



## Criminal Law Course Descriptor

Course Title	Criminal Law	Faculty	Law
Course Code	NCHLW526	Course Leader	Dr Balgiisa Ahmed
Credit Points	30	Teaching Period	Both
FHEQ Level	Level 5	Date Approved	June 2020
Compulsory/ Optional	Compulsory for undergraduate combined and single honours students, and for Senior Status students		
Pre-requisites	None		
Co-requisites	None		

### COURSE SUMMARY

The Criminal Law course seeks to teach both a selection of significant parts of the substantive criminal law, and the principles that underpin criminalisation. Students are therefore encouraged not to simply learn a selection of rules and how to apply them to presented scenarios, but to also think about the justification for those rules and to critically challenge them where they consider it warranted, always using authority to support their arguments.

### COURSE AIMS

The primary aim of the course is to fulfil the key elements and general principles of Criminal Law as required by the SRA/BSB Academic Stage Handbook for a Qualifying Law Degree. Within that parameter the aims of the course are to:

- Instil in students an appreciation of utilising primary legislation, senior courts' judgments, and scholarly legal writing and to advance students' powers of analysis and interpretation of the criminal law by reference to the same.
- Stimulate critical legal thinking and encourage broad and independent legal research.
- Assist students in formulating and criticising legal arguments regarding criminal law.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- K1b Review the legal theories, principles, doctrines, values and rules which underpin the criminal law of England and Wales
- K3b Evaluate the English legal system and its processes in the context of criminal law.

### COGNITIVE SKILLS

- C1b Apply knowledge and critical understanding to determine solutions to criminal law problems.
- C2b Critically evaluate factual information, selecting and prioritising from possible alternatives, using reasoned judgment and recognised legal arguments applying to criminal law.
- C3b Recognise ambiguity and understand limits of law when dealing with criminal law.

### TRANSFERABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- T1b Communicate information, arguments and analysis effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences, using a variety of media and technological resources whilst demonstrating accurate use of English and legal terminology.
- T1b Demonstrate an effective technical proficiency of written English that uses a wide range of literacy skills and vocabulary selected appropriately to communicate to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
- T2b Undertake further development of personal skills and competences by effective use of feedback, reflection, determination of needs, acquisition of knowledge and skills and collaborative working.
- T3b Further develop skills in self-directed research using a wide range of legal and other information sources, evaluating and selecting information based on reasoned criteria.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning for this course will include:

- 22.5 hours full-cohort lectures.
- Eight x 1 hour seminars
- Two x 45 minute two-to-one tutorials
- Two x 30 minute one-to-one tutorials<sup>1</sup>
- One x 90 minute revision session

Note: the seminars and lectures may be interchanged at times, depending on the needs of the course.

---

<sup>1</sup> One-to-one tutorials will only be offered to undergraduate combined and single honours students.

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students will attend Collections (formal meetings) in which they receive comprehensive and collated feedback on their performance.

Students are required to attend and participate in all the formal and timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

**EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**

- This course develops effective written, oral and online communication skills.
- The course addresses core needs for practicing lawyers, especially independent research, communication, and presentation skills.
- Students will be taught skills and professional awareness to support professional development.
- Presentation skills suitable for different audiences both for lawyers and other professionals will be developed.
- The course develops critical problem solving and the production of evidence-based advice.

**ASSESSMENT**

**FORMATIVE**

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. For example, managing a fact pattern by identifying the legal issues and presenting advice to the parties, or drafting a critical essay which has been independently researched. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback.

**SUMMATIVE**

Assessment will be in two forms:

AE:	Assessment Activity	Weighting (%)	Online submission	Duration	Length
1	Written assignment	40	Yes	N/A	2,000 words
2	Examination	60	N/A	2 hrs	N/A

The examination will consist of a number of questions from which the student will have the choice of answering a specified number. Both the examination and the written assignment will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

**FEEDBACK**

Students will receive formal feedback in a variety of ways: written (including via email correspondence); oral (within one-to-one tutorials or on an ad hoc basis) and indirectly through discussion during group tutorials. Student’s will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance.

Feedback on examinations is provided through generic internal examiners' reports and are made available to the student on the VLE. For all other summative assessment methods, feedback is made available to the student either via email, the VLE or another appropriate method.

### **INDICATIVE READING**

Note: Comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Syllabus or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

#### **BOOKS**

Ashworth A, and Redmayne M, *The Criminal Process* (OUP)  
Ashworth A, *Principles of Criminal law* (Oxford)  
Child J and Ormerod D, *Smith & Hogan's Essentials of Criminal Law* (OUP)  
Cook K, James M, and Lee R, *Core Statutes on Criminal Law 2015- 2016* (Palgrave)  
Herring J, *Criminal Law: Text, Cases and Materials* (OUP)  
Horder J, *Ashworth's Principles of Criminal Law* (OUP)  
Jefferson M, *Criminal Law* (Pearson)  
Martin J, and Storey T, *Unlocking Criminal Law* (Routledge)  
Ormerod D, and Laird K, *Smith & Hogan's Criminal Law* (OUP)  
Ormerod D, and Laird K, *Smith & Hogan's Text, Cases and Materials on Criminal Law* (OUP)  
Wilson, W, *Criminal Law* (Pearson)

#### **JOURNALS**

The Criminal Law Review  
The Journal of Criminal Law  
Law Quarterly Review  
Modern Law Review  
Oxford Journal of Legal Studies  
The Cambridge Law Journal

#### **MEDIA SOURCES IN PRINT AND ONLINE**

Students are encouraged to monitor news sources for issues of relevance, notably The Times Law Section and its new daily email service The Brief, available here:  
<http://thetimes.co.uk/thebrief/signup/>

#### **ELECTRONIC RESOURCES:**

Westlaw

LexisNexis

Other electronic resources, e.g.:

BAILII <http://www.bailii.org>

Parliament: <http://www.parliament.uk>

UK Supreme Court: <http://supremecourt.uk>  
 Law Commission: <http://www.lawcom.gov.uk>  
 European Court of Justice: [http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2\\_7024](http://curia.europa.eu/jcms/jcms/Jo2_7024)  
 European Court of Human Rights: <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int>  
 Judiciary of England & Wales: <http://www.judiciary.gov.uk>

**INDICATIVE TOPICS**

- Theoretical framework
- Principles of criminalisation
- Elements of a crime: mens rea and actus reus
- Liability without fault, strict liability
- Fatal offences
- Non-fatal offences against the person
- Sexual Offences
- Theft and related offences
- Criminal damage
- Inchoate liability
- Complicity
- Defences: affirmative, failure of proof

<p><b>Title: NCHLW526 Criminal Law</b>  <b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>  <b>Location: Academic Handbook/Programme specifications and Handbooks/ Undergraduate Programme Specifications/LLB (combined honours) Programme Specifications/Course Descriptors</b></p>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Proposed next review date	Modification (As per AQF4) & category number
2.0	February 2022	March 2022	Alice Schneider	April 2025	Category 3: Changes to Learning Outcomes
1.1	June 2021	June 2021	Dimitrios Kyriazis	April 2025	Category 1 formatting change
1.0	June 2020	June 2020	Dimitrios Kyriazis	April 2025	