

# Introduction to Law

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## We're delighted you're thinking about studying at Brunel University London.

Our lecturers have put together the following information to help you prepare for your course. This will give you a snapshot of the materials and reading list you'll be using. You'll get a full breakdown of information before you enrol.

On our website you can also [find out more about your modules](#) and [chat to a current student](#).

If you have any more questions, [please get in touch](#).

We look forward to welcoming you to Brunel.

### Sample lecture/coursework questions

#### Murder or Manslaughter?

The **actus reus** of murder consists of the “unlawful killing of a human being in the Queen’s peace”.

The **mens rea** of murder is “malice aforethought”, which has been interpreted by the courts as meaning an “intention to kill or to cause grievous bodily harm”.

#### What principle(s) of law, i.e. murder or manslaughter, should be applied to the following material facts?

- a) A tram takes a sharp bend at speed and runs off the tracks, killing seven people.
- b) A bin lorry mounts the pavement killing six people and injuring fifteen. The driver fell asleep at the wheel.
- c) A lorry mounts the pavement running over and killing a 12 year old boy.
- d) A man aims a sawn-off shotgun at another man at point blank range and fires four shots into him.



## Reading list

### Essential reading

- Moore, I & Newbery-Jones, C. *The Successful Law Student: an Insider's Guide to Studying Law* (OUP 2018) - ISBN 9780198757085
- Embley, J, Goodchild, P & Shephard, C. *Legal Systems and Skills: Learn, Develop, Apply* (4th edition OUP 2020) Chapters 5 & 7 - ISBN 9780198834328

### Further reading

- Elliott, C & Quinn, F. *English Legal System* (20th edition, London: Pearson 2019)
- Finch, E & Fafinski, S. *Legal Skills* (7th edition, OUP 2019)
- Foster, S. *Legal Writing Skills* (5th edition, Pearson 2019)
- Gillespie, A. *The English Legal System* (7th edition, OUP 2019)
- Holland, J & Webb, J. *Learning Legal Rules* (10th edition, OUP 2019)
- Knowles, J. *Effective Legal Research* (4th edition Sweet & Maxwell 2016)
- McBride, N. *Letters to a Law Student: A Guide to Studying Law* (4th edition Pearson 2017)
- Wilson, S. Rutherford, H. Storey, T. Wortley, N & Kotecha, B. *Learning the Law* (4th edition OUP 2020)

### Websites

- [UK Justice website](#) - recent reforms and research as well as government departments and courts.
- [UK Parliament website](#) – parliament and the law-making process
- [All statutes in force in the UK since 1267](#)
- [Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service](#)
- [Judiciary of England and Wales](#)
- [Law Commission](#) - reforming the law
- [Law Society](#) - for solicitors
- [Bar Council](#) - for barristers
- [European Court of Human Rights](#) - human rights
- [European Union](#) - information on EU Law
- [Law in Action – Radio 4](#)

## Indicative content

Students will explore key building blocks of the English legal system including:

- Introduction to the Study of Law
- Sources and Classification of Law
- Common Law and the Doctrine of Precedent; finding and applying case law
- Legislation and Statutory Interpretation
- European Law (ECHR & EU) and its impact on the English legal system
- The Legal Profession(s)
- The Civil Justice System (Courts and Processes)
- The Criminal Justice System (Courts and Processes)

Students will also familiarise themselves with key legal skills and methods:

- Maximising your success as a law student
- Legal research methodology; using electronic databases and the library
- Academic writing & integrating materials
- Referencing
- How to construct a bibliography
- Legal reasoning and critical thinking skills
- Career skills
- How to adopt a professional attitude and perform efficiently in an interview and/or assessment centre(s).