fundamental legal principles such as statutory interpretation and judicial precedent
3. Interpret primary legal materials including case law and legislation
4. Explain the relationships between domestic and regional and international law.
5. Research legal problems using both hard copy sources and online legal databases.
6. Express their opinions and ideas in an appropriately legal manner.

¹ Part time hours shown in brackets where a difference with full time hours

7. Construct basic legal arguments and engage in basic legal analysis of problems.
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the legal process and broader social issues.

Module Objectives

1. To provide learners with a core understanding of the rules and principles that underpin the Irish legal system;
2. To outline how, in particular, the system of law developed and is developing;
3. To inculcate knowledge of the hierarchy of legal sources and to analyse forms and types of legal rules;
4. To develop a practical awareness of dispute resolution mechanisms, principally litigation.
5. To develop within learners an appreciation of the role of law in/with society;

Module Curriculum

- The Purpose of Law
- The Nature and Classification of Law
- The Historical Development of the Irish Legal System
- The Sources of Law
- The Courts System in Ireland
- The Doctrine of precedent
- Legislation and Legislative Interpretation
- Legal Professionals
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- Access to Justice
- Introduction to European Law
- Introduction to International Law
- Law and a Tool for Social Change
- Reading the Law
- Academic Writing
- Constructing a Legal Argument
- Legal Research
- Study Skills
- Exam Skills

Reading lists and other learning materials

Primary Reading:

Kenneally, A. & Tully, J. (2013) *The Irish Legal System*. Dublin: Clarus Press

Byrne, R. & McCutcheon, P. (2014) *The Irish Legal System*. Dublin: Bloomsbury

Donovan, D. (2010) *The Irish Legal System*. Dublin: Roundhall

Holland, J. & Webb, J. (2013) *Learning Legal Rules: a Students Guide*. Oxford: OUP

Schweppe, J., Kennedy, R. & Fahy, E. (2012) *How to Think, Write and Cite: Key Skills for Irish Law Students*. Dublin: Roundhall
Thornton, L., Ni Mhuirthile, T. & O'Sullivan, C. (2014) *Fundamentals of the Irish Legal System*. Dublin: Roundhall (*publication pending*)
Donnelly, L. [et al.] (2011) *Oscola Ireland*. Legal Citation

Secondary Reading:

Dernbach, Singleton, Wharton, Ruhtenberg, & Wasson (2009) *A Practical Guide to Legal Writing & Legal Method*. New York: Aspen Publishers
Doolin (2006) *Principles of Irish Law*. Dublin: Gill and MacMillan
Finch, E. & Fafinski, F. (2013) *Legal Skills*. Oxford: OUP
Garner (2001) *Legal Writing in Plain English: A Text with Exercises*. (2001) Chicago: University of Chicago Press
Higgins and Tatham (2007) *Successful Legal Writing*. London: Sweet & Maxwell
Hunt (2009) *Murdoch's Dictionary of Irish Law*. Dublin: Tottel
O'Malley, T. (2001) *Sources of Law: An introduction to Legal Research and Writing*. Dublin: Round Hall Sweet & Maxwell
Penner (2008) *The Law Student's Dictionary*. Oxford: OUP
Pope, D. (2013) *Mooting and Advocacy Skills*. London: Sweet & Maxwell
Smith, A.T.H. (2013) *Glanville Williams: Learning the Law*. London: Sweet & Maxwell

Module Learning Environment

Accommodation

Lectures and workshops take place in a classroom setting. Participants also have access to online teaching resources and Moodle

Library

All learners have access to an extensive range of "physical" and "remote access" library resources. The library monitors and updates its resources on an on-going basis, in line with the College's Library Acquisition Policy. Lecturers collaborate with the library in updating reading lists for this course on an annual basis as is the norm with all programmes run by Griffith College.

Module Teaching and Learning Strategy

This module is delivered by means of participative lectures which consist of tutorial-style discussions, group work sessions and exercises. The tutorial-style discussions, group work and exercises focus on specific case law and problem based learning requiring the learner to analyse the law and apply it to practical contract law dispute. The lectures supplemented by structured on-line resources and reading.

In order to support learners through the exam process they engage in the answering of sample exam questions and correction of their own or peers' papers, thereby familiarising

themselves with the module learning outcomes and marking criteria. Learners also engage in activities whereby they draft their own exam question in order to recap and consolidate their knowledge of a particular topic.

Module Assessment Strategy

The continuous assessment element of this module focuses on the practical skills which learners acquire while undertaking this module. It consists of two parts: a case brief exercise worth 20% thereby assessing learning outcome 3 and a research record worth 30%, assessing learning outcomes 5, 6, 7 and 8. Theoretical knowledge is assessed by an end of module, closed book, examination worth 50% of the total marks in this subject.

Element No.	Weighting	Type	Description	Module Learning outcomes assessed
1	20%	Case Brief	Learners are given a case report and asked to write a detailed brief under prescribed headings.	3
2	30%	Research Record	Learners keep a detailed diary outlining the steps they have taken in researching an assignment for one of the other law modules on the Stage. In addition to noting features such as the important legal issues which arise and the sources consulted, learners are also required to reflect critically upon their experience and to identify both the strengths and weaknesses of the steps they took in conducting this research.	5-8
3	50%	Exam	The examination consists of a choice of both essay style questions. Essay style questions place emphasis on the learners' demonstrating their understanding of the fundamental elements of the Irish legal System, the principles of legal interpretation and the players in the legal system of Ireland.	1-4 and 8.

Sample Assessment with Rubrics - see Annex 2