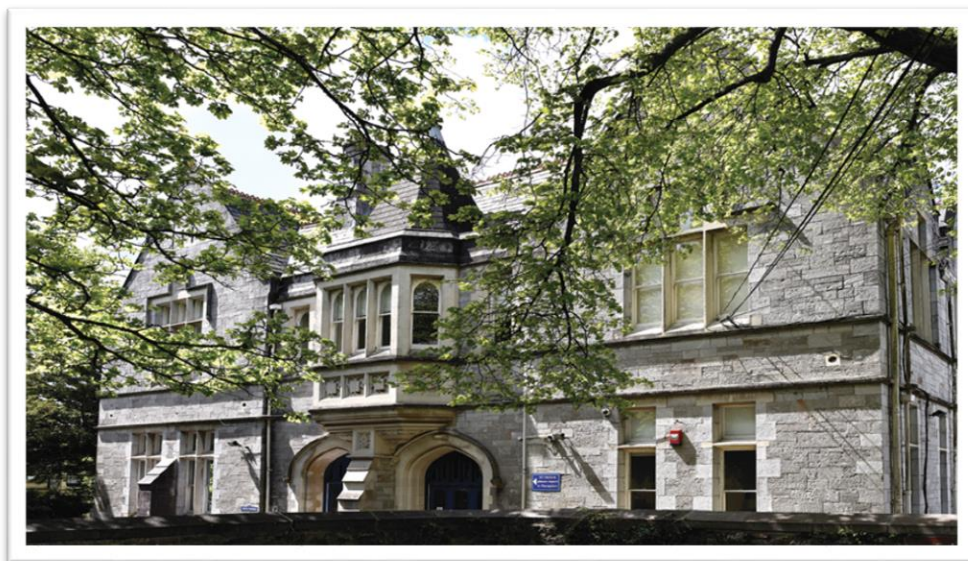


Curriculum and Progression Overview

Law

Plymouth High School for Girls

2024-2025



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The Curriculum

Intent

Plymouth High School for Girls aims to be an outstanding Grammar School for the 21st century remaining true to the philosophy of the school's motto 'For Life Not School We Learn'.

A school which:

- Promotes a culture of high **aspiration** enabling personal and academic success
- Prepares students to **think confidently and independently**
- Provides an **outstanding education** for all, the key to this being high quality teaching
- Provides **enjoyment, excitement and challenge** for all, stimulating an enthusiasm for lifelong learning
- Prepares students to become **active citizens**, equipped to succeed in a world of rapid change

Law is offered to A level students at Plymouth High School for Girls. It not only provides an excellent foundation for those intending to take the subject further but also develops skills of critical analysis, problem-solving and structuring a logical argument which are compatible with a range of higher education courses and careers. It is an exam-based qualification that is accepted by all universities, with students securing places at institutions including Oxbridge with this qualification.

A level Law at Plymouth High School for Girls offers an academically rigorous, yet exciting, introduction to the English legal system and areas of both private and public law within the law of England and Wales. As law permeates every aspect of students' lives, the course is full of interesting, useful and relevant concepts that ignite fierce debate. Students are encouraged to develop a critical awareness of how legal institutions operate in society and the changing nature and demands of that society. They evaluate the efficacy of current legal systems, laws and proposed reform.

No prior learning or knowledge of the subject is required and students enjoy the challenge of learning new content and applying it in different ways. Though it clearly does provide a good foundation for those hoping to pursue a career in law, the course is primarily aimed at developing the skills which are generally applicable to any form of further education or employment. These include:

- research using a range of sources, citing authority
- the ability to interpret and explain complex information clearly
- analytical skills
- critical evaluation, with reference to evidence and expert argument
- reason and formulate sound arguments
- lateral thinking and problem-solving skills
- write concisely, with accuracy
- confident and persuasive oral communication skills
- attention to detail and the ability to draft formal documents with precision.

The primary aim of the course is to provide good academic outcomes for students so that they can access the next stage in life, whether that is an apprenticeship, employment or university. The aim is for all students to achieve or surpass their target grade. To enable this, the objective has to be to create an environment where students are adequately challenged to achieve progressively more highly as the course goes on. There has to be an atmosphere where risk is encouraged so that students will try something beyond their capabilities without fear of failure. Additionally, students must feel that they understand what is required of them and that they have the support available to achieve this.

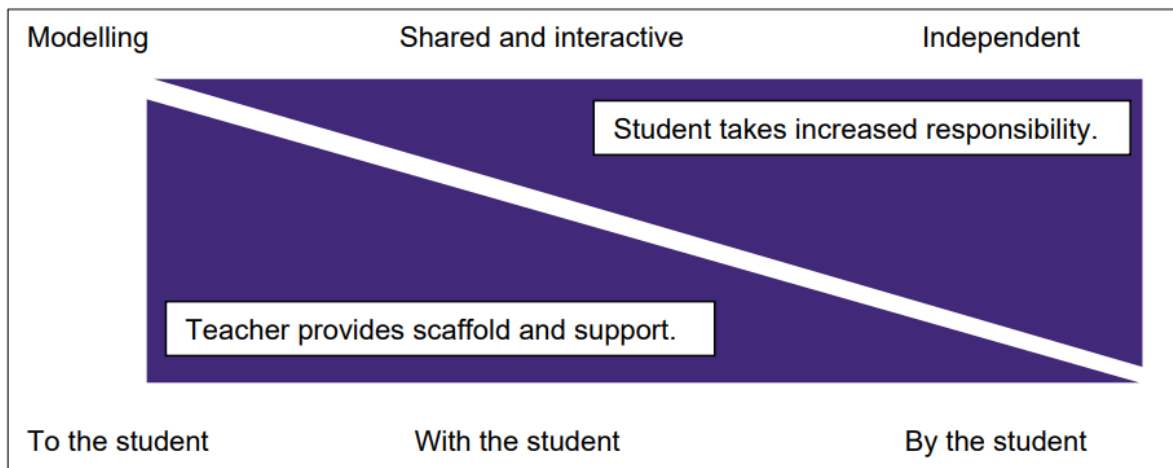
As well as this, a secondary aim is to produce active and well-informed citizens of the future. This subject has clear links to citizenship and the Rule of Law. Opportunities for enrichment are important in this subject so that students understand the relevance of what they are learning to the world in which they live and promotes an informed decision about future careers.

Implementation

The course is structured to provide the basic understanding of the legal system first, then develop legal application skills with a critical awareness of the operation of the law. The course content achieves the skills outlined above in the following ways:

- develops competence in using legal skills during the study of the nature of law, legal issues and the English legal system, and the private and public areas of substantive law.
- ability to analyse a hypothetical scenario by identifying the key facts from which legal issues arise.
- formulate a legal argument by analysing legislation and case law, applying the rules and principles of statutory interpretation and the doctrine of precedent.
- formulate a reasoned argument to support a particular proposition by reference to the relevant legal rules and principles that support that argument.
- construct clear, concise and logical legal arguments which are substantiated by legal authority, using appropriate legal terminology. In addition, learners must be required to construct a persuasive argument including instances where they have recognised that there are no clear legal precedents or conflicting precedents to solve a problem.
- analyse and critically evaluate legal issues by identifying different perspectives, being able to support their identification of the strongest viewpoint and demonstrating the ability to counter alternative viewpoints.

In order to build confidence with this subject that students have no prior knowledge or experience of, language pertaining to Dweck's growth mindset is used, in combination with the model of gradual release of responsibility advocated by Pearson and Gallagher:



High levels of achievement are obtained by carefully planning the course so that the content delivered matches the specification and mark schemes, taking account of how much time to allocate and allowing sufficient time for revision. A spiral structure exists has been developed more recently, to allow for an introduction to each component module, which is then returned to and built upon with more challenging aspects at a later date (see course structure below).

Time is spent deconstructing the most difficult concepts to provide scaffolds and structures that make them accessible to less able students, whilst simultaneously providing extension materials which could provide a deeper level of understanding for the more able students. Tasks are usually differentiated, sometimes by outcome but frequently by self-selected choice of task, using a traffic light colour coded system relating to confidence. Often modelling or exemplars are given and analysed before a task to give confidence and demonstrate effective structure.

An atmosphere of comfortable risk is promoted by low stakes retrieval, cold questioning and tasks with no clear right answer being tackled together. A frequent feature of lessons is a seminar-style table used to push higher ability students and support lower ability during independent tasks. There is an open-door policy and drop-in fortnightly sessions offer support.

There is a focus on revision strategies being explicitly taught throughout the course to enable retention of the many case citations and statutes that are expected to be referred to, for example with mnemonics and dual coding. Revision materials are developed by students using a given format which is informed by Thinking skills but adapted to suit the course and enable A* results, such as with flow maps being used in a grid format to see the parallel of evaluative points concurrently with explanatory points. Additionally, a variety of teaching methods from co-operative learning to interleaving are used to create variety and help principles embed. The textbook is used for pre-reading and some self-study modules but is used very infrequently in class as it does not fully prepare higher ability students, is uninspiring and has not been proven to be a memorable method of learning. Enjoyment of the subject is promoted by variety of activities and an attempt to deliver most interesting versions of the material, often using real-life current or famous cases. Students are encouraged to ask questions to extend understanding and to engage in debate on contentious issues, building their critical thinking and speaking skills.

Thinking skills are incorporated into lessons, homework and revision tasks. Retrieval tasks are mandatory at the beginning of every lesson, usually including long-term, medium-term and short-term information. Engagement is ensured by expectation of notes and cold calling for answers. Flow maps are common in lessons, giving structures for application and evaluation questions and to revise these. Circle maps and bubble maps are also used to make links and qualify knowledge from different areas. Tree maps are used

to break down elements, such as contract terms. Thinking hats are used for evaluation work and when dealing with dense primary source material, for example with black and yellow hat used to plan counter-arguments in evaluations and white hat for retrieving evidence from scenarios for applications.

Regular formative assessment is a key feature to track progress and adjust teaching methods. This occurs in a variety of ways from questioning, to active low stakes testing methods, to more formal half-termly tests that mimic components of past papers. Mark schemes and success criteria are frequently shared with students, both prior to tasks and for feedback and DIRT tasks. Feedback is frequent and detailed, often with verbal one-to-one meetings, particularly for students identified to be in the RAP group.

Further reading lists are given and some of these texts made available in the library. Mini-pupillages and work experience in legal settings have been arranged. Students of Law are visited by legal professionals including barristers and magistrates to give career advice and an insight into the workings of the legal system. Trips to the Houses of Parliament, Supreme Court and the local courts enrich student understanding of the law in practice.

Impact

The course is continually adapted in response to knowledge gained through formative assessment, so that the methods and materials used are having the greatest impact possible. Students are advised of the areas they need to focus on to progress and where these are common in the class they will be embedded into future tasks. The exam board has been changed from AQA to OCR as a result of new specification changes not being as well-suited to our students' strengths (e.g. multiple choice yields poorer results than essay-style questions and the clarity of structure across papers suits our students). The materials that have been created for teaching this year will evolve over subsequent years in response to student progress, response to them in terms of enjoyment (measured by teacher perception and student voice feedback) and examination outcomes. Links are being developed with other Law teachers in the Trust to share good practice.

Quality assurance is conducted both formally and informally. There are work scrutiny audits of folders by SLT, formal observations and drop-ins, observations and student questionnaires. Student voice is strong in this subject, with the law captain meeting regularly with the teacher to relay feedback on student perception and to liaise over module choice and reflect on communication of revision lists, etc. Student voice questionnaires are used to measure student response and gather information, for example on which areas students believe require most focus in revision lessons. Teaching is adapted in response to feedback and knowledge of the subject (which is continually reformed!) and teaching methods are regularly researched and reviewed by the sole teacher.

Outcomes in external examinations have traditionally been very good, with value added scores being consistently good and above comparable subjects. Student satisfaction has also historically been recognised as high in questionnaires. Numbers of students electing to take A Level Law continue to be sufficient and have increased significantly over recent years, with some joining our sixth form from other schools on the basis of this offer.

In terms of enrichment opportunities and links, we have visits from legal professionals, such as barristers, and ex-students studying or working in the field. Plymouth High's Bar Mock Trial team has an excellent record in the National Bar Mock competition though whether this runs in 2024 is to be confirmed. Participation rates are high as is the success in the competition with the school being regular finalists and previous national champions on several occasions. Students have also been able to exploit links for work

experience. There has also been success in other competitions with students reaching the final stages of the Legal Apprenticeship Competition and commendations for essay competitions in recent years.

Numerous students who have undertaken the A Level at Plymouth High School for Girls have elected to read Law at university, with many citing their enjoyment of the A Level course as their reason. Some have been accepted at Oxbridge to do so. The course and super curricular activities offered have prepared them well for success at university level; some ex-students have gone on to have their academic law research published and have become heavily involved in Human Rights law.

Feedback and Assessment system

External assessment occurs at the end of the two-year course by three two-hour OCR examinations.

Prior to this, assessment is a regular feature of lessons. As shown on the table overleaf, formal half-termly assessments that mimic components of the A Level exams are completed and graded. Percentages are awarded and students can translate this to a notional grade on the understanding that grade boundaries can only be estimated. This data is used to track progress, inform teaching, provide evidence for report grades and create RAP groups.

Detailed written feedback is given, along with mark schemes for students to engage with. Typically, one area of success and two areas to focus on for progression are identified and students are expected to act on this feedback. DIRT tasks are usually complete after an assessment, sometimes these are individual but sometimes a common task if it was a general weakness. Students are encouraged to rewrite a piece when they have failed to meet their potential grade, and if they achieve an E or U grade then a retake in test conditions is mandatory.

Verbal feedback is given regularly in lessons, with opportunities created to work with groups or individuals on areas where support or advice would be beneficial. A seminar-style table is often used for both extending high ability students and supporting areas of weakness. An open-door policy and drop-in fortnightly session encourages students to get individual support in a non-threatening environment. Law captains are on hand to offer peer support during these sessions.

Self-assessment and peer assessment are used where appropriate, often in the form of reflecting on their own work against mark schemes or exemplar pieces and reworking elements of their own piece. Low stakes testing using Thinking maps are generally self-assessed to avoid stress and to allow students to learn from corrections. These scores are not recorded but used by the teacher to gain an understanding of both individual and class understanding.

Students are assessed at the end of year 12 using two mock papers that are samples or previous exam papers from OCR on units that have been thoroughly covered. A revision list guides independent preparation. A typical assessment feedback sheet is attached, which utilises mark scheme wording and highlights what students are demonstrating already and what they can do to access the next level.

Data for report grades are formulated by a combination of results in the formal assessments and teacher perception based on formative assessment made through homework, classwork, questioning, etc.

By the end of year 12, students are expected to know:

- basic legal terminology
- legal institutions and processes
- law making

- a selection of substantive criminal law
- a selection of contract law

They should be able to:

- succinctly and clearly explain the above
- use clear citation of cases and statutes
- apply criminal and contract law to increasingly complex scenarios
- critically evaluate the efficacy of the above and proposed reform

By the end of year 13, students are expected to know:

- criminal law
- tort law
- contract law
- jurisprudence
- criticisms of potential reform

They should be able to:

- write extended critical essays, using theoretical arguments and reaching an independent conclusion
- accurately cite statute, cases and theorists using appropriate terminology accurately
- apply substantive law of above areas to complex scenarios
- present clear, fully developed arguments with logical reasoning

Sample assessment feedback sheet:

	AO1	marks	AO2	AO3	AO3 extended response(x)	marks
Excellent	Excellent knowledge and understanding of the English legal system, rules and principles. The response is accurate, fully developed and detailed. There will be excellent citation of fully relevant statutes and case law, where appropriate to the question.	9-10	Excellent application of legal rules to a given scenario. Excellent presentation of a legal argument which is accurate, fully developed and detailed. Fully appropriate legal terminology is used.	Excellent analysis and evaluation of a wide range of legal rules, principles, concepts and issues. The response is wide ranging and has a well sustained focus on the question. The key points are fully discussed and fully developed to reach a valid conclusion, where appropriate to the question.	<i>There is a well-developed line of reasoning which is clear and logically structured. The information presented is relevant and substantiated.</i>	12-15
Good	Good knowledge and understanding of the English legal system, rules and principles. The response is detailed, but not fully developed in places. There will be good citation of mostly relevant statutes and case law, where appropriate to the question.	6-8	Good application of legal rules to a given scenario. Good presentation of a legal argument which is detailed but not fully developed in places. Appropriate legal terminology is used.	Good analysis and evaluation of a range of legal rules, principles, concepts and issues. The response has a mainly consistent focus on the question. Most of the key points are well discussed and well developed to reach a valid conclusion, where appropriate to the question.	<i>There is a line of reasoning presented with some structure. The information presented is in the most-part relevant and supported by some evidence.</i>	8-11
Basic	Basic knowledge and understanding of the English legal system, rules and principles. The response may lack detail in places and is partially developed. There will be some reference to statutes and case law, where appropriate to the question.	3-5	Basic application of legal rules to a given scenario. Basic presentation of a legal argument which may lack detail in places and is partially developed. Some appropriate legal terminology is used.	Basic analysis and evaluation of legal rules, principles, concepts and issues. The response is partially focused on the question. Some of the key points are discussed and partially developed to reach a basic conclusion, where appropriate to the question.	<i>The information has some relevance and is presented with basic structure. The information is supported by limited evidence.</i>	4-7
Limited	Limited knowledge and understanding of the English legal system, rules and principles. The response will have minimal detail. Citation of statutes and case law is limited, where appropriate to the question.	1-2	Limited application of legal rules to a given scenario. Limited presentation of a legal argument which has minimal detail and is unstructured and/or unclear. Minimal legal terminology is used.	Limited analysis of legal rules, principles, concepts and/or issues. The response has limited focus on the question. Discussion of any key points is minimal.	<i>The information is limited and communicated in an unstructured way. The information is supported by limited evidence and the relationship to the evidence may not be clear</i>	1-3
No credit	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0	No response or no response worthy of credit.	No response or no response worthy of credit.	No response or no response worthy of credit.	0

Overall mark (see your work for individual marks):

WWW:

EBI:

DIRT:



CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW: KS 5 LAW

OCR	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
KEY STAGE 5 Exam Board OCR						
Year 12	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> The legal system: intro to nature of law; civil courts and ADR; criminal courts and lay people; legal personnel; access to justice.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> early test (30 mins) plus paper 01 section A style assessment (30 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Law making: Parliamentary law making; delegated legislation; statutory interpretation; judicial precedent; law reform; EU law.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 02 section A style assessment (30 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Criminal Law: General elements and theory; fatal offences; non-fatal offences; offences against property.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 01 section B style assessment (60 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Law of contract: rules and theory; formation; terms.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 03 section B style assessment (60 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Law of Tort: Rules and theory; liability in negligence; occupiers liability; land torts.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> MOCK EXAM full paper 01 (120 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Law of Tort: vicarious liability; defences; remedies; evaluation.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 02 section B style assessment (60 mins)</p>
Year 13	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Criminal Law: mental capacity defences; general defences; preliminary offences; evaluation.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 01 section B style assessment (60 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Law of contract: vitiating factors; discharge; remedies; evaluation.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 03 section B style assessment (60 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> The nature of law: law and morality; law and justice; law and society; law and technology.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> MOCK EXAM paper 02 and paper 03 (240 mins)</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Revision: legal system; criminal law; law making; tort.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> paper 01, paper 02, paper 03 full papers at intervals (120 mins each).</p>	<p><i>Topic(s):</i> Revision: nature of law; contract; legal system; criminal law; law making; tort.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> various, dependent on results of prior assessments.</p>	A level exams