

**New College of
the Humanities**

Securing Your University Offer for Law

Essay Competition Award Ceremony: July 23rd, 2022



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Agenda

- Welcome
- Studying Law at University: an Overview
- Submitting a Competitive Application
- NCH Insights
- Q&A



Studying Law at University: an Overview

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What is the study of law?

- Gain an understanding of the legal practices of a particular country/district
- Learn about all the varieties of law, e.g.: tort law, criminal law, family law, contract law
- Generally required to get into a career involving legal practice
- Practice your essay writing and hone your analytical, critical thinking and persuasion skills
- Form your own ideas and opinions that you can develop and use beyond your studies
- Gain transferable skills that can help create a pathway into different careers/further study



Where and how can you study law?

- Single Honours Law LLB
- Many joint and combined honours options, e.g.: Law and Politics, Law and Criminology, Law with English Literature (*note that the study balance is likely to be other than 50/50 if it's Law *with* rather than Law *and*)
- Different degree spans (standard English 3 years, standard Scottish 4 years, fast-track 2 years etc)
- Degree apprenticeships take a more practical approach (potentially useful to fast track toward particular careers)
- Full-time/part-time; in-person/online; study abroad (especially interesting for a global law perspective, or for career-related work placements)

How is law taught?

- **Reading:** Reading is critical in understanding all the facets of the law, and may include analysis of pivotal cases
- **Lectures:** Lectures will give an introduction to historical and current developments in law, as well as an understanding of how to go about reading and understanding different law practices
- **Seminars:** Seminars are very important to law, as it is all about discussion, debate and interpretation
- **Essays:** Law essays are where you can show off your thinking skills and research and analysis, to form your own arguments concerning the question/topic given
- **Presentations:** Occasionally presentations are used to assess how well you understand a topic - these may be individual or group presentations



What skills do you develop?

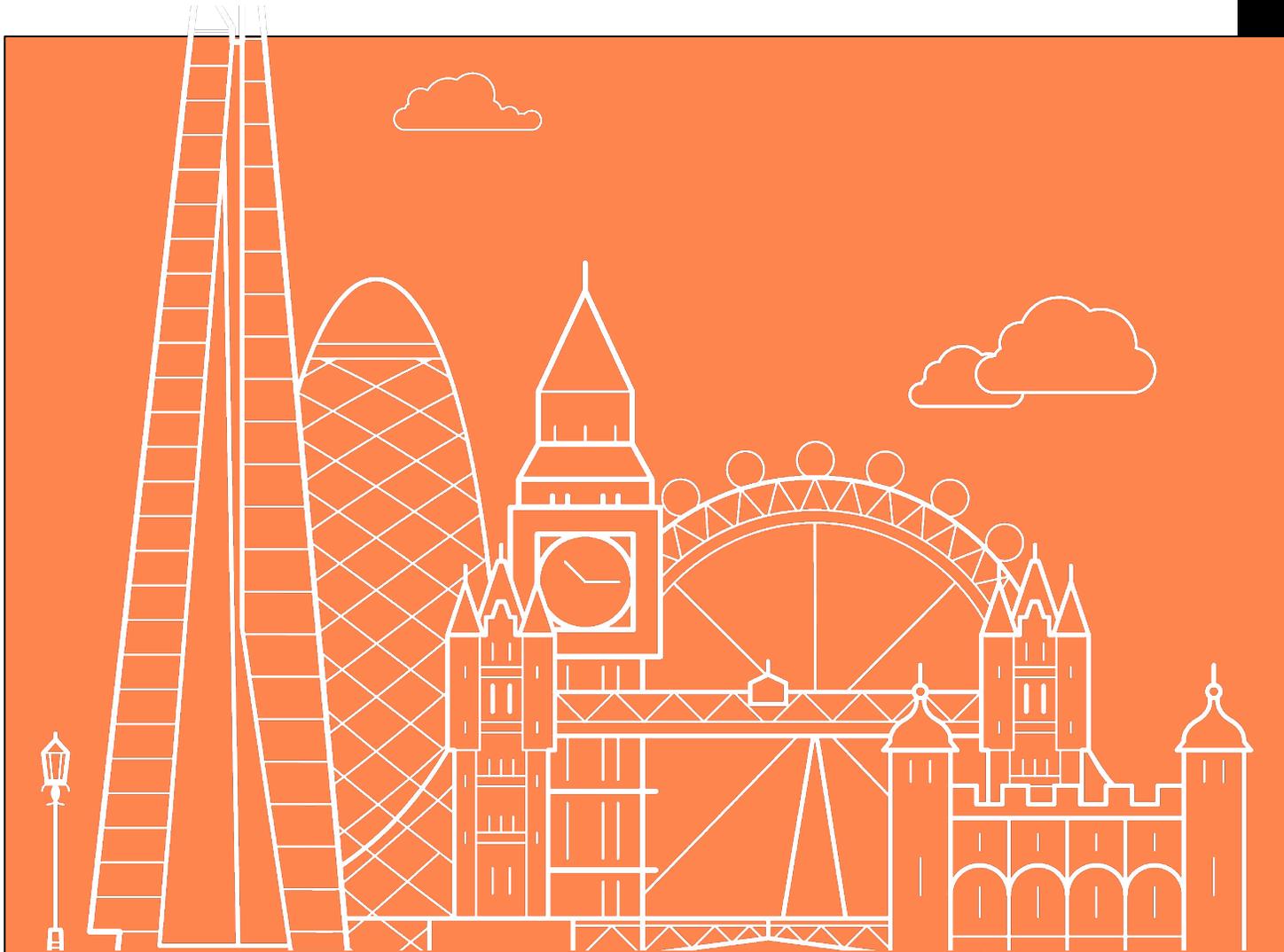
- Thorough and accurate research
- Detailed analysis
- Negotiation skills
- Precise language and writing
- Critical thinking
- Conflict resolution
- Essay writing
- Ability to work under pressure
- Time management

The skills you will acquire as a Law graduate will allow you to pivot flexibly into a variety of industries, when you enter the working world.

What can you do after your degree?

As a Law graduate your transferable skills can take you into ANY industry. Some of the top graduate destinations are:

- Barrister
- Coroner
- Solicitor
- Trading Standards Officer
- Company Secretary
- Patent Attorney
- Banking and finance
- Business
- Insurance
- Accountancy
- Central and local government administration



Submitting a Competitive Application for Law

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What are the entry requirements?

UCAS

Information provided by ucas.com

A levels:

- Usually requires a minimum of two A levels, with three A levels and A grades needed for the most popular courses
- Entry requirements range from BCC to AAA
- Be aware that some universities may not accept PE, art, photography and dance as one of the three main A levels

International Baccalaureate Diploma:

- From 30-39 points overall in the IB Diploma

Scottish Highers:

- From BBBB to AAAAB



What are admissions tutors looking for?

- Enthusiasm and motivation to study Law
- Credible evidence that supports your subject passion
- Proactive subject exploration and engagement - e.g.: wider reading beyond the set texts
- Relevant extra-curricular/super-curricular activities
- Interests outside of school, relating to Law
- Relevant and transferable work experience
- Aims and goals; career plans if known
- Understanding of the demands of studying at university, and how this is different from school

What super-curricular activities would support my application?

Super-curricular activities take the subjects you study further, beyond what you have learnt at school or college. Some examples for Law may include:

- Reading specialist magazines and journals
- Attending university taster lectures or taster days
- Listening to podcasts, TED talks or online lectures
- Attending a Law Summer School
- Work experience, shadowing and volunteering
- Taking an online (MOOC) Law course
- Taking part in Debate Society, Model UN, Student Council or student-run newspapers
- Taking part in university essay competitions!



Why is the personal statement so important?

- Often your only chance to 'sell yourself' to the university and impress the admissions tutor
- Helps to differentiate between equally excellent candidates with similar or identical grade profiles, especially for competitive courses
- Helps if you are a borderline candidate
- Demonstrates your reasons for applying for a course
- May form basis of an interview - tutors may ask questions arising from the statement
- May help if on results day you don't quite make your grades

How can I write a compelling personal statement?

- Invest plenty of time in the brainstorming/thinking stage, before starting to write your statement
- Structure your personal statement
- Use positive and enthusiastic language
- Make every sentence count - word count is tight!
- Ensure it reflects your 'voice', and your 'journey'
- Use evidence to support claims/statements
- Be prepared to draft and redraft
- Be honest - don't exaggerate and don't plagiarise
- Double check grammar and spelling for errors
- Ask for support, especially with proofreading and checking - it's easy for mistakes to slip through!





What does an admissions interview look like?

- Unique opportunity to discuss a subject you are passionate about with an academic tutor
- Opportunity for tutor to get to know you and your motivation for applying - you can also ask questions!
- May take the form of a 'taster' tutorial
- Unlikely to be a test of knowledge - tutor will be more interested in how you think, rather than what you know
- Discussion-based; questions will probe your subject interest, enthusiasm and aptitude
- Questions may build on your personal statement
- Questions will be challenging - don't panic if you don't immediately have an answer; take your time to think
- Some interviews may include a task, or pre-reading



How can I prepare for my admissions interview?

- Carefully reread your personal statement, and be prepared to expand upon any of the points you have included
- Re-read or re-familiarise yourself with any texts you referenced, so these are fresh in your mind
- Undertake any reading or pre-interview tasks in good time
- Practice talking about the points in your statement
- Research who will be interviewing you
- Make sure you are clear regarding interview logistics
- If you will be undertaking a virtual interview, make sure you have somewhere suitable for this task, with good wifi
- Prepare questions you would like to ask in the interview



NCH Insights

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Faculty Insights

- Law is a fascinating subject with broad application, that impacts all aspects of human life and society, yet is constantly changing
- Students who enjoy developing and deploying arguments, who are good with people while retaining an eye for detail, would be suited to law. Intellectual curiosity, research and communication skills and problem solving skills are all extremely valuable
- Read widely and remember to apply both sides of the argument. Stay up to date with interesting legal developments. Don't cite your love for legal TV dramas as your motivation!
- Create a professional Twitter account and follow lawyers, barristers and academics in the legal field you're interested in. This way you'll see the conversation they're having and what are the most interesting new legal developments. Also follow the UK Supreme Court on Twitter
- There are the obvious career paths (solicitor/barrister) but the skills you pick up can also make for a great career in politics, academia, business, and journalism. More go into business than you might expect

Student tips and hints

- You need to be resilient. You'll be dealing with some abstract theories and complicated pieces of legislation, and you have to be able to get back up and try again when you don't get it the first, second, third and fourth time
- There are many excellent blogs - e.g. the UK Supreme Court blog. Look at recent judgments
- The BBC Radio 4 'Law in Action' podcast is useful
- YouTube has some really great content for understanding what a law degree might be like, and Lexology is a great resource for daily news
- Read *The Rule of Law* by Tom Bingham, and *Letters to a Law Student* by Nicholas McBride
- Never lie in your personal statement about something you've read!



Suggestions for wider reading

- A short, accessible presentation of law as an academic subject; how the study of law can be fun, intellectually stimulating, and challenging: **Barnard, O’Sullivan and Virgo, *What About Law?* (2nd edn, Hart, 2011)**
- The theory, structure, and practice of legal reasoning, how to uncover and exploit the mysteries of legal materials: **Holland and Webb, *Learning Legal Rules* (9th edn, Oxford University Press, 2016)**
- An overview of the English Legal System covering the essential legal skills that students need to master to succeed both in their legal studies and in their future careers: **ATH Smith’s Glanville Williams, *Learning the Law* (16th edn, Sweet & Maxwell, 2016)**
- Introducing the purposes and functions of English law, the law-making process, and the machinery of justice, while challenging assumptions and exploring current debates: **M Partington, *Introduction to the Legal System* (2017-2018, OUP, 2018)**



Q&A



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