

GETTING AHEAD



ALTON

Start to develop skills that are relevant to your course before you join HSDC this September!

Law - A Level

Law has a significant influence on our daily lives and is a factor in many news items, films and TV programmes. When studying Law, you'll learn how it's made and how the court system works. We will consider the nature of justice, and whether law and morality are the same. You will be able to identify criminal offences, such as murder and robbery, and criminal defences, including self-defence. Also, you'll learn about the civil law topics of tort and contract. Can a neighbour be taken to court for creating bad smells in their garden? Can you write a legal agreement on the back of a fish?

We aim to develop your skills of analysis and evaluation in a variety of ways - through problem-solving, discussion and essay writing. There are also opportunities such as taking part in a Bar Mock Trial competition and university workshops. If you have a critical and enquiring mind, this course is for you!



PART 1 - LAW IN THE NEWS

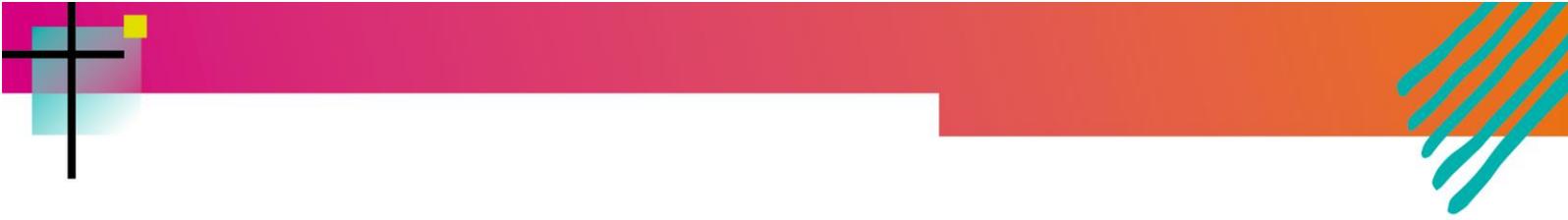
Activity

1. Keep up-to-date with the news, whether through online sources, TV or radio or by reading a broadsheet newspaper.
2. Print off the sheet on the next page (or create your own version).
3. Locate or research UK news stories relating to key topics and record them on the table, identifying any key terms.



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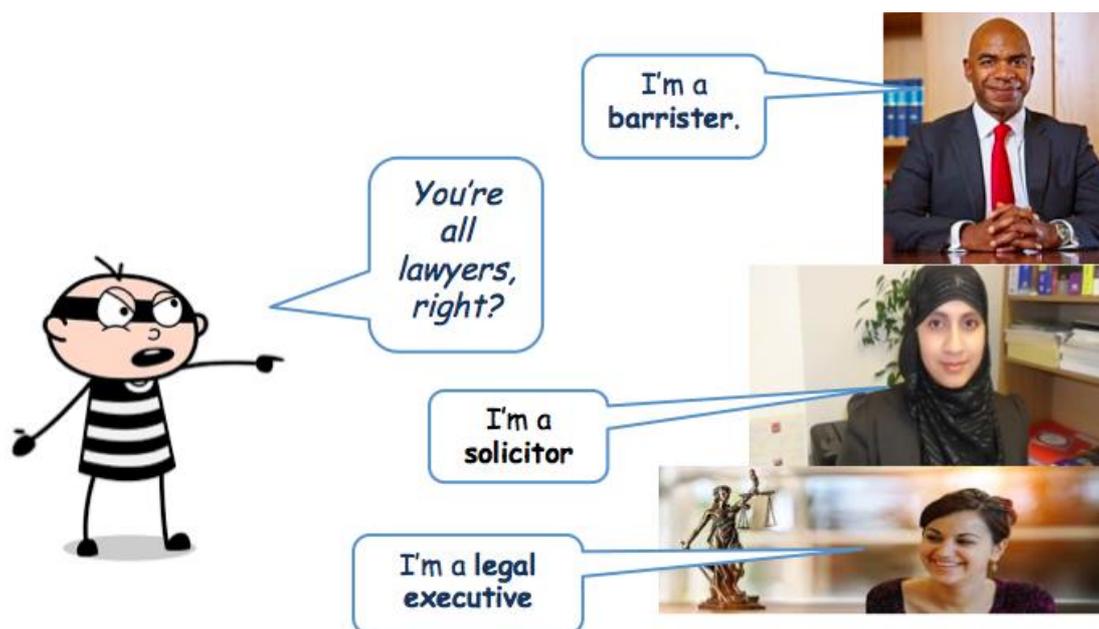


FIND A NEWS STORY FEATURING:	DATE of news item	SOURCE: Where did you read, view or hear the news item? E.g. BBC News at 10.	BRIEF DETAILS in one sentence of 12 words or less.	TICK ANY KEY WORDS contained in the stories:
UK Government or Parliament (check the difference!)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Act of Parliament ● Prime Minister ● Member of Parliament (MP) ● House of Commons ● House of Lords
Murder or manslaughter in England and Wales (criminal law)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● victim ● defendant ● sentence ● jury
Theft or robbery in England and Wales (criminal law)				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● property ● force ● intention ● dishonesty
Injury or property compensation (negligence), contract or other civil law matter in England and Wales				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● claimant ● defendant ● duty of care ● claim ● damages ● agreement

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PART 2 - EXAMPLES OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS



Activity

RESEARCH the differences and **MAKE A NOTE** of your findings:

- www.thelawyerportal.com/free-guides/what-is-a-solicitor/
- www.slatergordon.co.uk/media-centre/blog/2016/09/difference-between-a-lawyer-a-solicitor-and-a-barrister-explained/
- www.cilex.org.uk

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PART 3 - LEGAL LANGUAGE



Activity

Please **read through** this information and make notes on the points raised.

An illustration featuring a man in a black suit and a woman in a yellow high-visibility police uniform. The man is on the left, and the woman is on the right. Three speech bubbles are connected to them, containing text about legal language.

'Legal language' ?
But it's just words, right?

Yes, although there's a lot of specific legal terminology.

For instance, in a **criminal trial**, the '**defendant**' is the person accused of committing an **offence** (a crime). But '**defendant**' can also refer to someone who is being sued in a **civil court**.

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Okay. So, not all law involves crime and criminal courts?

That's right. **Civil courts** deal with disputes between individual people or private companies, rather than with criminal law. The police don't usually get involved with **civil proceedings**.



In a criminal trial...

- The **prosecution** brings the case against the defendant.
- To be found **guilty** of a crime, it must be decided that the facts show that the defendant definitely committed the crime - there is no other logical explanation (**beyond reasonable doubt**).
- A guilty person will be **sentenced** by the court e.g. a fine.
- If the defendant is found **not guilty**, they are **acquitted** of the charges against them.
- **See: www.cps.gov.uk/ for more information.**

In a civil trial...

- The case is brought by the **claimant (C)** against the **defendant (D)**.
- E.g. C may state that D **negligently** damaged C's property, or that D didn't carry out their side of a bargain (**breach of contract**).
- If C can prove that it is more likely than not that D acted wrongly (**on the balance of probabilities**) then the defendant is held 'liable'.
- Usually, this means the court orders D to pay **damages** to C (financial compensation).

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In a criminal trial...

- The defendant's guilt is decided by 3 **magistrates** in a **Magistrates' Court** or by a **jury** in a **Crown Court**.
- Magistrates' Courts deal with less serious offences.
- Over 95% of criminal cases are dealt with just by Magistrates.
- The most serious cases are heard in the Crown Court, where a jury of 12 citizens reaches a **verdict** of guilty or not guilty, but a **judge** sentences the defendant.

In a civil trial...

- The **judge** makes the decision as to the defendant's liability.
- The judge makes a court order e.g. for the payment of damages.
- The two courts in which civil cases are tried in are the **County Court** (hears most cases) and the **High Court**.



The Supreme Court, London

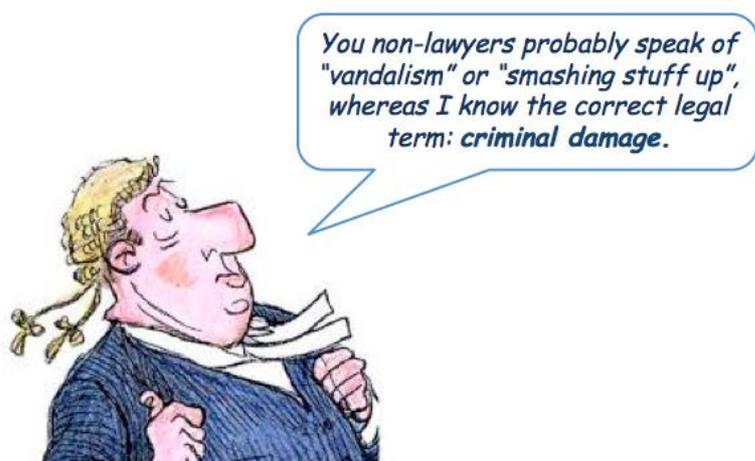


Guildford Crown Court

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The law uses very specific language. For example:



And the proper legal term for "mugging" is robbery.

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*Looks as if I'll need to learn a very small amount of Latin when studying the law.
For instance, 'actus reus' means the criminal act - the defendant's guilty conduct - such as punching the victim.*

- The **prosecution** must generally prove the **actus reus**, as well as the defendant's guilty mind – the **mens rea**.
- For example, for the offence of murder, the prosecution must show that the defendant killed the victim (the actus reus)
- AND intended to kill or cause serious harm (the mens rea).

Activity

WATCH this short video for a little more information on actus reus:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AdMU6oONRHw



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Legal language - your textbook

There's a glossary of legal words on p.248 of the **textbook** needed for the first year of A Level Law.

- You can buy the textbook from College next term – at a discount.
- If you'd like to buy a copy now, to read over the summer, it's available from bookstores (they can order it if not in stock) and from online retailers – new or second-hand.

[/www.hoddereducation.co.uk/subjects/law/products/16-18/aqa-a-level-law-for-year-1-as](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/subjects/law/products/16-18/aqa-a-level-law-for-year-1-as)

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AQA A-level Law for Year 1/AS

Jacqueline Martin, Nicholas Price

AQA Approved
This title has been approved by AQA

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Published: 30/06/2017
Extent: 288 pages

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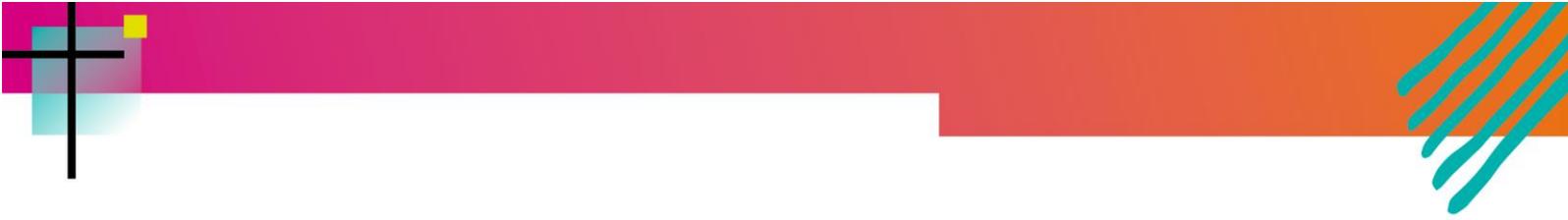
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[Sample chapter](#)

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BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH LEGAL TERMINOLOGY:
See if you can locate the 24 legal words in the **word search**. Bring the completed word search along to your first Law lesson.

By the way, judges in UK courts don't have gavels (the wooden hammer I'm holding) despite them sometimes being shown in cartoons - like this - and in legal dramas. *Gavels are* used by auctioneers and can be found in U.S. courtrooms.

V K N J F M T N K X N P Q V M F O P C P G N I U
 X R N C P T G V O J C Q Y A M M K H N G X E W E
 E U Q R R H Z I X M F Q K T L S C K Z T D G Y X
 M B H O Z W B C I J U P N U H M F Z J W F L R G
 L I V W M O E T N W L A F R N I G Q R C M I U V
 P L L N R N I I J V M J X O Y T L I U G H G J X
 L N A X K J C M J I A S J T G I S C R K C E S K
 N O N M V Y N V A Z C A G I T C I D R E V N L G
 F I I U E V U L U I Q L T C X B I Y Y V A T T W
 B T M N F S C D H C U B G I H D G V J V P E E A
 S U I Q T Q O C C W I I E L D C M A I E R L C C
 Y C R B V D I R N W T Y J O O Y A A N L O B N V
 V E C S L W A N G O T V X S S S B E Y D B A E D
 U S S V K E W D W S E R Q X J F J W R N A N T K
 A O E P W N C Z E L D J E C A M U S O B B O N J
 S R I Q O N I F D F V J T T T G D C T Y I S E C
 O P Y M C Z W N A O E I A R S H G C V M L A S L
 X A K U V R G U F G F N X G U I E K P L I E F J
 E M U D F I Z B G T A X D V G O R N P C T R P J
 Y D A M A G E S A I U M W A U D C R I Y I J B B
 F Z T A E L B A I L V F C R N U E A A P E Q W W
 X S L Q W W Q F W W R Q H M O T U V C B S S O P
 D T W Z U S E T A R T S I G A M Q M E W H I G H
 I Q P Z B Z N D J U G B Q E M T R U U G G A E Q

acquitted barrister breach civil claimant court criminal Crown damages
 defendant guilty High judge jury liable Magistrates negligent probabilities
 prosecution reasonable sentence solicitor verdict victim

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PART 4 - CRIMINAL LAW - THE OFFENCE OF ROBBERY

Section 8 of the **Theft Act 1968** states: A person is guilty of robbery if he steals, and immediately before or at the time of stealing – and in order to steal - he uses force on any person or puts or seeks to put any person in fear of force.

This means that robbery concerns a theft where the offender is using physical force (or a threat of it) so they can steal.

As stated above, crimes usually have:

- a physical element – the actus reus (or guilty conduct)
- a mental element – the mens rea (or guilty mind)

Activity

- **WATCH** this short video: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8A6bm8Dth4w

- **LOOK** out / **LISTEN** for references to the actus reus and mens rea of robbery

- **ANSWER** the following questions (all answers are in the video):

- a) How much force was used in the case of Dawson and James?
- b) When does the force have to be used?
- c) The defendant (offender) in Lockley stole beer. Who did he use force against in order to steal?

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