



Law Student

// issue 4

// BVC or LPC?

// Results of the student survey

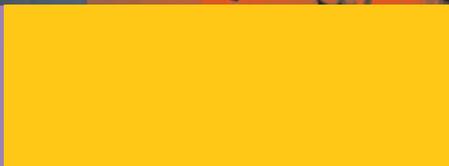
// Getting the most from your gap year

// Making lectures work for you

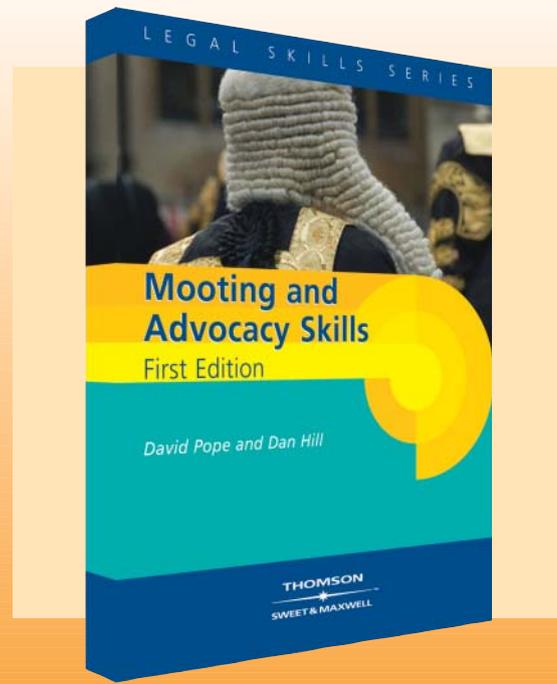
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Letter from the Editor



Welcome to the fourth issue of Law Student from Sweet & Maxwell. This issue contains an eclectic mix of articles, from advice on how to make the most of your lectures, to how to make a great spaghetti bolognese.

Maximising your lectures will really help

you when it comes to exam-time – not least because you'll have useful lecture notes from which to revise from. Check out the article on pages 6-7 for some great advice. You can also learn a great deal from the feedback your lecturers give you on completed assignments. The article on pages 25-26 explains why you should spend time on the feedback of work you've already been marked on.

Undertaking research for assignments and exams is essential if you want to do well. Our article starting on page 9 gives guidance on how to make the most of the law library. While the article on pages 22-23 explains how you can research from the comfort of your home. With exams on the horizon, how do you know what to revise and when? Check out the article on pages 16-18 for some great advice.

Still not decided whether you want to go on to do the LPC or BVC after your degree? Read our article on pages 4-5 to see if you're more suited to being a barrister or a solicitor. Or, you may have already decided to take a year out after your degree finishes. Turn to page 12 for advice on how to make the most of your gap year.

Bored of eating the same food but on a limited budget? Our article on pages 19-20 gives two cheap but tasty recipes for you to try.

Finally, the results of the survey we carried out in the last issue are in. Turn to pages 14-15 to see who beat Ally McBeal in the favourite film/TV lawyer category. I hope you enjoy this new issue.

Samantha Siddle

Sam Siddle
Editor

Law Student

Contents

- 04-05** To be or not to be: BVC or LPC
- 06-07** Making lectures work for you
- 09-10** Making the most of the law library
- 11** How to make the most of your gap year
- 14-15** Results of the student survey
- 16-18** Revising for examinations
- 19-20** How to eat like a king on a student's budget
- 22-23** Westlaw UK: My mobile Law Library
- 25-26** Utilising feedback on your work
- 29-30** Types of books available



Law Student

issue 4

Sweet & Maxwell Ltd
100 Avenue Road
London NW3 3PF

To Be, Or Not To Be: BVC Or LPC?

*"It was the best of times.
It was the worst of times..."*

That's often how it can feel when you graduate. One hurdle jumped, another, higher one, staring you rather aggressively in the face. It is said that lawyers are hard working, decent and sober, with a good social conscience and an amazing ability to devote their entire waking life to each and every client. If you meet a lawyer who doesn't satisfy all of the above – complain to the Law Society or Bar Council. Everyone else does. So how do you make the decision that will effect the rest of your career: solicitor or barrister?

A brief history...

Traditionally, a solicitor would primarily spend his or her time in an office, whilst a barrister would mostly be preparing for and speaking in court.

Solicitors' work covers a broad range, including advising commercial and private clients on business matters and property and undertaking

litigation. The degree of specialisation of solicitors' firms varies enormously. Some offer general legal services, from conveyancing and drafting wills to acting for defendants in criminal cases. Others specialise in one or two areas, perhaps doing only corporate work or personal injury work.

An advantage of working for a firm is the security of earnings – as a salaried employee you are assured a monthly pay packet. For your self employed barrister colleagues there has traditionally been no such security. Current trends among chambers (barrister offices) are to guarantee earnings for pupil barristers, which effectively has the same effect as receiving a salary.

Recent years have seen a rise in "in-house" recruitment. This means that large corporate organisations such as Barclays and EDF Energy are taking on trainee solicitors straight from the LPC. The unique factor of in-house is that you will be acting only for one client – your employer.

Most barristers' work is confined to litigation. Traditionally barristers specialise in one or a few areas of law, although in their early years most undertake a broad range of cases until they develop expertise in a particular area. Whether, or how much, you specialise as a barrister will depend to a large extent on the cases you get in your early years.

Barristers by their very definition are entitled to speak, or have rights of audience, in all courts of the land. This has been the main distinction between barrister and solicitor, with the latter not having the higher rights. Until the arrival of solicitor advocates. These are solicitors who

When deciding firm or chambers, consider:

1. You will probably know less than you need to at this stage. Unless you're from a family of lawyers, or have spent your past 3 summers on endless vacation placements and mini-pupillages. If you don't know what a vacation placement or mini pupillage is, might I respectfully suggest you clear next week's diary, and head for your nearest law library with a pad and pencil.
2. A solicitor is not the same as a barrister. Solicitors are used to smiling sweetly when asked if they one day hope to become a barrister. Barristers reply through gritted teeth when asked how life at the firm is these days.
3. Despite extensive press coverage suggesting a blurring of the boundaries, the two arms of the profession have not fused. Alas this means that you have to make a decision and stick with it.
4. The decision is not easy.

have higher rights, and so can speak in any court. They do not however wear the wig and gown of a barrister. As such, they are referred to as "my friend". A barrister is referred to as "my learned friend". Even the most learned looking of solicitors are at pains to point out to the court that they are not in fact learned at all. A solicitor tutor informs me that barristers do not like to be called "my friend". I am assured that forgetting the learnedness of a barrister is a very quick way to get on his or her wrong side...

All barristers have to be members of one of the four Inns of Court, which were established in medieval times. Each Inn is strikingly beautiful, and worth a visit purely from an aesthetic perspective. The Inns today have five main functions. They own and administer accommodation, which is rented to barristers for professional chambers. They provide law libraries and common rooms for barristers and students. They provide lunches and dinners for their members. They award scholarships and bursaries for students and young barristers. They help in the training of students and young barristers by the traditions of keeping terms





through eating dinners, by moots, talks and practical exercises.

You will, for both arms of the profession, partake in some form of personal and professional development. This course is essential for those of us who have not yet mastered the art of basic social interaction. Apparently it warrants an hour to have the following explained to you in the most exquisite detail: think before you speak, speak, and think about what you've said. A time waste of monumental dimensions, but compulsory nonetheless.

Where next?

If you have been a public speaker all your life, and find yourself becoming excited over the minutiae of a 16th Century case on how many times a neighbour must walk over your garden to constitute an easement, or if you are the type of organised soul who has set up and run every event to have ever taken place at your university, you're probably all set. If however you are neither of the above, or both, read on... If unsure whether to apply for the LPC or BVC

think of your objectives. If you aim to be a cog in a huge corporate machine, answering to a boss and living the business dream then life as a solicitor may be for you (although there are numerous smaller firms with a people focus to their work). If you desire greater control over your working patterns, then a (self employed) barrister may well suit, although consider the burden of potentially irregular work, and the need to budget efficiently for the lean periods.

In the end, law is a lifestyle choice, and rarely a 9 to 5 job. The challenges that lie ahead will be among the most difficult you face. A 16 hour day in a top city commercial firm is physically exhausting, whilst cross examining a rape victim

can brand itself into your mind for the rest of your days. Knowledge is power – be sure to read the press, speak to lawyers, and contact law schools. Whilst your final career decision must be your own, make sure it is an informed one. Use as many sources of information as you can, as often as you can, and remember not to miss any application deadlines. Whichever you choose you will feel challenged and tested, and inevitably will be approached by all of your non-legal friends looking for free legal advice.

The author is a Legal Practice Course Scholarship Student at BPP Law School Leeds, and is being considered for a 2007 Middle Temple Scholarship.

Making lectures work for you – how to listen and notetake effectively

Lectures are often regarded as forming the backbone of a course and it is usually assumed that most students will attend them. But how do you make sure you are getting the most from them? Here, from *How to Study Law*, is advice on how to make the most of lectures.

Lectures are generally seen as a cost-effective way of imparting the main ideas in an area to a large number of people. They also give the lecturer the opportunity to tell students about the latest developments in an area, and to explain any particularly complex parts of a subject. In addition, the content of lectures, and the handouts that often accompany them, form the basis for further independent study.

Lecturing style is closely related to the personality of an individual lecturer, so you are likely to come across a wide variety of lectures delivered in many different styles. Some will be excellent, some less so. As a student, you will need to develop a good technique for dealing with lectures, which you can then adapt to cope with the different lecturing styles you come across. Don't forget that while most lecturers want to be good at what they do, and deliver lectures of a very high standard, you are ultimately responsible for your own education. You must make lectures work for you.

Arrive in reasonably good time

Handouts and important announcements are often given out at the beginning of lectures; you may be very confused if you miss them. Equally, the first few minutes of the lecture itself are important, as the lecturer will often summarise the main points of the lecture, or remind you where they have got up to in their coverage of a topic.

Listen actively

Listening to a lecture can be a very passive experience. Students are not generally expected to interrupt a lecture by asking questions or making comments, although some lecturers will include interactive elements in their lectures. In a standard lecture, it is very easy to “switch off” and lose the thread of the lecture. In order to get the most out of lectures, you need to listen effectively and take good notes. Doing both of these things helps to make the experience less passive and also helps you to record the lecture in a way that will prove useful for future reference.



Did you know?

Eyre was a circuit court in the Middle Ages. The justices in the eyre were regularly established in 1176, with delegated power from the King's Great Court or Aula Regis.

- Taken from the 10th edition of Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary [978 0 421 90050 9] available from all good booksellers priced £9.95

Listening effectively does not mean merely that you hear the lecture. It means that you listen actively. Taking notes will help you listen actively, because it provides the listening activity with a purpose. You should also listen reflectively; in other words, you should try to relate what you are hearing to your existing knowledge of the subject and think how the new information fits into it. A lecture can be very boring if the lecturer has a monotonous delivery, but as an effective listener, you need to train yourself to ignore poor delivery, and concentrate on the content of what is being said.

Eliminate distractions

In order to help you concentrate in lectures, you need to eliminate as many distractions as possible. Make sure you are comfortable; use a clipboard if there is no desk. Use a convenient size of paper, which gives you enough space to set out your notes clearly. Decide whether you prefer lined or unlined paper. If you have a series of consecutive lectures you may become uncomfortable because you are sitting for long periods; try to move your limbs slightly during the lecture and use any brief gaps between the lectures to get out of your seat and move around a bit.

Take notes

Taking notes in lectures not only helps you to concentrate; it also means that you have a record of the content of the lecture that you can refer to in the future. Since one of the main purposes of taking notes is to use them in the future, it is important to devise a system of note-taking which produces a clear set of notes which you will understand when you come to look at them again, weeks or months after the original lecture.

Establish your style of note-taking

There is no single "best" way of taking notes. Some people will take quite detailed notes; others will take down the key points in a diagrammatic form. The most important factor here is to establish a style of note-taking which results in a useful set of notes for you to refer

to after the lecture has finished. Since law degrees generally rely on lectures as the main source of information, you may feel you need to write down quite a lot in order to be sure that you have everything you need. However, don't attempt to write down everything the lecturer says, as you won't be able to do this, and you will lose the sense of what they are saying. When you have taken some notes in some lectures, it is worth stopping to ask yourself if they will be useful to you in the future. If they are too messy, too short or too confusing, you can take steps to improve your note-taking technique.

How do you know what to write down?

Handouts that support the lecture make the task of note-taking easier; they will show you the broad structure of the lecture and the main topics which will be covered. The lecturer may help you by summarising their main points; they may also try to aid your understanding by including examples or illustrations; these are good to include in your notes, as they will help to remind you of the workings of the arguments. Note the names of cases, statutes and academic writers who are mentioned; if there is a lecture handout, this should help you as it will contain names of cases and statutes and other technical legal terms, so you don't need to get all these perfectly during the lecture; you can insert them when you review your lecture notes.

Evolve your own form of shorthand

This is a very simple but important technique. If you have a good system of abbreviating words, it will enable you to take much more effective notes.

Good presentation is important

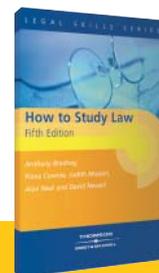
Use headings and sub-headings to emphasise the main points made, and to indicate changes in topics. Numbered points can provide a quick way of noting a large quantity of information. Underlining and the use of different coloured pens can direct your attention to particular points.

10 tips for maximising your lectures

1. Arrive on time or you may miss important information.
2. Make sure you have everything you need such as pen, paper, and the correct books.
3. Make sure you are comfortable or you may lose concentration.
4. Take notes – they help you to listen actively and give you a record of the lecture.
5. Don't try to write down everything the lecturer says as you won't be able to.
6. Handouts are a good indication of the points you need to remember.
7. Create your own form of shorthand.
8. Use a combination of different formats such as headings or bullets to help pick out key information.
9. Establish a style that works for you – it's no good incorporating headings if they don't work for you.
10. Review your notes as soon as possible or you may find you can't understand them at a later date.

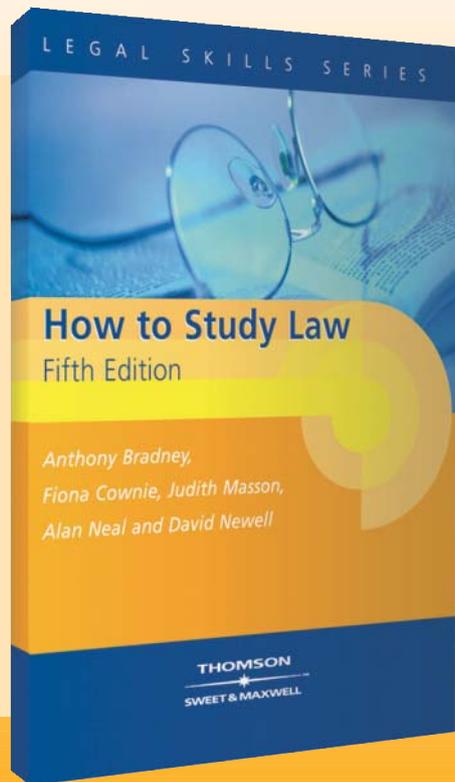
Review your notes as soon as possible

It is important to review your notes while the lecture is still fresh in your mind. You may need to expand what you have written, or add headings, or do a little research on a point which you have not understood. Some people like to summarise their notes in diagrammatic form at this stage.



This article is taken from the 5th edition of *How to Study Law*, which is available from good booksellers priced £16.95 (978 0 421 89380 1)

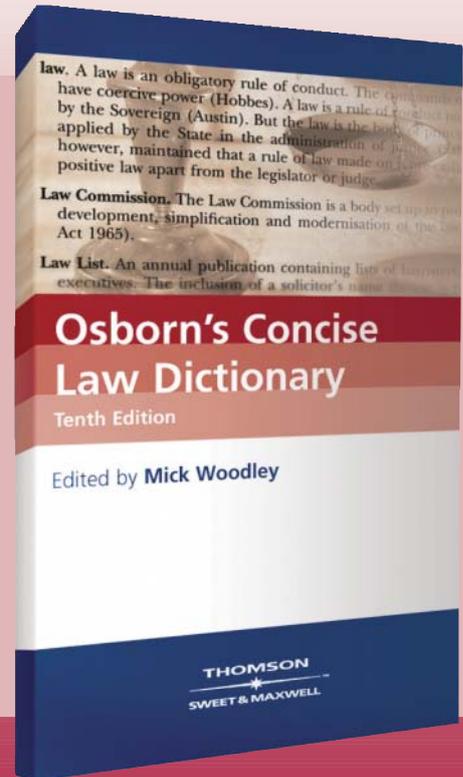
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Making the most of the law library – finding the books you need

The books held in a university library are usually the best starting point for legal research. Making good use of them can save a great deal of wasted effort. Here, taken from *Effective Legal Research*, is advice on how to search for the book/s you need.



The different types of books available

You will find three different kinds of book on the library shelves. Textbooks designed for undergraduates explain the fundamentals of law in a particular area. These are complemented by research texts (sometimes called monographs) which offer detailed descriptions of the law and usually a more advanced level of discussion. These often assume the knowledge set out in undergraduate textbooks.

Practitioner texts and loose-leaf updating services, in contrast, aim to provide a detailed, authoritative, statement of the law in a particular area. They are designed first and foremost for the legal profession. All three types of book can be useful to legal research. Check dates of publication, to ensure that you are using the most recent edition.

How are the books organised?

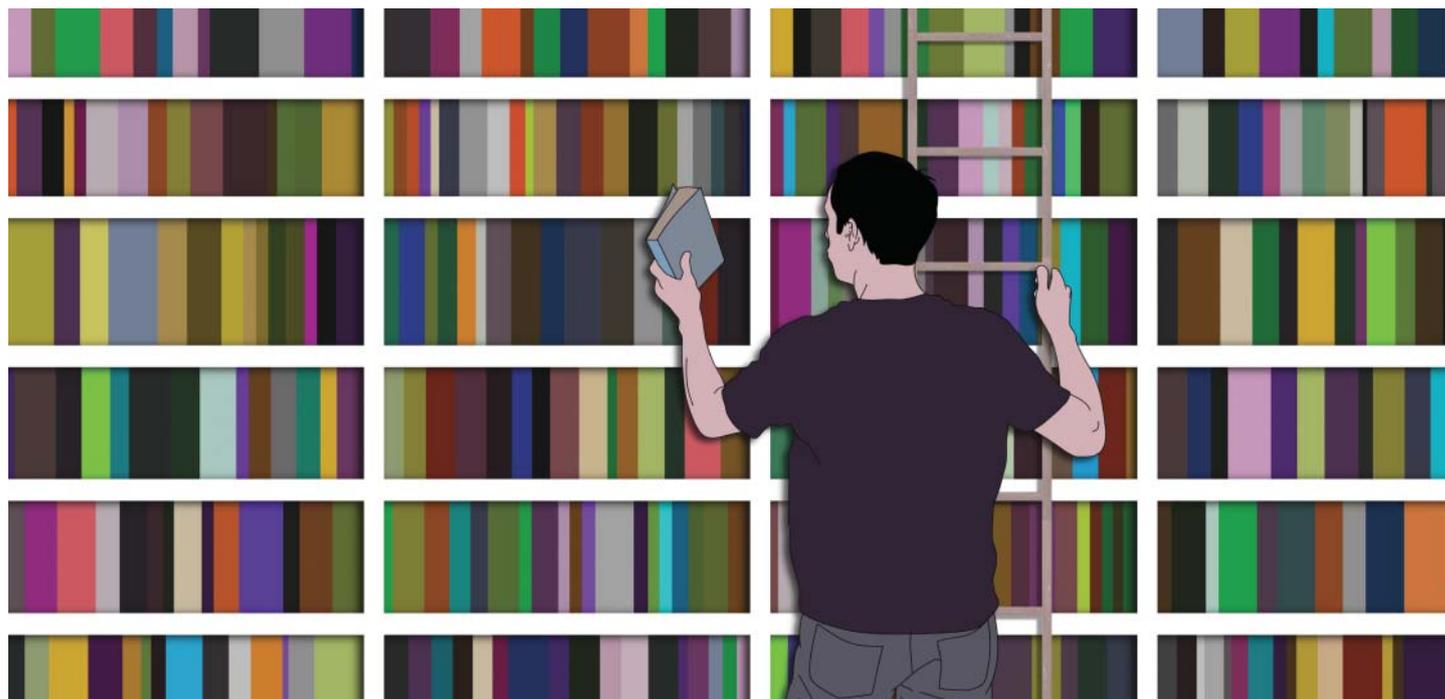
Books of all kinds are usually grouped on the shelves according to their subject. The subject dealt with in each book is indicated by numbers, or letters and numbers, which are usually printed on the spine of the book. These symbols indicate the exact subject matter of each volume. They are known as the classification number or classmark and bring together, in one area of the library, all books dealing with the same subject, such as torts, criminal law and constitutional law.

There may be a number of separate sequences in the library. Large books (folios and quartos) and very thin books (pamphlets) may be kept in a separate part of the library. Thus, the size of the book may be important in helping you to find it on the shelves. There will normally be some indication on the catalogue entry for a book, if a book is shelved separately.

Searching the library catalogue

Library catalogues allow you to search for books by the author's name, or the title of the book. It is usually easier and quicker to search by title (ignoring words such as "The" or "A" in the title), or alternatively by a combination of author surname and title. If you do not have the exact title, a "keyword search" enables you to search for words occurring anywhere in the title.

Additional searches by subject area or classification are usually also possible. If the library has the book you want, the catalogue entry will give you its full details (e.g. its publisher, the date of publication and the length of the book in pages) and the location of the book on the shelves.



Author searches should be used with care. Even if you are sure of the author of the book, you may need to check a number of author entries before you find the right one. Suppose you have a reference to a book written by John Jackson. If you use the author search and enter "Jackson, J" you will see index entries that might feature the following variations of the name (among others):

Jackson, J.A., John Archer, 1929-

Jackson, J.D., John Dugland, 1955-

Jackson, J.E., John Ellwood

Jackson, John, 1887-1958

Jackson, John E.

You need to start with "Jackson, J.A." and work down the list in order to find the right author. In this case, the second author listed is a writer on legal subjects, but a search using "Jackson, John" would have missed the correct entry. The index display would begin with "Jackson, John, 1881-1952".

Books still listed under the previous author's name and other anomalies

Law books often continue to be known by the name of the original author, even though that author might be dead. This is something you will need to take account of when using the catalogue. Let us take as an example, *Winfield and Jolowicz on Tort*. This is in its seventeenth edition. Winfield has not been involved with the work for many years, but it is still referred to by his name. You will usually find an entry in the author catalogue under Winfield, but in addition, there will also be an entry under Rogers, W.V.H. who is the author of the current edition. If you are using a title search you need to search for "Winfield and Jolowicz on Tort", not "Tort", which was the original title of the book.

Many law books have been written jointly by two or more authors. You may be referred for example to Craig and de Burca (EU Law) or Clayton and Tomlinson (*The Law of Human Rights*). There will be an entry in the catalogue for both authors, and title searches should be for "EU Law" or "Law of Human Rights".

Sometimes a book does not have an individual as the author. It is published by an organisation or society and the organisation is, in effect, the author. In this case, you will find an entry in the catalogue under the name of the body, e.g. Law Commission, Law Society, Legal Action Group, United Nations.

Finding and borrowing a book once you've established the library carries a copy

The classification number for a book appears prominently in the library catalogue entry. It is usually combined with letters and numbers based on the author's name which enable you to trace the precise place the book should appear on the shelves. Remember to check also for any indication that the book you wish to find may be shelved in a separate sequence (pamphlets, large-sized books etc).

If the book is on loan to another reader, the library catalogue will give the current return date for the book. It is usually possible for you to reserve the book using the catalogue, in which case the book will be recalled from its present borrower.

A book may be mis-shelved or missing, or have been removed by library staff for some reason, e.g. re-binding. If you have any problems finding a book, ask a member of the library staff for help.

When you borrow a book from a library issue desk (or self-service issue machine), you will be given a return date for the book. Remember

that the book could be requested before that date if another reader has reserved it. There will also be fines for late return. These fines can be expensive if the book has been borrowed from a short-loan, reserve, or consultation collection.

Other sources of information available from the law library

The library is also a gateway to other printed materials such as law reports and journals as well as online collections of legal materials. You'll need to learn how to make use of both the online and the print collections of a law library if you are to spend your research time efficiently and effectively.

Full details of how to make the most of the full range of services offered by your university library can be found in the first edition of *Effective Legal Research*.



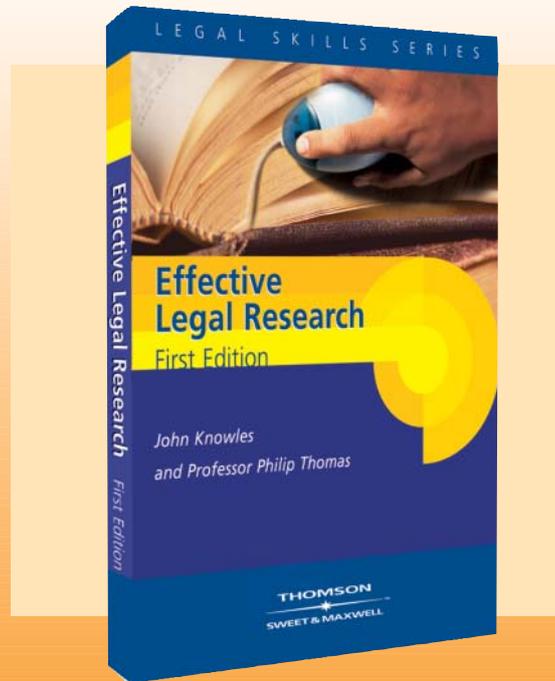
This article is taken from the 1st edition of *Effective Legal Research*, which is available from good booksellers priced £15.95 [978 0 421 92270 9]

Did you know?

Dubitante is used in law reports to signify that a judge cannot make up his mind as to the decision which he should give.

- Taken from the 10th edition of Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary [978 0 421 90050 9] available from all good booksellers priced £9.95

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Mind the gap!

You've decided you're going to take a year out, but what are you going to do? From volunteering and eco travel, to adventure seeking, to plain old relaxing, there is a lot to consider. The National Union of Students offers some advice.

Once finals are out of the way, entering the working world and starting a career might be the last thing on your mind. For many new graduates, a gap year after college or university provides the ideal solution. It could be an opportunity to see the world, visit new places, carry out voluntary work or learn new skills. Of course, if you do not fancy anything along those lines, it might just be a case of relaxing postfinals, before you decide upon your next move.

Carry out your research

If it is an adventure that you are looking for, there is a range of different organisations that could help you plan your year out. These include:

- www.gapyear.com
- www.yearoutgroup.org
- www.gap.org.uk
- www.gapprofile.co.uk
- www.outreachinternational.co.uk
- www.raleigh.org.uk
- www.teaching-abroad.co.uk

Advice on places to avoid

If you have concerns about spending your gap year in certain parts of the world, particularly given current worries over terrorism, you should contact the Foreign Office or check the website www.fco.gov.uk which provides advice and tips for travellers to destinations all over the world. Remember, if you still choose to go to countries that the Foreign Office advises against visiting, it is highly likely to invalidate your travel insurance.

For more information on this and other topics, visit NUS at www.nusonline.co.uk



Make sure you're covered

Before embarking on your year out, insurance is one of those essentials that you cannot afford to be without. Endsleigh offers graduates specialist gap year insurance offering peace of mind for your time away, plus covering you for every eventuality such as: medical expenses, lost or damaged possessions and legal help. You are also covered if your trip is cancelled or if you need to return early due to accident, illness or bereavement. For more information on Endsleigh's policies visit their website – www.endsleigh.co.uk

Deciding what to do in your gap year may seem daunting at first, if you do not already have a clear idea in mind. Once the preparations have been made, though, all you need to do is go off and enjoy your year out – whatever you have got planned.

Top tips

- Carry out research on the different opportunities available – you may not get another opportunity to take a year out again.
- Plan, plan, plan! Once you've decided what to do, organise the details so that you maximise the time.
- Make sure you get the right insurance cover for your trip – speeding down white water rapids might not be covered in some policies.
- Protect your health – don't forget to get any jabs that you need.
- Buy a money-belt – they are a great way of keeping your money safe and secure.
- Ensure someone has a copy of your itinerary so that you can be contacted in emergencies.

Podcasts now available



Expanding the way they convey their information to you, Sweet & Maxwell have made their first foray into podcasts. Mentioned by Richard Susskind in *The Times* on 5th September 2006, and also in the September 2006 issue of *Information World Review*, they are a great way to study whilst on the move.

There are seven podcasts available, six of which tie in with titles from the popular *Nutshells* and *Nutcases* series. Used in conjunction with the print editions, they provide you with a great introduction to the subject, and are ideal revision aids.

The other podcast is presented by Roger Brownsword, editor of the *Understanding Law* series and co-author of the individual titles *Understanding Contract Law* and *Understanding Law*. Roger reflects on the origins of the *Understanding Law* series and how well law does in its aspirations to serve the community. He goes on to discuss key cases which challenge the authority of and respect for law.

You can access these free podcasts by visiting <http://www.sweetandmaxwell.co.uk/podcasts/index.html> or by following the instructions from our homepage www.sweetandmaxwell.thomson.com

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Fig 1. How many hours you spend studying per week

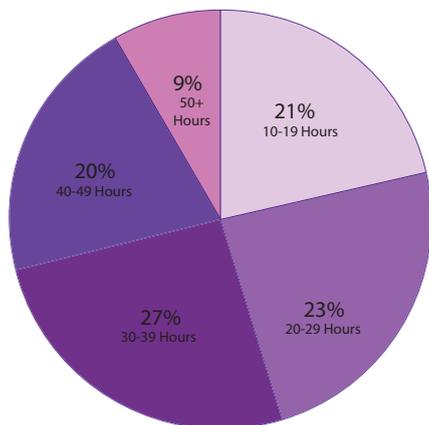


Fig 2. What you expect to be earning on qualification

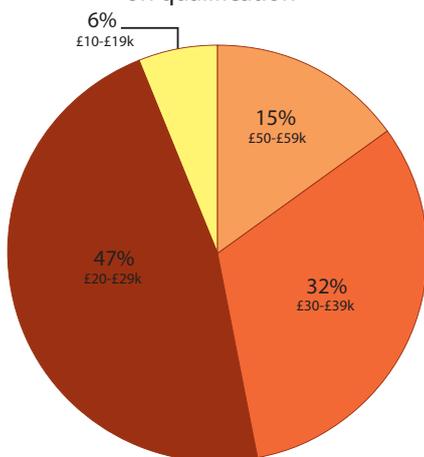
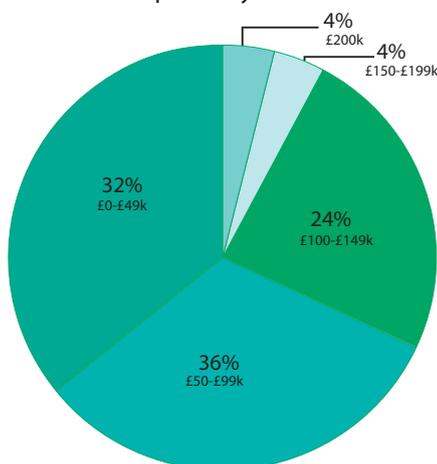


Fig 3. What you expect to be earning at the peak of your career



Results from the student survey now in!

In the last issue we enclosed a student survey to find out a little more about you – your studying habits, who you'd most like to work for, and your career aspirations. The results are now in.

Time spent studying

We asked you how many hours you spend studying per week. The majority of you spend 30 to 39 hours per week studying. Amazingly, 9% of you put in more than 50 hours per week. (Fig 1.)

Your favourite fictional lawyer

When it came to your top three favourite film or TV lawyer, there were three clear winners. Accounting for over 31% of the votes, you voted Judge John Deed your favourite fictional lawyer, followed by Ally McBeal and then Kavanagh QC.

The remaining 69% of the votes were spread wide and far. Tom Cruise featured twice, once for his role as Lt. Danny Kaffee in *A Few Good Men*, and again for his role as Mitch McDeere in *The Firm*. While Ally McBeal romped away to second most popular lawyer, the men from the series made an appearance with Cage and Larry Paul also receiving votes.

Atticus Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird* also made the list. Gregory Peck won the Best Actor Oscar for his performance in the film, beating off competition from Peter O'Toole who has been nominated for, and lost out on, the Best Actor Oscar eight times.

Top three favourite real lawyers

This category was extremely diverse with entries including Baroness Hale and Hilary Clinton. Two respondents voted their mums as their favourite real-life lawyer. However, the top three favourites were:

1. Lord Denning
2. Michael Mansfield QC
3. Helena Kennedy

Your top dream client

The field was split on this with votes ranging from Veve Clicquot through to Everton Football Club and from Girls Aloud to Tony Blair. The dream employer though was Microsoft, with Richard Branson coming a close second.

Your top dream employer

Not surprisingly, three of the 'magic circle' law firms – Clifford Chance, Allen & Overy, and Linklaters – were your top choices for dream employer.

Your career aspirations

We asked you what you anticipate becoming on qualification. 65% of you want to become

Did you know?

Rejoinder is an old term for a defendant's response to a claimant's reply in a civil case. Abolished by the Civil Procedure Rules 1998.

- Taken from the 10th edition of Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary [978 0 421 90050 9] available from all good booksellers priced £9.95

solicitors with 24% of you wishing to become barristers. 11% of you are undecided as to what you want to do, with the remaining 11% split between working in the public sector as a solicitor or barrister, working in-house, entering business as a non-lawyer, or doing something completely different. We also asked you what legal areas you would like to specialise in. The top three were:

1. Commercial Litigation
2. Private Client
3. Banking & Finance

We then asked what the most important factors would be when deciding where to work.

In order of most important to least:

1. Training
2. Status
3. Salary
4. Research
5. Staff Turnover
6. Holidays
7. Pension
8. Hours expected to work
9. Maternity
10. Gym

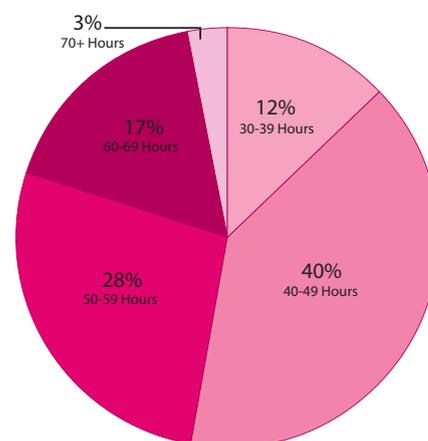
So, we know how many hours you currently spend studying, but how many hours do you expect to be working per week? 40% of you think you'll work between 40 and 49 hours per week. (Fig 4.)

On to the nitty-gritty of money!

On qualification the average amount you expect to be earning is £32k, with the majority of you expecting to earn between £20k and £29k. (Fig 2.) The average amount you expect to be earning at the peak of your career is £83k, with the majority of you expecting to be earning between £50k and £99k. (Fig 3.)

And finally on to the question of where you see yourself in twenty years time – 40 and scared as someone put! 26% of you see yourself as being a partner in a law firm, while 10% of you see yourself owning your own firm and 11% of you see yourself as either becoming a QC or a Judge. The rest of the answers were widely different, though there was an over-arching theme of being happy, with a good work life balance and successful at what you're doing.

Fig 4. How many hours you expect to work a week

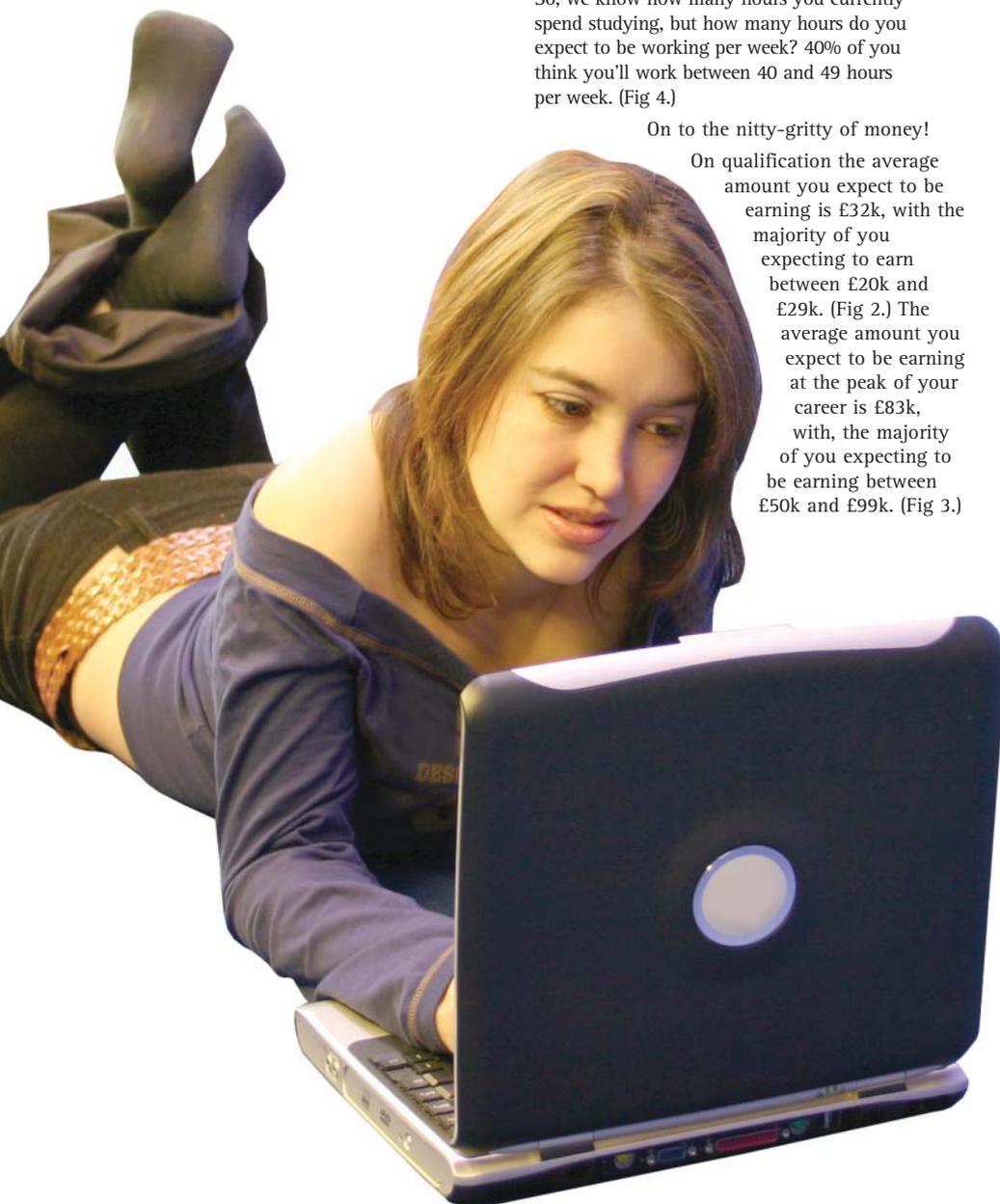


And the winners were...

Taking top prize was Brian Putman, a first year student studying at Oxford Brookes. Brian's favourite fictional lawyer is Lionel Hutz while his favourite real lawyer is Clive Anderson.

Kate Langley, a first year student studying at Durham was one of the runner-ups. Her favourite fictional lawyer is Elle Woods from the Legally Blonde films while her favourite real-life lawyer is Michael Fardham.

Stacey Brown was the other runner-up. A third year student at Northumbria University, her favourite fictional lawyer (though also real) is Erin Brockovich, while her favourite real lawyer is Jonny Hall.



Revising for examinations: how to cope and what to do

With exams just around the corner, you need to be fully prepared. Michael Haley, Professor of Law at Keele University, and author of a number of books including *Nutshells Equity & Trusts* and *Nutshells Land Law*, offers some advice.

For all students, the examination period is a stressful and adrenaline fuelled time. The sense of panic can, moreover, be heightened by inconvenient examination timetabling and the sheer number of examinations to be taken within a particular assessment period. The possibility that essay submission dates occur around the same time can also add to the immediate pressure. These practical realities obviously fall beyond the control of students and often are not the responsibility of the department/school concerned. As students will be given timely warning of examination and submission dates, it is crucial to plan ahead and to organise the workload accordingly. Deciding when to start revision and what to revise are vital steps in preparation for the fate that lies ahead. As different students work best in different ways, what follows is no more than general guidance and advice.

What to revise from?

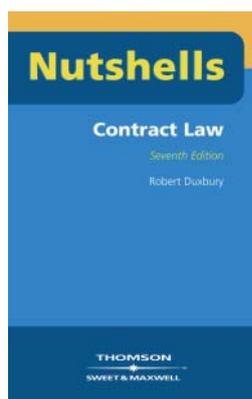
In the majority of institutions, the examination paper will be set by those that teach on the particular course. The paper will reflect the lectures and the tutorials/seminars provided. It is essential that students maintain a good set of lecture notes and keep a record of tutorial/seminar deliberations. Together with any written work submitted for the course, these documents will form the basis of revision material. For students who are aiming for an upper second standard and above, it is advisable to supplement this material with notes taken from text books, key cases and articles which have been referred to by the lecturer. If the lecturer has written on a topic, read the work and be able to refer to it. Although it might come as no surprise, academics often have an egotistical streak. The published work of the lecturer might even shape the nature of the questions set on a particular topic covered in the course.

When to revise?

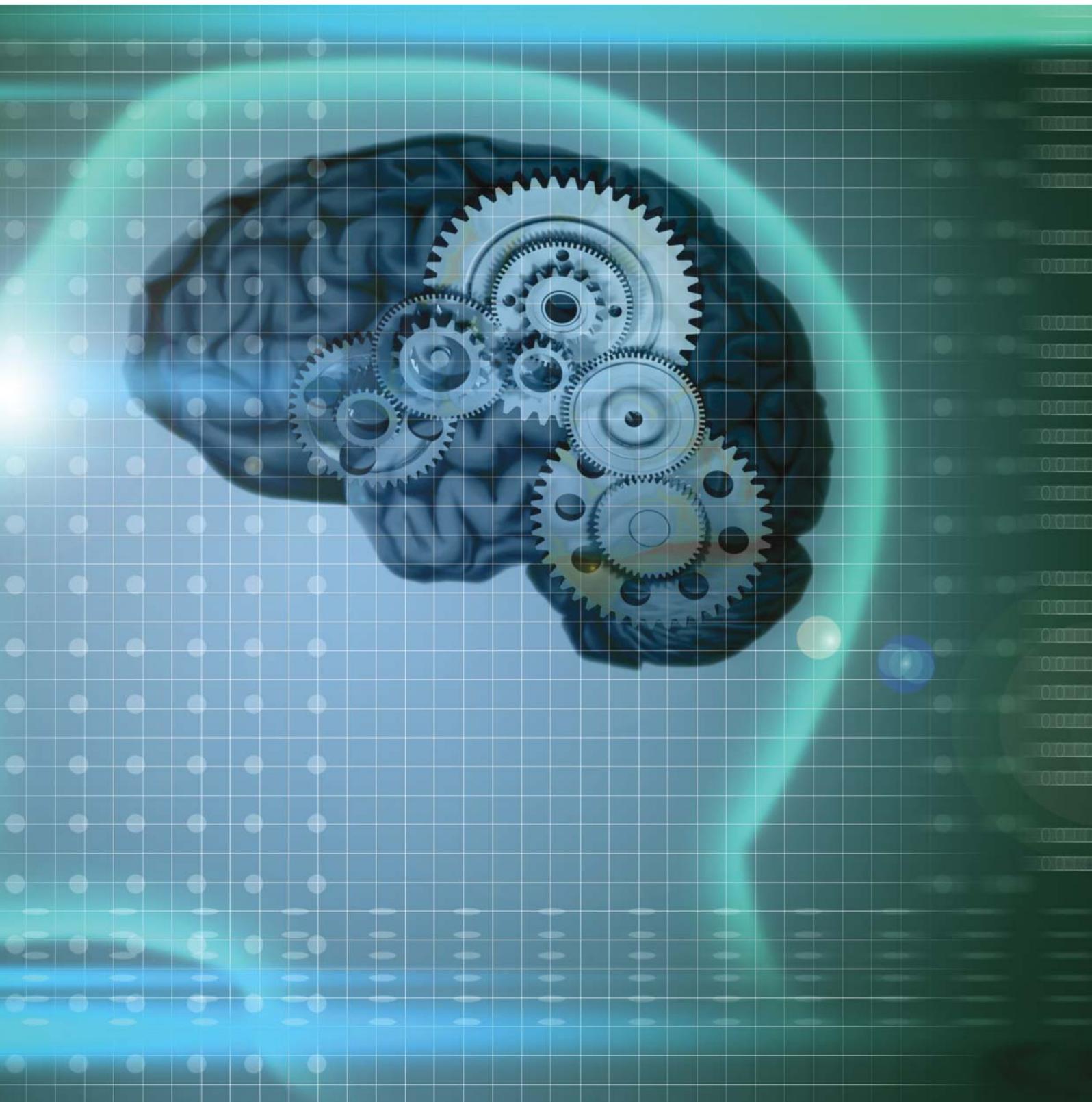
The assessment period may be preceded by a vacation or, at the least, some weeks within which teaching does not occur. It is during this

time that the bulk of revision work will normally take place. It is crucial to set aside a number of hours each day and to plan carefully what subjects are to be covered and on what days. Once a plan has been devised, it is imperative that it is adhered to. Provided that the ground work has already been laid by attending lectures and tutorials/seminars, collating revision materials and undertaking the recommended reading, this should offer most students a sufficient period within which to finalise their preparation.

As the memory fades with each day that passes, it is essential that students go over their revision notes the day before the particular examination is to be taken. In the weeks before, make notes from notes to recap the previous day's revision. This is particularly helpful as regards to memorising the names of cases and recalling statutory provisions.



- Present the essentials of law in clear and straight forward language, explaining the basic principles
- Include diagrams and flowcharts to illustrate difficult concepts
- Contain an examination checklist
- Provide sample questions with model answers



Did you know?

Beadle is a common law parish officer chosen by the vestry to hold office as its messenger and servant.

- Taken from the 10th edition of Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary [978 0 421 90050 9] available from all good booksellers priced £9.95

What to revise?

The ideal student will revise the entire course. Ideal students are, however, few and far between. Instead, the ambition of many students is to maximise their performance while minimising their workload. A favourite way of doing this is by predicting the areas and types of question that will appear on the examination paper. The revision work is then tailored accordingly. As with all predictions, however, there is the possibility that they will be inaccurate. This explains why tutors do not usually advise students to question spot. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to think that students always revise every aspect of the course taught. Understandably, the tendency is to select topics which are thought likely to appear on an examination paper and to sacrifice topics that are found to be difficult, confusing or otherwise off-putting. In order to minimise the attendant risks, look carefully at past papers and become aware of the number and style of questions that have historically been set. At the very least, always make sure that you revise in depth a sufficient number of topics to answer the requisite number of questions and to cater for the possibility that a chosen area might not appear or might appear in a form that you cannot answer well. The less you revise, the greater the risk of things going awry in the examination hall.

So are past papers useful?

Looking at past papers is extremely useful. They show the style of questions that have been set in previous years and may even indicate the topics that are likely to appear in future papers. It is not unknown for lecturers to set a similar type of question on the same area year after year. It is also useful to write out practice answers to old examination questions and simulate examination conditions. This will not only help improve technique, but should also aid the revision process. Making essay plans may also prove useful.

Practice makes perfect?

Revision is designed to cement the knowledge and understanding that has been acquired during the course. The examination itself offers the opportunity to demonstrate that knowledge. The precise technique employed and structure devised will naturally vary according to whether it is an answer to a problem or an essay style question. Both should be practiced. It is, however, not enough simply to state your observations and views. In each case, the examiner will be looking for analysis, interpretation and relevant statements of principle. In traditional subjects such as crime, contract, tort, land and trusts, moreover, it is necessary to lace those answers with case authorities and section references. The common denominators of any excellent answer are that the relevant issues are identified, the arguments proceed in a logical manner and the analysis is thorough. Beyond this, there is no template for the ideal answer.

Top tips

- Think of different ways to represent material in order to aid recollection and understanding. Try diagrams, abbreviations, headings or bullets.
- Remembering troublesome case names can be difficult. Think of something, such as the words/letters or facts of the case, which will aid recollection. 'Recall by association' is often the best way to cope with a mental blank in the examination hall.



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- Use clear and straightforward language and summarise facts and decisions concisely
- Break the subject down into key topics
- Include additional commentary, explaining the decision and implications
- Fully indexed by individual cases and topics

- Key Quotations. Providing only a few words from a quotation by a judge/ - commentator will impress a marker. This is easier than it seems! Quotations often sum up key points succinctly and do not need to be perfectly remembered.
- Secondary sources. Cite (even vaguely) the views of key commentators. The 'X argues that ...' approach is impressive.
- Ask tutors for advice and to look at essay plans or outlines. At the very least, this will flag up gaps or errors in good time to make the necessary changes to revision notes.



...on a student's budget

With a limited budget, eating cheaply is a priority. But that doesn't mean you have to eat badly. Read on for a couple of cheap recipes as well as some top tips on how to eat well.

Spaghetti Bolognese

An all time favourite. Substitute the mince meat with courgette and peppers, or Quorn, if you are vegetarian.

Serves: 2

Preparation time: ten minutes

Cooking time: twenty to thirty minutes

Place the mince meat in a deep frying pan or large saucepan and cook until brown. No need to add oil, lard or butter, the mince (even lean) will release enough fat so that it doesn't stick. Once brown, add the Oxo cube (optional) and onion. Continue cooking until the onion becomes transparent (about five minutes). Add the mushrooms and cook for a further five minutes.

Next, add the tomatoes. Fill the empty tin half way with water, swirl round the tin so the remaining tomato releases from the sides and add to the pan. Add the herbs and pepper and then cook until the juice has reduced down (between ten and twenty minutes). While this is happening cook the pasta (cooking time dependant on manufacturer's guidelines). To give the recipe some pizzazz, add red wine. Note that you will need to cook for longer to reduce the wine down.

Recipe tip: experiment with the amount of herbs and booze you add. You may prefer more or less.

Serving suggestion: serve with parmesan and garlic bread.

Budget tip

Check out the reduction chiller at your local supermarket for food to freeze for later use. Don't worry if the use by date is for the same or next day, as long as it can be frozen you have around a month to use (check packaging for exact guidelines).

Cooking tip

If you don't want to mess around dividing food when you buy it, cook up a batch of food such as chilli con carne and then freeze some and eat some. A meal in waiting!

Budget tip

Visit your local Costco or saver store and buy in bulk. The cost can be split with flatmates and freezer food can be sorted into freezer bags and frozen in individual amounts for later use.

Ingredients

300 – 400g mince meat
(dependent on hunger!)
Spaghetti – dried or fresh pasta
400g tin of chopped tomatoes
Black pepper
2 tbp dried basil
1 small onion – diced
6 – 12 mushrooms – sliced
Oxo cube – (optional)
1 tbp dried mixed herbs (optional)
1 – 2 glasses of red wine (optional)

Bubble and Squeak

It may sound old-fashioned but this dish is simply delicious. If preferred, swap the cabbage for broccoli or another green vegetable as this dish is great for using up your leftover veg.

Serves: 2

Preparation time: ten minutes

Cooking time: twenty to thirty minutes

Place the potatoes in a pan of water and bring to the boil. Turn down and simmer for around fifteen to twenty minutes (they need to be soft, but not so soft they break up). At the same time, steam or boil the cabbage – again for around fifteen to twenty minutes. While the potatoes and cabbage are cooking, slice the corned beef and place on the plates (along with the ham if using). Once cooked slightly mash the potatoes and mix with the cabbage. Place in a frying pan with a little oil or lard and fry until golden brown (around ten minutes), then serve. If you are running short of time, you can skip the frying stage by simply mixing the potatoes and cabbage together and serving straight away – though this won't taste as nice!

Recipe tip: use up leftover potatoes from the day before. It may sound horrid, but this is what they did during the war. Move straight to the frying pan stage – tastes lovely!

Recipe tip: don't stick to just corned beef and ham, leftover beef from the Sunday roast tastes equally delicious.

Serving suggestion: serve with other vegetables to increase your five a day and if pushing the boat out, pickled onions and Branston pickle.

Did you know?

Exequatur is the permission by a government to the counsel of another state to carry out his functions.

- Taken from the 10th edition of Osborn's Concise Law Dictionary [978 0 421 90050 9] available from all good booksellers priced £9.95

Ingredients

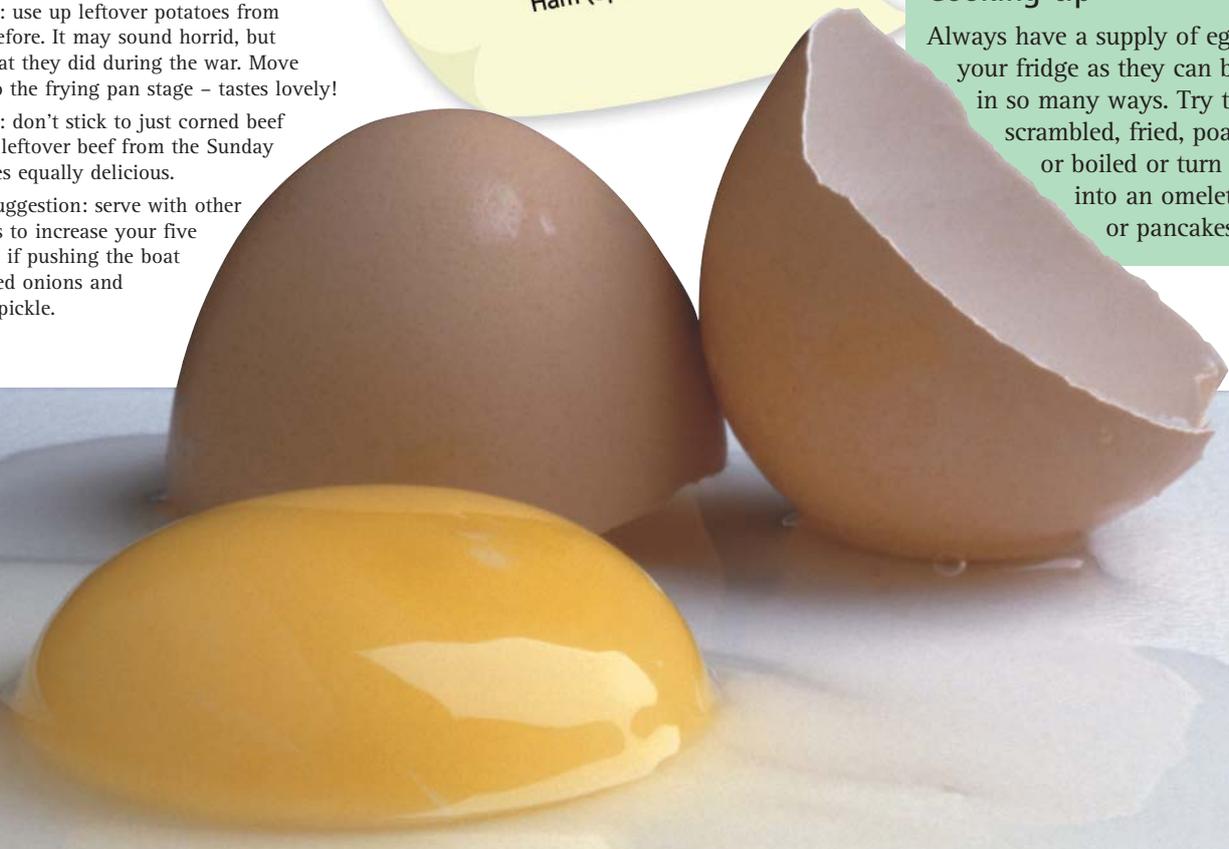
Small cabbage – shredded
 3 – 6 medium sized potatoes –
 cut into chunks
 (amount dependent on hunger!)
 340g tin of corned beef
 Ham (optional)

Budget tip

It may seem boring but planning your meals in advance is a great way of sticking to your shopping list. It also means you waste less money buying things that don't go together to make a meal. But still watch out for good 'buy one get one free offers' that can be frozen for use the following week.

Cooking tip

Always have a supply of eggs in your fridge as they can be used in so many ways. Try them scrambled, fried, poached or boiled or turn them into an omelette or pancakes.



Top tips to help you get the most out of using Westlaw UK

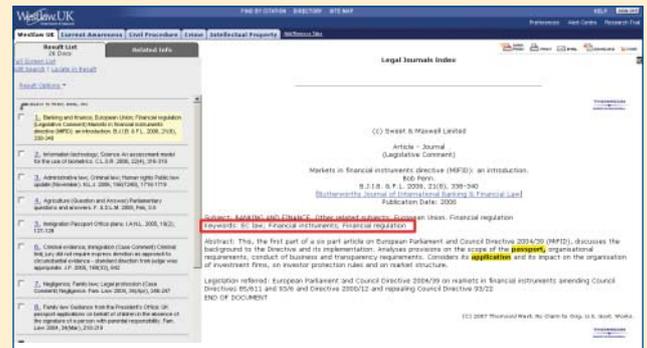
When using Westlaw UK for your legal research, you can speed up the research process, narrow down your search results, or find exactly what you are looking for by trying these Westlaw UK Top Tips.

TIP
1

Westlaw UK suggests keywords to narrow your search

For better quality results when using the Legal Journals Index, find an article entry that closely matches what you are looking for and look at the Keywords.

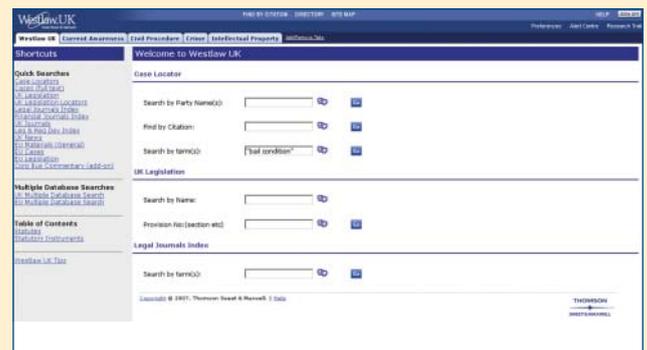
Re-run your search using one or more of these terms to narrow down the number of journal articles returned and better target your subject area.



TIP
2

Narrow your results by searching a phrase

If you want to search for a phrase on Westlaw UK, enclose it in double inverted commas; otherwise the system will assume an "and" connector between each word and search for them separately.



TIP
3

How can I tell a case is 'good law'

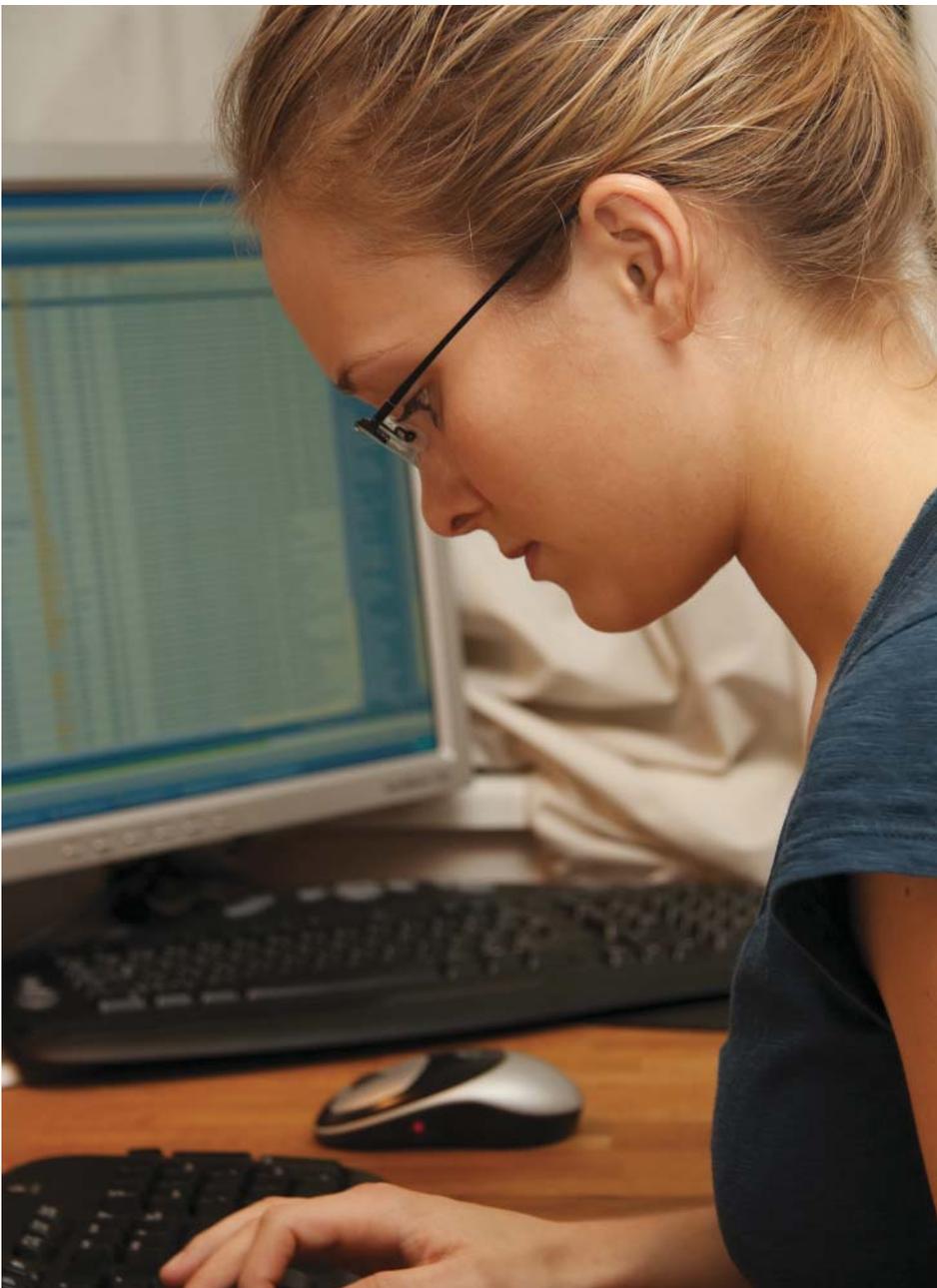
When reading an entry in "case locator", look for a red flag in the top left corner; this indicates that the decision has since been reversed by a higher court. A yellow flag indicates a case has had some negative treatment, but has not been reversed.



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Rachel Patel, 3rd Year LLB (Hons), Southampton Solent University says
 "Research on the tricky subject of abortion is difficult enough, so using Westlaw UK over the summer, without leaving the house, gave me an invaluable head start for Year Three of my law degree."



Legal Research, the easy way

I live a long way from Southampton Solent University and I don't have time to travel in daily, but luckily Westlaw UK can be accessed off campus by using my Athens authentication name and password. I'm sure you'll agree that the majority of students depend on online resources such as Westlaw UK to compliment their studies especially as it is so accessible and easy to use. I don't have enough fingers and toes to count the number of times I've been lost and frustrated in the law library searching for a case or journal article, and to be honest, I find I can get a little lazy to go to uni to look up cases. Westlaw UK makes life so much easier, I can access all the information I need, online, allowing me to sit back and relax in the comfort of my home and not worry about library closing time (especially for those urgent, next-day deadlines).

So that's just what I did over the summer holidays. I wanted to research the subject of abortion in a legal context. I had already taken out numerous books from the library and brought them home, but wasn't allowed to borrow journal articles or casebooks. The books were great in that they gave me text and directed me to journals and cases but they did not provide the judgments of the case, for example, or the whole article from the journal. It gave me mere quotes, which was a start but not good enough.

Having been introduced to Westlaw UK in my first year at Southampton Solent University, I found it really easy-to-use, avoiding the confusion of other legal research sources.

After signing on, the first page displayed the three search fields I always use; Case Locator, UK Legislation and Legal Journal Index.

The Case Locator – I typed in either the citation or case name and it took me straight to the abstract of the case I sought. With a click on one of the citations listed I could have access to the full case text within seconds, on my PC, in the comfort of my own home.

UK Legislation – the same thing. I typed in the section number and legislation name and there it was on the screen.

That's all I felt I truly needed in the first year. I did not really look at journals until my second year of law. But again, it was just as simple.

Legal Journals Index – I type in the terms relevant to my assignment, and a list of journal articles is instantly returned on the left-hand side of the page, relevant to my search terms. Click on a link, for an article abstract, which

summarises the article without me having to scan the entire text, saving me a lot of time. Furthermore, it returned articles that I would not even be able to access in the library.

It has only been since starting my third year that I realised how immense Westlaw UK truly is. You will use the library much less when you have Westlaw UK, as it holds all the legal information you will really ever need. I have already mentioned journals, cases and legislation but you can also access recent and historic newspaper articles, EU legislation and cases, and it even has all the commentary from Archbold. With such a vast resource, you'll be thankful that using Westlaw UK is so simple. For example, instead of knowing which particular database I have to search, I can run a wide search across all the directories and, if I did want to do a narrow search, I just need to search the directory and drill down the specific database I require. So much power, at the click of a mouse.

OK, so who really has time to sieve their way through the lists of cases and articles; reading the abstract or even the whole document to

pick out the quote you are looking for or the paragraph that has the information you need? Being a student, I can completely understand how little time you would want to spend researching so here's a tip: I've often needed to find particular quotes from judges, or even journal articles, to support my submissions and the advanced searches offered by Westlaw UK have made it possible for me to find those words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. I type in the sentence, phrase or words I wish to search in the Natural Language search box and a hundred articles and cases will be returned containing the best match to my search terms. By clicking on the 'Best' link, the website will highlight in red the section I need. I can also use the Terms and Connectors to narrow my search further.

Following my new-found love for Westlaw UK, I realised that there were certain databases which I searched often, so I tailored my Westlaw UK page by adding and removing tabs so the directories I used were always showing. Now all I have to do is click on the relevant tab at the top of the screen, and when I search,

I search only that specific database.

As part of my dissertation requires me to make comparisons between UK and American law and cases I use the All Westlaw UK Databases, a directory taken from the Westlaw in the US which is effectively the US law library. I can access US journals, cases, legislation and news, which is very helpful, as the library has limited information in such areas.

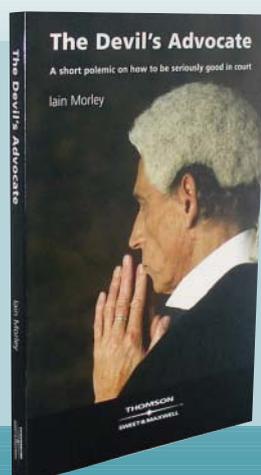
If at the end of this research session, I want to access a search I did earlier, I click on the 'Research Trail' to view a list of previous searches and I can even print and email the search lists as evidence of my research.

I enjoyed my summer and completed my dissertation research but I could not have done it without Westlaw UK. My mobile law library.

For more information on how Westlaw UK can help your legal research, contact your student representative or your subject librarian.

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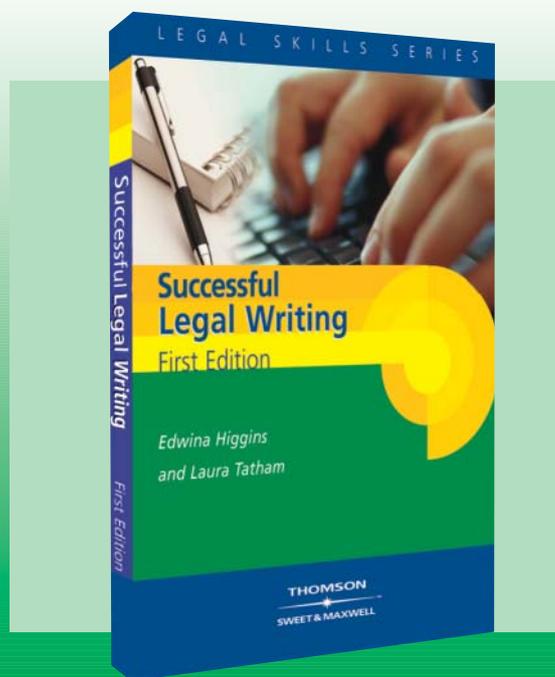
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Utilising feedback on your work

During the course of your studies you will receive feedback on your work. In some cases you may just learn the mark or grade allocated to your work, and on other occasions more extensive comments will be provided. This article, adapted from *Successful Legal Writing* by Edwina Higgins and Laura Tatham, explains how you can use the feedback you receive to improve your work.

Why should I spend time on the feedback of work I've already been marked on?

Your tutor will be genuinely interested in what you have to say and their feedback has been designed to help you to understand why you were awarded the mark given and also as a tool to improve for the future. It is therefore really important to take time to interpret what the feedback means, and make a plan to act on it. You should resist the temptation to look only at the mark.

With these comments you have the chance to improve your writing for future assignments. Comments from your tutor are a valuable resource at your disposal. Taking these comments on board means that not only are you working hard but you will be 'working smart'.

Letting your feelings settle

Unless you are exceptionally able, you will from time to time receive marks and/or feedback that is disappointing to you, especially in the light of the amount of time you spent working on any particular assignment. Unfortunately, the length of time spent on a piece of work does not necessarily equate to the mark awarded.

Leave the feedback on your work for a few days to let your feelings settle. To really make the most of your feedback, you need to work on separating your *reaction* to a mark from *learning* from that mark. Once you are ready to look at your feedback with more objective eyes, ask yourself:

- Do you understand the comments?
- Can you identify what they are specifically referring to?
- Do you agree with the comments? If not why? (remember 'but I worked really hard' isn't adequate evidence)
- What do you need to do to improve your performance?

From these questions, start to plan what you will do differently next time.

Understanding the feedback

You tutors may adopt many different kinds of marking styles and comments when marking papers. Naturally, this can make understanding your feedback confusing, particularly when you may be getting feedback from many different tutors and subjects.

'Translating' comments from tutors is a skill. Understanding what has been written is vital for your next piece of work so you will need to spend some time acquiring the necessary skills to take this away from any feedback you are given.

Tip

Your tutors should always be happy to explain their feedback if you are having trouble 'translating' what the comments mean or even actually reading them. Go and see your tutor and ask for their help.

Tip:

Putting the feedback away for a few days and then coming back to it can help.

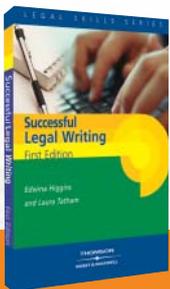
Tip:

With the best will in the world it is sometimes impossible for your tutors to return work as fast as you – and they – would like. If the assignment feels remote by the time you receive the feedback, then get your copy out so as to make the most of the feedback you get on it. Don't just look at the mark!

The different comments and what they might mean

Tutor comments can address a range of issues e.g. grammar, structure/layout, referencing, content, errors and can be positive reinforcement or be more negative and critical.

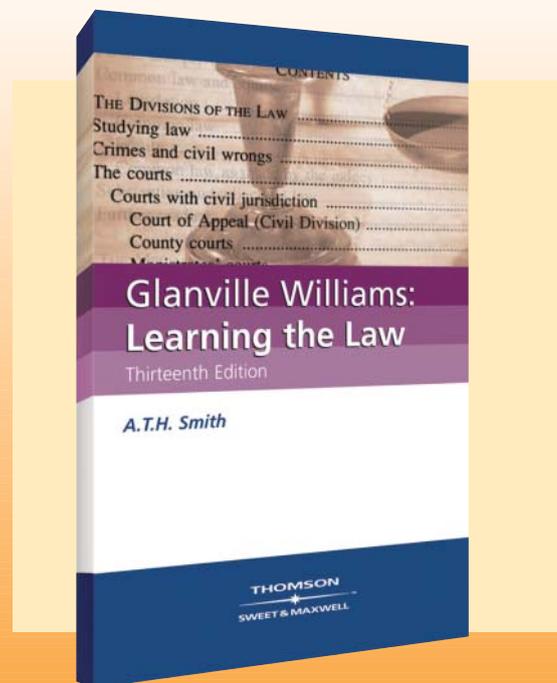
So, if you are wondering what to do with all those tutor comments on your work first read them carefully. Then, see if you can determine what kind of comments have been used by the marker, and then use the table opposite for suggestions.



This article is taken from the 1st edition of Successful Legal Writing, which is available from good booksellers priced £15.95 [978 0 421 96120 3]

If comments are...	Then you should...
Positive reinforcement	Feel good and accept any critical comments there are. If this refers to something in particular see if you can incorporate it into your next assignment.
Related to the bibliography	Be sure you are fully aware of any programme or discipline standard on this and use it!
Related to the range of sources	Try expanding and developing your research strategy. Either you have not read widely enough or you have just not created a sense of detailed understanding of the topic in your writing
Structure/layout related	Follow the comments. If you are not sure what is expected check your lecture/tutorial notes when information may have been given.
Grammar/spelling/sentence structure problems	Read these comments carefully and try to work out where the problems are. Don't forget to leave yourself enough time to proof-read carefully before you submit your next assignment.
Errors of law related	Learn your material and how to apply it. It is clear that if your work does have a lot of errors on the law your tutor will not be best pleased no matter how well it is written.
Content related	See what general lessons can be learnt from it. This is harder to categorise as these comments will be subject specific, but for example if the marker suggests that there is something s/he particularly liked in your assignment look at it carefully and try to work out if a similar strategy would work with other assignments.
Related to your referencing	Revisit chapter 6. This tends to involve a discipline or department specific norm and you need to learn what it is in your institution very early on in your legal academic career.
Indicating a lack of analysis	Work on developing the evaluative or analytical parts of your argument. This is a hard one to understand. Essentially it means that you have been too descriptive and have not adopted a style which challenges and evaluates the law on this matter. You need to adopt an improved questioning approach to your next assignment.
Presentation related	Work out what is wrong and fix it – this is easily done and as with referencing there is no excuse for poor presentation.
Fails to answer the question	Reconsider how you diagnose your task. Consult Successful Legal Writing for tips on how to do exactly what it says on the tin!
Related to a lack of authority	Remember every statement or assertion or proposition of law you make needs to be supported by authority or evidence i.e. primary or secondary sources.

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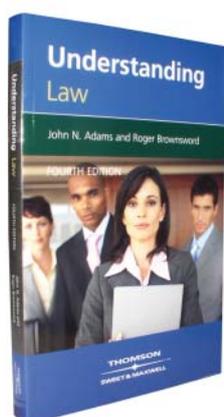


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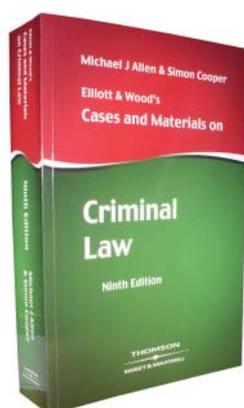


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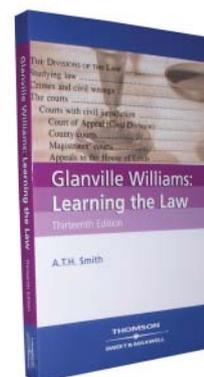


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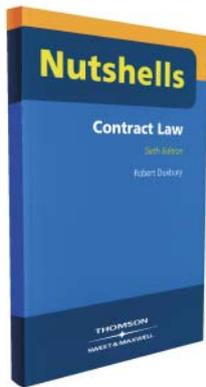


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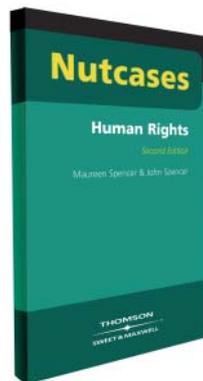
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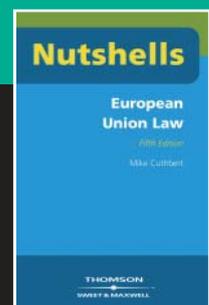
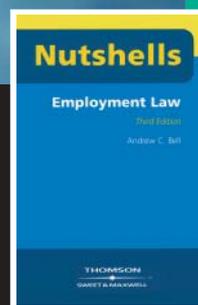
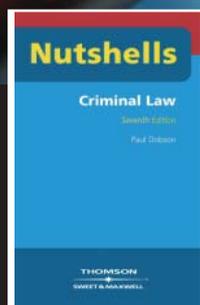
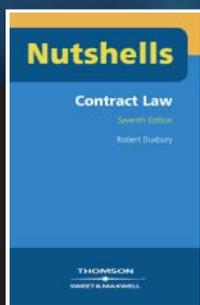
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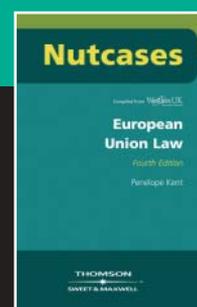
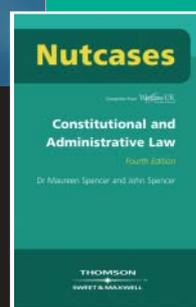
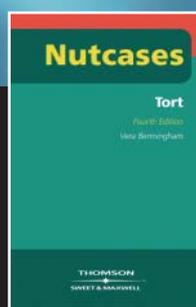
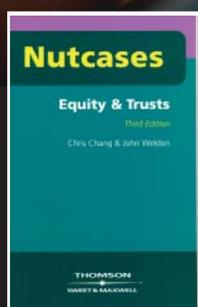
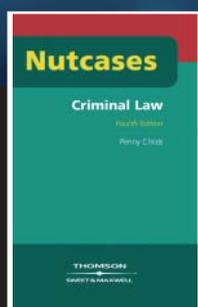
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