



What it all means - studying Law at the University of Reading!

This is a guide created by students for students, to help you understand what some of the words we use while studying mean. We hope you find it helpful!

STUDYING LAW AT THE UNIVERSITY OF READING

Co-curricular activities	Things you do along with your Law degree. They can be law related like mooting, negotiation skills, client interviewing and mediation or they may be clubs, societies and hobbies you get involved with.
Foxhill House	Home to the School of Law – we have some classrooms here, lots of offices, study space and a student common room. All Law students are welcome. We also have some offices in the Edith Morley building.
LLB	Bachelor of Laws – this is your degree programme and is the qualification you are awarded at the end of the course.
Module	<p>A module is a subject with a set number of credits (usually 20). Your degree is made up of several modules. You must study 120 credits a year.</p> <p>In Law we have many compulsory modules that you have to study in first and second year:</p> <p>First Year: Legal Skills, Tort, Criminal law, Contract, Public law 1.</p>

	<p>Second Year: Public Law 2, Land law, Equity and Trusts, EU law.</p> <p>We also have some elective modules that you can choose to study. You may choose to study some modules from other subjects in the University.</p>
Part 1 / Part 2 / Part F	<p>Part 1 = first year</p> <p>Part 2 = second year</p> <p>Part F = final year (because in Law, some students have a year abroad in their third year).</p>
Pro bono	<p>Latin words for “voluntary” work – sometimes lawyers work for free, as a student you might volunteer to help different organisations with legal work or other activities. Look out for the “Pro Bono” Fair early in the Autumn term – where you can find out more and sign up to join in if you want. Can help you when you apply for jobs but not compulsory.</p>
Programme	<p>The programme is the course that you are on which has a selection of modules that you can study. You are on the LLB programme.</p>
QLD	<p>Qualifying Law Degree – our LLB is a “QLD”. You study the 7 compulsory foundations of legal knowledge modules which can form part of the academic stage of professional training to become a lawyer.</p>
Reading University Law Society	<p>An organisation run by students for students (mainly Law students, but others can join) – they organise social events, careers sessions and skills competitions like mootings. You can choose to join them and it can be a good way to meet other students.</p>
School of Law	<p>We are a School made up of the Law & Criminology programmes. You are part of the School! Welcome!</p>
Undergraduate	<p>When you study for your first degree, you are called an undergraduate. You receive your degree when you graduate.</p>
Welcome Week	<p>Your first week as a new student. We don’t start teaching until week 1, so there is time to settle in & introductory sessions with lots of things to do and find out about.</p>

WHO TO ASK FOR HELP

Academic Tutor	<p>Every student has an academic tutor – they are one of the teaching staff in the Law School. Your academic tutor is your first point of contact for any questions. They are responsible for your academic, personal and professional development & write your references. They're a bit like a school/college form tutor.</p>
“Ask A Question” on RISIS	<p>If you are not sure who or where to ask for help, go on to the RISIS website and click on “Ask a Question” – your message is directed to the Support Centre helpdesk who can assist you.</p>
Director of Academic Tutoring	<p>Each year group has a Director of Academic Tutoring (DAT) who you can approach for help, support & advice, in addition to your academic tutor.</p>
Exceptional Circumstances	<p>If you are affected by circumstances outside your control (eg. you are ill or dealing with a personal crisis) and it affects your studies and your ability to meet a deadline, then use the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) process to request help with that. The Student Support Co-ordinator can also help & advise you. Look under “Actions” on RISIS.</p>
Module Convenor	<p>The member of teaching staff responsible for each subject/module you study – they organise the module, support the teaching staff and can answer your questions about that module. They may be one of the lecturers on the module, but not always. You can check who they are on Blackboard.</p>
PAL (Peer Assisted Learning)	<p>Some students volunteer to support students in the years below (their peers) with particular module subjects. They run PAL sessions where they help you to learn. Run by students for students. PAL sessions are optional and you can choose to sign up and join in.</p>
Reading Students' Union	<p>RSU are your student representatives and offer support for students via their free Advice services for academic issues, housing and financial problems. RSU run activities through supporting student societies, events and campaign on issues that matter to students.</p>

Self-certification	<p>Within our Exceptional Circumstances process, you can request an extension to some assessments without providing evidence for 5 working days, this is called “self-certification” (or “self-cert”). You can do this twice in an academic year, for a short extension. This is to help you with emergencies that are not easy to evidence.</p>
STaR Mentors	<p>Second and third year students who volunteer to help new students settle into their time at the University of Reading.</p>
Student Hours	<p>Times that academic teaching staff are available to meet with their students. Staff may offer “in person” meetings in their office or virtual meetings online. Sometimes they are bookable, other times they are drop-in student hours where you just go along. These student hours are advertised in Foxhill House (on the noticeboard in the main corridor) and on Blackboard and often in staff’s email signatures.</p>
Student Services	<p>Based in the Carrington building you will find a range of services to help and support you: Careers team, Disability Advisory Service, Counselling & Wellbeing, Welfare team, Student Financial Support, International Student Advisory team & Accommodation.</p>
Student Support Co-ordinators	<p>Sometimes called “SSCs”, they work in the Support Centres and run the online “Ask A Question” helpdesk – always happy to help you and give you advice.</p>
Support Centre	<p>The Support Centres are another first point of contact for all questions, help or advice throughout your time at the University – drop in to our Support Centre in the Edith Morley building (ground floor – by the main entrance). You can also contact them using “Ask A Question” on RISIS or by telephone 0118 3785671</p>
Welfare Team	<p>The Welfare team support all students with any issues they may have – based in the Carrington building. You can just drop in to see them without an appointment, call them or email. Drop-in Monday to Friday 10-4. Telephone: 0118 3784777 Email: studentwelfare@reading.ac.uk</p>

IMPORTANT WEBSITES TO KNOW ABOUT

Blackboard	Our “virtual learning environment” (VLE) – a website where all of the teaching materials and information are stored. A section for courses – for each of your module subjects. A section for organisations – lots of information about the Law School, Careers, Work Experience opportunities and other University organisations. A “ Help ” section with links to lots of useful resources & advice. www.bb.reading.ac.uk
Essentials	This is the University of Reading’s main webpage for student information and support: www.reading.ac.uk/essentials
LawTrove	We pay for access to online Law textbooks for you. You do not need to buy Law textbooks as the books you need for your course are all available online: https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/law-trove
Library	Not just a nice building with a good coffee shop! Books, study space and helpful and knowledgeable librarians. Online resources wherever you are: www.reading.ac.uk/library
RISIS	The University of Reading’s database. It stores your tutor card with all your personal details & results, where you choose modules, update your personal details, request extensions for work & seek help using the “ Ask A Question ” option: www.risisweb.reading.ac.uk
Westlaw & Lexis	Legal databases found online through our library. We give you training in how to use them. They are where you find most of the law reports of cases and journals where academics write about the law: https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/law

TEACHING & LEARNING – UNDERSTANDING HOW IT WORKS

Academic	A general word describing a member of staff who teaches and researches. Sometimes we use the word “lecturer” or “tutor” instead.
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Independent Learning	<p>At university you are expected to plan your own time. You have timetabled classes, but should also follow the instructions on Blackboard & given by academics in class, to do independent reading, prepare for classes & assessments. Please talk to your academic tutor if you are struggling.</p>
Lecture	<p>A large group teaching session led by an academic. It can be in a lecture hall or live online, or a pre-recorded video. A lecture gives you an outline or introduction to a subject area. You are expected to take notes and follow this up with reading yourself.</p>
Tutorial or Seminar	<p>A small group teaching session led by an academic. This can be in a classroom or online. There will be tasks to prepare and reading to do (look on Blackboard) before the class and we discuss the material and your answers in class. You may work in groups in some classes. This is a good place to ask questions to help you understand the subject better.</p>



ASSESSMENTS & MARKING

Assessed Work Rules	<p>We have set rules for the formatting of your work to ensure that all students' work is the same length (linked to word/page limits). You can find these in your Legal Skills Guide and in the Programme Handbook.</p> <p>Text: font size 12, Times New Roman</p> <p>Margins: 2cm top/bottom & 2.5cm left/right</p>
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	<p>Line spacing: 1.5 or double spaced, except indented quotations (single spaced)</p> <p>Footnotes: included within page allowance, no smaller than font size 10, each starts on a new line.</p> <p>Pages: numbered</p>
Essay Questions	A question which requires you to make an argument, backed up by evidence, to answer the question.
Feedback	This is advice on what is going well and how to improve your work – you get feedback in class, in lectures and in conversations with your tutor. On assessed work you will usually receive generic and individual feedback .
Formative Assessment	A piece of work that you do to practice your skills and get feedback. It does not count towards your module grade or results. Optional but highly recommended.
Generic Feedback	Information given to all students about a piece of assessed work. It typically gathers together common mistakes made by students on the module and gives general guidance on how to improve. Read it with your individual feedback .
Individual Feedback	On your assessed work the marker will give you personal feedback on what you have done and how to improve.
IPAC	The problem solving method we use in the Law School Issue -> Principles -> Application -> Conclusion (IPAC) . It is a way of tackling problem questions, that encourages you to identify the issue, state the relevant law clearly, then apply it to the facts in front of you, before reaching a conclusion. We help you with this in your modules.
Marking Rubric/Criteria	A marking guide showing you what you need to do for a piece of work and which the marker will use when assessing your work.
Moderation	A member of staff marks your work, but it is then “moderated” by other staff to ensure that it has been marked fairly and consistently with other students’ work & recognised university standards. This happens internally (within the Law School) and for summative assessments externally (by someone from another University).
OSCOLA	OSCOLA is the referencing system we use in the Law School – it uses footnotes and a bibliography to show

	<p>where you found your information. You must follow the precise rules: oscola_4th_edn_hart_2012.pdf (ox.ac.uk)</p> <p>We introduce you to OSCOLA referencing in Legal Skills. Confused? Ask your academic or tutorial leader for help.</p>
Problem Questions	<p>Scenarios or situations (sometimes called fact patterns) that are created to test your ability to identify issues and apply the law to solve them. We use a method called IPAC to help you work through these problems.</p>
Referencing	<p>Citations or references show where you got your information from or what influenced your thinking.</p> <p>Footnotes are at the end of each page with a number & you add the relevant number in your writing.</p> <p>Bibliography is a list of ALL the sources you used in preparing the work (not just the ones referred to – that would be a reference list).</p>
Summative Assessment	<p>A piece of work that does count towards your module grade. Compulsory – you must do this work.</p>
Turnitin	<p>Software which checks your work against a database for similarities with books, websites and other students' university work. The similarity score shows how similar your work is to other people's writing.</p> <p>Plagiarism is using other people's words or ideas as if they are your own, without referencing. Turnitin helps us to spot this.</p> <p>We give you lots of advice to avoid plagiarising or cheating (we call this academic misconduct):</p> <p>https://libguides.reading.ac.uk/study-advice-guides/referencing</p>
Word Limit & Page Limit	<p>To ensure fairness we limit the length of your work. Writing concisely is a key skill for a lawyer. There may be a word limit which means you should not write more than the set number of words (eg. 1250 words). Sometimes it is a page limit which means do not go over the set number of pages of typing (eg. 5 pages). Bibliographies do not count towards word/page limits, footnotes usually do!</p>