

SCHOOL OF LAW

GUIDANCE FOR HONOURS STUDY

2012/2013

This document contains details about Honours study in the School of Law in 2012/13. It sets out the admission and application procedure for Honours courses, submission of topics for the dissertation (for students entering Fourth year), and details of the Honours courses on offer in 2012/13.

Please read this information carefully and ensure that you meet the following deadlines:

- For students going into third year: selection of three (3) Hons courses by **31 May 2012**
- For students going into fourth year: selection of two (2) Hons courses by **31 May 2012** AND submission of two dissertation topics by **1 June 2012**.

At the end of the guidance, there is a section containing links to further information which may be relevant. If you have any queries, please check this section in the first instance.

If you are uncertain about choosing Honours courses or dissertation topics, please contact your Director of Studies to discuss your options.

Please retain this guidance for reference throughout the session. For general information about the honours component of the LL.B degree, you should consult the student handbook for 2012/2013, which will be issued over the summer.

Dr Gillian Black
Director of Undergraduate Studies

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PLAGIARISM

Candidates are reminded that all summative work (essays etc.) submitted for assessment as part of the Honours degree examination must be their own. While such work may properly contain quotations from, references to and summaries or descriptions of relevant publications, any such quotations should be clearly marked and their source clearly indicated. Summaries or descriptions should be acknowledged appropriately. All electronic copies of honours essays and dissertations submitted to the School of Law will be checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin software.

A) APPLICATION AND ADMISSION PROCEDURE

1) RULES GOVERNING ADMISSION TO HONOURS AND TO INDIVIDUAL COURSES

1.1 Students who apply for admission to Honours will be admitted if they:

- (a) have completed two years of study towards graduation within the School; and
- (b) by the end of the August diet of examination have failed to pass no more than one 20 credit or one 40 credit course or two 10 credit courses prescribed for their study in their years or, as the case may be, year in the School. The sole instance where a student will be admitted to Honours having failed to pass more than one course is thus where the student has failed two 10 credit courses only.

1.2 Students who are not admitted to Honours may appeal **only if there has been a procedural irregularity**. Students who wish to appeal should discuss the matter as soon as possible with their Director of Studies and give notice of appeal to Dr. Jessica McCraw, Academic Administrative Officer, **no later than five days before commencement of semester one**. Appeals are to School's Progression Committee.

1.3 **Application for admission to Honours is made online**. You are automatically considered to be applying for Honours admission by submitting your choice of Honours courses. This must be done by **31st May** at www.law.ed.ac.uk/ease/honsselect/.

On the online form you should select the Honours courses you wish to take. You are allowed to make up to three attempts at submitting your choices before your courses can no longer be altered.

Students who intend studying abroad next year should indicate the institution at which they will be studying, although they will obviously not be selecting courses.

Students intending following the Ordinary degree are required to apply for two Honours courses. They should tick the box indicating that they are following the Ordinary degree.

1.4 **Second year students progressing to third year:**

Please note that your allocation of places on Honours courses for 2012-13 is not the same as admission to Honours study and does not mean that you are eligible to proceed with these courses in 2012-13. The allocation of places on Honours courses is conditional on you gaining sufficient credits in this academic year to allow you to progress into the next year. In terms of the University Regulations, all students must achieve at least 80 credits in any academic year to be able to progress to the next year of study. If you do not achieve 80 credits by September 2012 (a total of 200 over the first two years of study), then you will not be permitted to move into the next year or take the Honours courses allocated to you. Instead, you should contact your Director of Studies to discuss what steps to take. Note that you have two sittings in order to achieve the necessary credits, as there is a resit diet for Ordinary courses.

Third year students progressing to fourth year:

The allocation of places on Honours courses is conditional on you gaining sufficient credits in this academic year to allow you to progress into the next year. In terms of the University Regulations, all students must achieve 360 credits by the end of third year to be able to progress to the final year of study. This means that you must pass all Honours courses taken during third year, and pass any courses that you are carrying from second year. If you do fail an Honours course in third year it is sometimes

possible to progress if you are awarded credit on aggregation for the failed course - you should contact your Director of Studies to discuss. Please note there is no resit diet for Honours courses.

- 1.5 Students must apply for Honours courses online at www.law.ed.ac.uk/ease/honsselect/. Applications must be submitted by **31st May**. This choice can be altered up to three times. You will be automatically enrolled for the honours courses you have been successful for by **31st August 2012** and you should check your student portal for this information. It is hoped to release information on course allocation by the end of July but course enrolment is likely to be completed by the end of August.
- 1.6 Where applications for a course exceed its quota, selection will be made on the grounds of general academic merit with any special criteria noted in the individual course entry. The method of calculation is set out in 1.7 below.
- 1.7 Points are awarded for each degree course passed, whether by examination or exemption. No points are awarded for a pass obtained other than in a first diet of examination (May diet) unless the applicant had good reason to sit an examination in the August diet. Previous failure in the course or disinclination to take an examination will not be considered good reason, but illness or extenuating circumstances will be so considered. If you are thinking of adopting this course talk to your Director of Studies in advance. Re-sitting exams to improve the grade is not permitted. Each pass is awarded points on the following scale:
 - A grade 8 points for 40 credit courses; 4 for 20; 2 for 10
 - B grade 6 points for 40 credit courses; 3 for 20; 1.5 for 10
 - C grade 4 points for 40 credit courses; 2 for 20; 1 for 10
 - D grade 2 points for 40 credit courses; 1 for 20; 0.5 for 10

2) APPLICATION FOR AND ALLOCATION OF PLACES IN PARTICULAR COURSES

After the closing date for submitting course choices, the School Office makes a list for each course indicating all the students who have put that course as one of their first choice courses. If the total number of students wishing to take the course as a first choice is less than the quota for that course, all those students are given a place. If the total is more, the students are selected up to the quota in order of academic merit. **When choosing your courses, please consult the Honours Timetable.**

Those students who have not been successful are then entered into their reserve courses, if there are still spaces left. If there are spaces, but the number of students exceeds the spaces, again selection is made on the basis of academic merit. It is possible that some students will not have gained entry into a sufficient number of their first choice and reserve courses, in which case they will then receive an e-mail from the School Office indicating what courses still have places available and asking the student to make a choice from these.

It clearly makes sense when choosing courses to avoid putting courses which are going to be oversubscribed after the first round as reserves. In the past, courses which have been regularly oversubscribed include: Contract, Criminal Law, Evidence: Interpretation and Evaluation, Family Law, Labour Law, Media Law, Medical Jurisprudence, Property Law and Trusts and Succession. Courses which are generally round about quota are: Commercial Law, Criminology, Intellectual Property, International Law and Punishment and Society.

Also, *be realistic*. If your overall performance in your first two years is not very good, remember that by putting as first choice one of the most popular courses (probably in vain) you may miss out completely on second preference courses to friends who took a more realistic estimate of their chances of selection.

Students who have participated in an exchange in third year are reminded that they should not apply for a 4th year course if it appears that there will be significant duplication of material covered in a course taken abroad. If in doubt, consult the Edinburgh course organiser. You should send with your enquiry an outline of the course taken abroad plus any further information you have available which will assist the decision (level of course, number of credits relative to the whole year etc.).

In exceptional circumstances there may be too few students enrolled on a course to make it viable. Where this is the case those students affected will be consulted and every effort will be made to find them places on suitable alternative courses.

Note that some courses have pre-requisites. You will not be able to enrol for a course if you do not meet the requirements.

NOTIFICATION OF ALLOCATION OF PLACES

We aim to notify all students of the Honours courses that they have been admitted to by **the end of July**. Notification will be by way of email to your university email account. Please note that this allocation will be conditional on meeting the requirements to progress into the next academic year: if you have not achieved sufficient credits by September 2012, you will be withdrawn from these courses.

3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSED TOPICS FOR THE DISSERTATION

You are required to submit TWO alternative working titles, from two different areas of law, on which you would be willing to write your dissertation. THESE TITLES NEED TO BE DRAWN FROM THE COURSES YOU TOOK IN THIRD YEAR. ONE of these topics will be allocated to you. Note that this may be your second choice subject, so please select both topics carefully.

In order to assist us in allocating a suitable supervisor and to assist you in getting off to a good start at the beginning of the year you should be AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE in identifying your working titles. For example, it is not sufficient simply to opt for "Contract Law" or "Criminal Law". The level of detail required in your suggested topics should be something like this: "Third party rights in contract law" or "A comparative examination of the defence of insanity in criminal law". There will, however, be an opportunity to adjust and finalise your title after your first meeting with your supervisor.

Your two suggested dissertation working titles must be submitted electronically to the Law School **by 1 June 2012** at

www.law.ed.ac.uk/ease/dissertationselect/

NOTE: IF ANY STUDENT HAS NOT INTIMATED HIS OR HER CHOSEN SUBJECTS BY 1 JUNE, S/HE WILL BE ASSIGNED A TOPIC FROM THE SUBJECTS STUDIED IN THIRD YEAR.

Students will be notified of the names of their supervisors by **30 June 2012** by email from Liz Mack to their university email accounts.

B) LIST OF HONOURS COURSES

1. COURSES OFFERED IN 2012-2013 QUOTA

Civil Law	25
Commercial Law	25
Company Law	25
Constitutional Law	25
Contract	25
Criminal Law	25
Criminology	25
Delictual Liability (double-streamed)	40 (20 in each class)
EU Regulation of Culture and Mass Media	25
European Institutions	25
European Union Law	25
Evidence: Interpretation and Evaluation	25
Family Law (double-streamed)	40 (20 in each class)
Gender and Justice (double-streamed)	50 (25 in each class)
Human Rights	25
Information Technology and Law	25
Intellectual Property	25
International Law A	25
International Law B	25
International Private Law	25
International Trade Law	25
Justice, Ethics and Law	25
Labour Law	25
Law, Democracy and Citizenship	25
Media Law	25
Medical Jurisprudence	25
Property Law	25
Punishment and Society	25
Taxation	25
Trust and Succession Law	25
Unjustified Enrichment	25

2. COURSES NOT AVAILABLE IN 2012-2013

Administrative Law
Comparative Law
Competition Law
Environmental Law
European Legal History
History of Scots Law
International Law of the Global Economy & Environment
Jurisprudence of Legal Concepts

C) INFORMATION FOR HONOURS STUDENTS

Useful information on the honours programme:

<http://www.law.ed.ac.uk/courses/viewcourse.aspx?ref=127>

There are a series of Honours induction podcasts recorded by members of staff. These are designed to help you adjust to Honours study and prepare for the dissertation, and are available at:

www.law.ed.ac.uk/honoursinduction/

We will also run LawPALS3 in 2012/13, for third years, to provide an induction to Honours study.

1. HONOURS CLASSIFICATIONS

How your degree classification is calculated:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/humanities-soc-sci/undergraduate-academic-admin/curriculum-assessment/assessment-examination/degree-classification>

Assessment regulations:

<http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Regulations/TaughtAssessmentRegulations.PDF>

2. APPEALS AGAINST MARKS OR CLASSIFICATION OF DEGREES

Regulation 59

Students have the right of appeal against the decisions of Board of Examiners on specific grounds, which are set out in the University's Appeal Regulations:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/appeals

3. RULES ON ASSESSED ESSAYS - DATES FOR SUBMISSION

Dates for submission of Honours essays and the dissertation will be provided at the start of semester 1. See any honours course handbook for this information.

4. PLAGIARISM AND THE USE OF UNACKNOWLEDGED QUOTATIONS

Candidates are reminded that all summative work (essays etc.) submitted for assessment as part of the Honours degree examination must be their own. While such work may properly contain quotations from, references to and summaries or descriptions of relevant publications, any such quotations should be clearly marked and their source clearly indicated. Summaries or descriptions should be acknowledged appropriately. All electronic copies of honours essays and dissertations submitted to the School of Law will be checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin software.

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/academic-misconduct>

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/staff/discipline/plagiarism>

Honours essays and the Honours dissertation are to be submitted by students electronically, through Pebblepad. Such electronically submitted files will be uploaded to “Turnitin”, an advanced plagiarism checking programme.

For electronic submission of essays, see

http://www.law.ed.ac.uk/docs/568_schooloflawonlinecourseworksubmission.pdf

STUDENTS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY ARE NOT PERMITTED TO DUPLICATE MATERIAL WHICH HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR ASSESSMENT IN ANOTHER HONOURS COURSE, e.g. you may not repeat in the dissertation parts of an essay submitted during 3rd year. This will be treated as self-plagiarism.

5. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Please see information in student handbook, pages 26-28:

http://www.law.ed.ac.uk/docs/1291_lawstudenthandbook201112.pdf

Students should also check the student handbook for 2012/13 when it is published, for up-to-date guidance on the School’s Special Circumstances policy.

6. GUIDANCE ON THE LLB HONOURS DISSERTATION FOR 2012/13

This guidance is issued provisionally for the LLB Dissertation in 2012/13. Should any amendments to this guidance be approved, on review of the Dissertation in 2011/12, these amendments will be notified to students at the outset of the 2012/13 session.

The 4th year dissertation is mandatory on LLB programmes for all students, including those who have spent their 3rd year abroad, with the following exceptions:

- Students taking the LLB Law and Economics undertake a dissertation on an approved topic linking Economics and Law. This is most likely to involve – in terms of the dissertation on which students are registered - a “Dissertation in Law” [LAWS10097] rather than the “Dissertation in Economics” [ECNM10030], given the structure of the programme.
- Students taking the LLB Law and Politics undertake a dissertation in Politics rather than in Law.
- Students taking the LLB Law and a Language who have spent the 3rd year abroad may undertake the dissertation OR substitute a further taught course in Law.
- Although the normal fourth year curriculum is two Honours courses and a dissertation, if after spending the junior honours year abroad, a student feels that the subjects studied during the year abroad have not given them sufficient background to enable them to make an informed choice of dissertation topics, please contact your Director of Studies as soon as possible to discuss this. In appropriate cases, it may be possible to seek a concession to take a third taught Honours course instead.

Supervision

Supervision of the dissertation in 2012/13 comprises a series of meetings. Further guidance will be provided in the form of a document to be uploaded in early summer on to the LLB Dissertation section of the courses page on the Law School website.

For the sake of fairness, and to help ensure that neither students nor members of staff devote disproportionate effort to the dissertation, no meetings on the dissertation between supervisor and student additional to those specified above will occur, **including communication by e-mail of any problems**, after finalisation of the title.

Research Ethics

Should your proposal involve either or both of:

- Primary empirical research - fieldwork, observation, interviews, surveys, or experiments
- Secondary information not otherwise in the public domain

Then the proposal will require completion of a checklist to ensure that it complies with the School's research ethics policy.

Please note that it is not suggested or expected that an LLB dissertation *should* extend to include primary empirical research or the use of information not otherwise in the public domain. It is however recognised that occasionally students may choose to undertake such research.

If so, the student has a responsibility to alert their supervisor to their intentions, so that the checklist can be prepared and the proposal can receive appropriate consideration. The supervisor will then need to assess whether what is proposed is reasonable and feasible both ethically and practically. Such intentions should be declared clearly in the initial proposal as it is submitted to the Undergraduate Office.

Submission

The dissertation will require to be submitted towards the end of the 2nd semester (details will be posted to the Dissertation webpages). This is submitted electronically through PebblePad. Late submission will attract the same penalty as late submission of Honours essays. Anonymisation applies – students are encouraged to use the template cover sheet on their dissertation.

Feedback

Dissertation feedback will follow the same pattern as essay feedback and will be released through PebblePad. However, feedback on the dissertation will become available only after the final degree results have been released.

Format

The dissertation should not exceed 25 pages in length, including footnotes (preferred) or endnotes, which are used for citation or referencing, not to make substantive points. Bibliographies and lists of statutes or cases are not included within the page limit.

Essays must be presented in the following format:

Paper:	A4 size, Portrait form
Font:	Times New Roman
Font size:	12

Margins:	All 1 inch (2.54 cm)
Line spacing:	1.5
Footnotes/endnotes font size:	10
Page numbering:	All pages should be numbered in the following style: "Page x of y" where x represents the current page number, and y the total number of pages. Such numbering should appear either at the very top or very bottom of each page.

Failure to comply with the foregoing provisions will incur the following penalties.

- (i) Should any submitted written work exceed the specified maximum length, the examiner will not read further than the specified limit, and shall therefore not take into account any work beyond the specified limit when grading the submitted work;
- (ii) Should any submitted written work appear to the examiner to vary unacceptably in format from that specified, he or she shall refer the work to the attention of the Director of Examinations who may determine that a penalty is to be imposed.

Where a student is aware in advance of special circumstances which will prevent him/her from submitting the dissertation on time, s/he may request in writing an extension of the due date from the Director of Examinations. Such an extension, and the length of any extension granted, will be at the discretion of the Director of Examinations. Where such an extension is granted, a dissertation submitted within the extended period for submission will not attract a penalty. An Extension Request Form for this purpose can be picked up from the Teaching Office.

Dissertation supervisors do not have authority to grant extensions to the deadline and should not have such requests made of them.

Where a student fails to submit a request for an extension to the Director of Examinations in advance, the student may nonetheless inform the Director of Examinations in writing of any special circumstances which prevented him/her from submitting the dissertation on time. In such a case, the Director of Examinations may at his/her discretion reduce any penalty which has been applied for late submission.

In no circumstances shall any special circumstances affecting late submission of assessed work be considered after marks have been finalised by the Board of Examiners.

7. MARKING CRITERIA

<http://www.law.ed.ac.uk/courses/viewhandouts.aspx?ref=127>

8. CAREER OPTIONS - WHAT NEXT AFTER GRADUATION?

The Law School's Careers Officer, Ruth Saville, is always happy to discuss careers options and provide guidance on applications etc. She can be contacted through the Careers Service. Please also check out the information on these sites:

www.law.ed.ac.uk/careers

www.law.ed.ac.uk/lawcareersblog

The above information is correct at the time of preparation – April 2012