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Law

SYLLABUS OVERVIEW

13-15 YEARS OLDS

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About Immerse

Immerse Education is an award-winning academic summer school provider offering programmes for 13-15 year olds in Cambridge University colleges.

The aim of these introductory programmes is to provide participants with academically challenging content in a classroom environment based on the university style of learning. Through 40 hours of academic sessions, the programmes also offer young students unique and valuable insights into what it would be like to study their chosen subject at an advanced level.



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This Syllabus Overview provides a summary of the topics and subject areas that participants can encounter during their studies with Immerse. It has been carefully created by our expert tutors who are current members of world-leading universities, and who have experience in teaching undergraduate students.

Academic Sessions

The academic sessions at Immerse are arranged into modules to enable participants to explore a broad range of topics over the course of two weeks. The modules included in this syllabus overview are indicative but not prescriptive.

Tutors are encouraged to include their own specialisms and also focus on any particular areas of interest expressed by participants within the class. They may choose to provide further detail on a specific topic, or they may include new material and information that builds on the knowledge already developed during the programme.

Personal Project

Each programme includes an element of individual work, generally termed the 'Personal Project'. This can take many forms but is commonly an essay or presentation delivered on the final day of the programme. Participants will receive feedback on this work which may also be mentioned in the participant evaluation which is provided in writing by the tutor once the programmes have ended.



Preparatory work

Some tutors may ask participants to complete some preparatory work, such as reading or a series of exercises in advance of the programme. Participants are strongly encouraged to complete this work since it will be included in the opening sessions of the programme. Any preparatory tasks will be provided in advance of the programme directly to the participant.

Academic Difficulty

As all of our programmes are designed to provide a unique introduction to advanced material, the syllabus will be academically challenging at times.

This is something to be excited about and all of our tutors will encourage and support participants throughout the programme. Immerse Education aims to develop every participant regardless of ability, and our tutors will adapt their teaching to individual needs.



Aim of the Law Programme

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Law is a complex discipline that, in theory, governs society on a day-to-day basis. At the heart of controversies past, present, and undoubtedly future, lawyers possess many transferable skills, notably critical thinking, evaluation, and the ability to construct a well-researched and convincing argument. The aim of the Immerse Education Law programme is to introduce participants to the foundations of this subject and highlight the pathways that are available to those would like to pursue law further in the future. Participants will get to grips with a variety of topics as they explore both the theory and practice of law.

Introduction to Law

This session will introduce the students to what we mean by law. We will discuss the basic tenets of the legal system and the courts, and the different sources of law. We will map how cases move through the system, and the various roles and functions of the system. We will also discuss the nature of legal rules and legal interpretation. We will explore the similarities and differences that emerge when we consider law as both an academic discipline and a practical vocation, identifying any preconceptions and tracing the source of our existing understanding of what the law is.

Introduction to Constitutional Law

In this session we will examine the constituent parts of the UK's unwritten constitution. The purpose of the session is to give students an understanding of the function and content of constitutional frameworks and how they govern the relationship between citizens and the state. The session introduces the function and composition of the House of Commons, the House of Lords, and the role of the monarch. The session will give participants a basic understanding of key concepts such as parliamentary sovereignty, royal prerogative, separation of powers, and devolved powers. We will also discuss what democratic processes give law validity, and critically examine the weaknesses of these processes in the modern age.



Introduction to Tort Law

Tort law pertains to civil wrongs, such as accidents from recklessness and negligence. It is the foundation for consumer protection law, and we will discuss the influence of the seminal case *Donoghue v Stevenson* [1932] UKHL 100. The students will be introduced to legal concepts such as duty of care and strict liability. The session will also give an introduction to common law and the system of precedents. Participants will be encouraged to evaluate the systems that exist and consider the potential for further improvements to the existing legal framework.

Introduction to Human Rights Law

This session will offer students an introduction to human rights law. Students will explore the normative foundations of the human rights doctrine and ask if it should have constitutional validity above ordinary laws. Students will be introduced to the three-generational framework that is prevalent in human rights discourse. Building on a previous session, students will be asked to critically assess the role human rights should have in a constitutional framework. The session also introduces the students to statutory law, and we will examine the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.



Introduction to European Union Law

This lesson will introduce the class to the key concepts of EU law. We will look at the treaties and the validity of EU law, the EU legislative and judicial institutions, and how they interact with the member states. Students will be introduced to the constitutional framework of the EU and we will discuss the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Students will learn about regulations and directives, and gain an understanding of key EU legal principles such as proportionality and harmonisation. Through the session, students will get the chance to deepen their understanding of the complexity of interlocking legal frameworks, and the sophistication of analysis required for legal arguments.

Introduction to Criminal Law

In this session participants will learn about the basic concept of mens rea and actus reus, and how to evaluate cumulative criteria in statutory language and common law precedents. We will look at the difference of burden of proof for criminal convictions, and examine in detail the offence of murder, manslaughter, assault and battery. We will discuss mitigating circumstances, defences, and follow the chain of events as a case makes its way through the legal system from the initial report to the police to a conviction by a court. We will also look at appeal procedures and contextualise these in relation to human rights.





TOPICS LIST

Introduction to International Law

In this session we will examine the nature and obligations that arise from international treaties and conventions. We will discuss the discrepancy between the democratic will as expressed through national parliaments to enact domestic laws and the powers of the international community. We will also look at the imbalance between individual state actors when negotiating and forming international law. Participants will be asked to reflect on whether there is a trend towards an international constitution and they should prepare a response to be delivered to the class as part of a debate.

Introduction to the Legal Profession

In this session we will discuss the routes to becoming a lawyer or a judge. We will discuss the various skills needed as a lawyer and what to expect working in different types of law firms. Students will be given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the academic study of law. The session will also focus on the practical skill of advocacy which is essential to a practising lawyer. The students will have the opportunity to hone their drafting skills and will do so in the form of legal briefs. We will also discuss the ethical implications of advocacy and how to defend actions that one may not agree with.

Mock Trial

In this session participants will be assigned a role, from judge to prosecution lawyer in order to participate in a mock trial. Participants will be provided with necessary material beforehand and asked to devise and present the arguments as they would in court. This is structured as a fun exercise to give the students a chance to think on their feet, and to present their knowledge. We will run the course of a typical criminal law trial, highlighting how theory and practice intertwine and can also be considered to occupy very separate spheres.



Personal Project

Throughout the fortnight, participants will be working on their own personal project. Having been provided with a brief, participants should research and prepare a presentation for their peers. This will build upon aspects of the theory that they have learnt over the course of the programme and is also an opportunity to showcase the practical skills they have developed. The presentation is followed by questions from the audience and wider class discussion of particular points of interest. The tutor may also include feedback about the presentation in the written evaluation which is sent to participants after the programme has ended.

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