

## Revised undergraduate programme specification

### School of Oriental and African Studies

The following information forms the programme specification at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. It gives definitive information relating to a programme of study and is written for a public audience, particularly prospective and current students. It is also used for other purposes such as initial programme approval, and is therefore produced at the start of the programme development process. Once approved, it forms the base-line information for all statements relating to the programme and is updated as approved amendments are made.

### CORE INFORMATION

Programme title	BA Law
Final award	BA Law
Intermediate awards	NONE
Mode of attendance	Full time
UCAS code	TBC
Professional body accreditation	NONE
Date specification created/updated	April 2012

### WHY CHOOSE THIS PROGRAMME?

Why study at SOAS?	<p>SOAS is unique as the only higher education institution in the UK specialising in the study of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The School also has the largest concentration of specialist faculty concerned with the study of these areas at any university in the world. SOAS is consistently ranked among the top higher education institutions in the UK and the world and it also offers a friendly, vibrant environment for students in a diverse and close-knit community.</p> <p><b>Click here for more information.</b></p>
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<p>What is special about this programme?</p>	<p>The School of Law at SOAS is one of the most highly-regarded law departments in the UK for the quality of both its teaching and research. The Department has an unrivalled concentration of specialists in the laws of Asian and African countries, with additional areas of expertise in the areas of comparative law, human rights, transnational commercial law, environmental law, international law and socio-legal method</p> <p>The BA Law will, unlike the LLB, allow students to take one non law options in each year of the degree. It will consequently provide those who want to study a wider range of SOAS courses with the opportunity to do so without requiring them to enrol on a two subject BA in Law and another subject.</p> <p>The BA Law will not normally be a qualifying law degree although the remote possibility exists that a student on the LLB who failed a final year non-exemption subject would qualify for a BA Law that included all the necessary exemptions.</p>
<p>Who would it suit?</p>	<p>The BA Law provides students with a wide range of analytical and transferable skills and is suitable for any profession in which a non-specialised degree is required. Although, as a non-qualifying law degree, the BA Law is aimed primarily at those not wishing to become practicing lawyers, it is possible to switch to the LLB at the end of Year 2 or 3 provided the student has taken and passed all the requisite courses necessary to qualify for an LLB.</p>

<p>Programme structure</p>	<p>First year: Four courses, three of which are compulsory, including Introduction to Law and Legal Process a course incorporating an introduction to the English legal system and specifically addressing study, writing, presentation and examination skills. The fourth course must be a non-law introductory open option offered within SOAS.</p> <p>Second year: four courses, three of which are compulsory. The fourth course can be either a law or non-law intermediate subject.</p> <p>Third year: four courses, including (if permitted) an Independent Study Project and/or a non-law subject and/or a law subject provided by another University of London law school (if available).</p> <p>The BA structure will provide students with alternative entry point into the Law School (and, if a student takes the requisite options, ultimately the LLB) which, by requiring students to take a non law introductory course in Year 1, will have a less steep initial legal learning curve.</p> <p>Students who fail to meet the progression requirements of the LLB will switch to the BA Law if they meet its requirements. Conversely any student on the BA Law will switch to the LLB at the end of Year 2 or their final Year if they meet the LLB's requirements.</p>
<p>Assessment summary</p>	<p>Through unseen examinations and assessed coursework, usually in the proportion of 80% examination and 20% coursework.</p> <p>Final year students may, with permission, undertake an Independent Study Project, resulting in a 10,000 word essay</p>

## **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

SOAS has general minimum entrance requirements for registration for an undergraduate degree and these can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/admissions/ug/entryreq/>)

### **AAB**

Candidates with non-standard qualifications may be invited for interview.

The School looks for high motivation, good communication skills, and an interest in Asia and/or Africa as well as Law. Students are taken from a wide variety of backgrounds, and mature applicants and those with qualifications other than A-levels or International Baccalaureate are encouraged to apply. Among these applicants those with Access to Law qualifications and SOAS Intermediate Certificate Course students are preferred.

## **PROGRAMME AIMS**

- To introduce students to the skills essential for an understanding and analysis of law in various contexts.
- To encourage the development of specialized knowledge and understanding of particular fields of law.
- To develop skills of analysis and expression, both oral and written.
- To develop additional skills and knowledge in other subjects available at SOAS.

## **PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### Knowledge

- Knowledge and understanding of the fundamental doctrines and principles which underpin the law of England and Wales particularly in the Foundations of Legal Knowledge as specified from time to time by the professional bodies;
- A knowledge of the sources of that law, and how it is made and developed; of the institutions within which that law is administered and the personnel who practice law;
- The ability to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a wide range of legal concepts, values, principles and rules of English law and to explain the relationship between them in a number of particular areas;
- Students are also expected to acquire specialist knowledge in course units outside the Foundations of Legal Knowledge. This includes, but is not necessarily confined to, knowledge and understanding of the following:
  - a) the theoretical, practical and comparative underpinnings of legal doctrine;
  - b) the context in which legal initiatives take place;
  - c) the role played by law in different social, cultural and economic environments;
  - d) the role and function of legal institutions, including those in selected legal systems in Asia and Africa, and those of the international community;
  - e) the weight and significance of different sources and methodologies;
  - f) knowledge of how to locate relevant materials and assess their relevance and/or importance.

### Intellectual (thinking) skills

- Students should become precise and careful in their assessment of legal arguments, and understand the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to legal issues.
- Students should be able to engage in theoretical and conceptual debate concerning the role of law and legal institutions.

### Subject-based practical skills:

- To apply knowledge to complex situations;
- To recognise potential alternative conclusions for particular situations, and provide supporting reasons for them;
- To select key relevant issues for research and to formulate them with clarity;
- To use standard paper and electronic resources to produce up-to-date

### Information;

- To make a personal and reasoned judgement based on an informed understanding of standard arguments in the area of law in question;
- To use the English language and legal terminology with care and accuracy;
- To conduct efficient searches of websites to locate relevant information; to exchange documents by email and manage information exchanges by email;
- To produce word-processed text and to present it in an appropriate form.
- Write good essays and dissertations.

### Transferable Skills

The programme will encourage students to:

- Structure and communicate ideas effectively both orally and in writing; and digest rapidly and effectively substantial amounts of reading.
- Develop critical awareness of issues in various subject areas.
- Use a wide range of written and digital materials, in libraries and research Institutes.
- Present material orally

## **PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GAINING AN AWARD**

How will the student's study be structured? How will they achieve an award?

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### **Structure, duration and requirements for gaining an award**

SOAS has standard requirements relating to the structure and duration of undergraduate programmes and for the award and classification of these programmes.

Details can be found at

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/file60378.pdf>

### **Programme structure diagram**

Below is a structure diagram for this programme.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Year of study</b>	<b>Course code</b>	<b>Course title</b>	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
4	1	155200029	Legal Systems of Asia and Africa	30	Compulsory	
4	1	155200049	Introduction to Law & legal Processes	30	Compulsory	
4	1	155200004	Obligations 1 (Contract)	30	Compulsory & Exemption course unit	Exemption unit must be passed for your degree to be recognised by the professional bodies in England and Wales.

4	1		An open option course offered within another SOAS dept	30		
5	2	155200005	Public Law	30	Compulsory & Exemption course unit	Exemption unit must be passed for your degree to be recognised by the professional bodies in England and Wales.
5	2	155200014	Obligations II (Tort)	30	Compulsory & Exemption course unit	Exemption unit must be passed for your degree to be recognised by the professional bodies in England and Wales.
5	2	155200034	Criminal Law unless studied in Year 1 in which case a course in the Year 2 Option list below	30		
5	2		A course in the Year 2 Option list below	30		

6	3		A course in the Year 3 Option list below	30		
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6	3		A course in the Year 3 Option list below	30		

**At least three final year courses must be advanced level**

**Level 5 Year 2 Course Options**

**30 credit options:**

155200055 Chinese Law

155200051 European Human Rights Law/ EU Law (Exemption Course)

155200037 Islamic Law

155200033 Law and Society in Africa

155200032 Law and Society in South Asia

155200019 Law of Property (Exemption Course)

155200054 Law and Institution in Contemporary China

Not more than ONE course offered within another SOAS department

**Level 6 Year 3 course options**

**30 credit options:**

155200054 Company Law

155200040 Law Multiculturalism and Intercultural Human Rights

155200057 Equity and Offshore (Exemption Course)

155200056 Labour Law

155200041 Independent Study Project

155200006 Family Law

155200030 Law and Development

155200025 Public International Law

Up to one LLB course that is offered at one of the other University of London Law Schools; (Kings college, London School of Economics, Queen Mary, University College and Birkbeck)

Up to one intermediate or advanced course offered within another SOAS department (open option)

Up to one LAW course from the year two option list provided the other three courses are at an advanced level.



## TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

What methods will be used to achieve the learning outcomes?

### **Knowledge**

- Students are required to attend all classes, study extensively on their own and together with other students, and prepare themselves to participate in an informed way in discussions. Students are also required to undertake assessed coursework and, in the Introduction to Law & Legal Processes course, to participate in assessed mooting (oral legal argument).
- The usual format of classes is 2 hours of lectures per week, plus 1 hour of tutorial per week in professional exemption course units, or 1 hour of tutorial per fortnight in other course units. Some course units, usually for final year students only, consist of a weekly seminar with no separate tutorials.
- Particular importance is accorded to the needs of first year students. The convenor of the Introduction to Law & Legal Processes course has less teaching hours than normal in order to be able to combine his/her convenorship with the pastoral care of the first year students.

Assessment: These skills are assessed as part of the normal assessment of coursework and unseen examination. Final year students may, with permission, undertake an Independent Study Project of a 10,000 word essay.

### **Intellectual (thinking) skills**

Critical thinking is fostered in all course units offered in the Programme, in that all units introduce information and ideas that need to be assessed critically and analysed in context. Students are encouraged not simply to summarise evidence and arguments but also develop their own assessments as to the relative value of different strategies/ arguments/ evidence.

Assessment: These skills are assessed as part of the normal assessment of coursework and unseen examination. Final year students may, with permission, undertake an Independent Study Project of a 10,000 word essay.

### **Subject-based practical skills**

- Through tutorials and coursework, particularly in instruction concerning the answering of problem questions and the compulsory mooting component of the Introduction to Law and Legal Processes course unit. The production of word-processed text and its presentation is not taught as such, but coursework is required to be produced in word-processed form; Some subject based Practical skills are specifically taught in the Introduction to Law & Legal Processes course unit.

Assessment: These skills are assessed as part of the normal assessment of coursework and unseen examination.

### **Transferable skills**

- Through preparation for seminars, essays, course work, and examinations.
  - Through individual and /or joint seminar presentations and class participation.
- Through preparation for seminars, through discussion in seminars, through correction of course work by tutors and through preparation of answers to exam questions.

- Through the formation of study groups

Assessment: These skills are assessed as part of the normal assessment of coursework and unseen examination.

## REFERENCE POINTS

What has been the basis for the design of this programme?

The programme was designed to provide undergraduate students with a sound basis in English law at the same time as introducing them to law, legal thinking and law related issues in, and relevant to, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Since its inception, the programme has been monitored and amended in order to ensure that it is up to date and that it deals with issues of contemporary relevance, as well as to ensure that it complies with:

1. the QAA Benchmark Standards for Law Degrees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland;
2. the requirements of the legal professional bodies;
3. SOAS teaching and learning strategy.

In particular, note the pastoral care available to first year students, as well as the provision of Human Rights Law in the latter half of the European Law course unit in view of the growing importance of this subject.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHANCEMENT

SOAS has internal procedures to assure the quality of provision to be offered to students and to enhance the quality in the light of experience following delivery, taking into account the input of external experts and students. The procedures are set out in the School's Quality Assurance Handbook and can be viewed at (<http://www.soas.ac.uk/add/qualityassurance/quality-assurance-handbook/>).

SOAS is also subject to periodic external review from bodies such as the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and relevant professional and statutory regulatory bodies.

The procedures described in the Quality Assurance Handbook are in place to provide a high quality student experience for those choosing to study at SOAS, and student input and evaluation of their experiences is greatly valued. Students make an input to the ongoing development of their programmes, and the environment in which they operate, in a number of ways, including:

- formal student evaluation as part of the annual programme review;
- student representation on School committees at various levels (through the Students' Union) where many relevant issues are discussed;

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Add in links to other relevant information, both internal and external, including:

[SOAS Vision and Strategy Statement](#);

[Undergraduate Handbooks](#);

[Departmental handbooks](#)

[Quality Assurance Handbook](#);

[Degree regulations link](#)

[UCAS website](#);

[QAA website](#);

[SoL Website](#)