

Module Title: Legal Research and Methods**Credit Points: 05 ECTS / 10 UK credits****Overview:**

The aim of this module is to inculcate in the learner advanced research and writing skills. The module will initially focus on various research methodologies which can be employed when conducting research. It will also impart to learners the ability to conduct such research by developing an awareness of research tools such as bibliographic and referencing software. Furthermore, the module will foster within learners the ability to write excellent legal prose with style, precision and accuracy.

Aims (To provide learners with):

- provide learners with an introduction to research skills and research methodology such that they appreciate the range of available sources and methodologies and can use and apply them to a legal problem
- enable the learners to acquire confidence in exploring their research ideas and the skill to formulate a research proposal.
- introduce learners to supervisory and research guidance.
- provide learners with the skills to research and to write up a dissertation and/or research paper, following guidance regarding presentation, word limit and time scales.
- introduce learners to computer techniques and packages for preparing and
- presenting assignments, for research and presentations.

Module Content

- Legal Writing
 - What is good legal writing?
 - Referencing and citation
 - Understanding plagiarism
 - Grammar
- Research Fundamentals
 - Understanding research
 - The contribution which research can make
 - Qualitative versus quantitative research
 - Ethical considerations of research
 - Developing a research question
 - Preparing a research proposal
 - Managing time
 - Understanding the role of the supervisor
- Introduction to Theoretical Frameworks
 - Positivist analysis
 - Law and economics analysis
 - Interdisciplinary analysis
 - Postmodernist analysis
 - Feminist analysis
 - Critical legal analysis
- Research Methodologies
 - Doctrinal legal research
 - Comparative research
 - Empirical research
 - Socio-legal research
 - Internal/external critique
- Research Methods
 - Databases
 - Fieldwork
 - Interviews
 - Surveys

Indicative Reading

- Blaxter, L, C Hughes & M Tight. How to Research (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2007)
- Buckley, P & D Clark. Rough guide to the Internet (London: Rough Guides, 2007)
- Calishain, T. Web search garage (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2004)
- Clinch, P. Using a law library : a learner's guide to legal research skills (London: Blackstone, 2005)
- Cole, J. Using Moodle: teaching with the popular open source course management system, (Sabastopol, CA: O'Reilly, 2007)
- Fairbairn, G J. & Winch, C. Reading, writing and reasoning: a guide for learners (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1991)
- Halvorson, T R. Law of the super searchers: the online secrets of the top legal researchers (Medford, NJ: CyberAge Books, 2000)
- Hanson, S. Legal method and reasoning (London: Cavendish, 2003)
- Webley, L. Legal writing (London: Cavendish, 2005)

Assessment methods

25% Assignment

25% Presentation

50% Assignment