



Law Reading List

We're looking forward to welcoming you to our Law course, and we hope you're looking forward to joining us too!

If you'd like to start exploring the subject ahead of the start of your course, here's a list of resources that will help you engage with some of the ideas you'll be exploring in more depth across the course. These are by no means in order of importance and you don't have to look at all of them – let your instinct choose what sounds more interesting to you.

Whether you're joining us for the one or two week course, the reading list below is applicable!

Our programme will be broadly split into two parts – we'll look at practical elements of law such as human rights and private law, as well as more philosophical ideas such as jurisprudence and morality. There's practical knowledge and application of the law, but there's also a lot of law that can draw on seemingly abstract concepts. From jurisprudence to morality, there's a large philosophical element to legal study. These resources will help you to start considering these ideas ahead of our course together – it would be great to see you bring them into our more practical discussions later in the programme too.

- **Website: UK Law, Bodleian Libraries LibGuides** – If you're looking for a resource you can dip in and out of to find out more about the British legal system, you need look no further than the Oxford LibGuide on the subject. Whether you'd like to flick through major case databases or just learn more about how the legal system functions, this website has you covered. Have a browse – you might just find your new area of legal interest.

Link: Browse [here](#)

- **Podcast: Nicola Lacey on Legal Positivism by Philosophy Bites** – This bite-sized introduction to legal positivism is a fascinating and thought-provoking listen. This school of thought suggests that the law is a purely social construct and separates it from the morality that many legal philosophers tie to the discipline. What do you think?

Link: Listen [here](#)

- **Video: Natural Law Theory by Crash Course** – This video looks at a theory that opposes the Legal Positivism ideas explored in Nicola Lacey's podcast episode above. Thomas Aquinas' view of the theory suggests that, as humans, we have an innate drive towards some fundamental "basic goods" and that our constructed law follows this natural foundation. If you've got time, I'd strongly recommend checking out both of these resources and considering which theory you most agree with, and why. I'd love to hear your thoughts in our second session on the philosophy of law.

Link: Watch [here](#)

- **Essay: Paternalism by Gerald Dworkin** – Paternalism and the law have an interesting tension, and this advanced but fascinating essay will give you a great introduction to the topic. It also works as a great first look at some core political texts and will encourage you to start thinking about the intersection of the law and politics.

Link: Read [here](#)

If you'd like to become a lawyer, you're going to have to get pretty familiar with the law. I'm sure this comes as no surprise to you and hopefully that's one of the major reasons you're enthusiastic about the subject. These resources will help introduce you to a range of legal subjects, each of which we'll explore in more detail in our relevant sessions together. If you have any questions, or anything seems unclear, do make a note so we can discuss them during the programme.

- **Video: Donoghue v Stevenson, The Law Simplified** – This case offers an introduction to three really key legal principles – as well as leaving you with a healthy fear of opaque ginger beer bottles... As you're watching this quick introduction, have a think about which area of law this case fits into. If the subject interests you, go ahead and do your own more detailed research and think about why it's considered seminal.

Link: Watch [here](#)

- **Video: Lady Hale, President of the UK Supreme Court, BBC** – This video sees Lady Hale, former president of the UK Supreme Court, discussing an important case in British politics back in 2019. In the process of discussing this important case, Lady Hale also clears up some misconceptions about the role of the Supreme Court in the UK. Do you think the Court's role should be reformed at all?

Link: Watch [here](#)

- **Essay: 1,000 words / The Supreme Court's Judgment in Miller, Public Law for Everyone** – Brexit might seem a little like old news following the COVID-19 pandemic, but its legal importance cannot be understated, particularly for those interested in the interaction between the law and politics. This 1,000 word essay on the Supreme Court's Brexit ruling will provide you with an excellent introduction to the case and the implications it could still have.

Link: Read [here](#)

If you're joining us for the two week course, here's some more exciting resources to push you even further!

- **Documentary: Murder to Mercy: The Cyntoia Brown Story (2020) by Daniel H. Birman** – This documentary covers a lot of ground and it deals with some difficult themes including abuse, neglect and violence. Cyntoia Brown committed murder when she was 16 years old and this documentary follows her plea for clemency following 15 years in prison. It raises questions about when the law is considered "right" and the morality of judging juvenile offenders.
- **Film: Just Mercy (2019) by Destin Cretton** – This movie follows the true story of the defence attorney who successfully appealed the murder conviction of a death row inmate. As you're watching, make a quick note of anything that stands out to you about the criminal justice system, as we'll be able to chat it through together.

Next Steps:

We're really looking forward to welcoming you to the Law course! If you'd like to take your learning to the next level, you're welcome to join one of our other related programmes too – many of our students sign up to multiple programmes as they prepare for their futures. Your options include:

- Our month-long [Law Internships](#) are a great option – you'll gain hands-on experience, co-authoring a legal research paper with an academic researcher for publication on [OxJournal.org](#) (particularly helpful as work experience can be hard to find!)
- At Oxford Scholastica, we run a residential Oxford Summer School every summer – you might be interested in the [Experience Law Academy](#). This is an immersive, two-week residential experience which takes place on the Oxford University campus – you'll take your understanding of law to the next level while meeting like-minded

students from around the world

Other Resources:

Clarity about your future career direction will help you in your academic studies and in your university applications. We've created a quick Careers Test to help you to know what careers might suit you best. You'll then receive a personalised Careers Report, with recommended careers and resources to explore. We hope you'll find it useful!

Try the Test [here](#)

If you know you're applying to university soon, and are keen to stand out from the crowd, we've created a short (free) **University Preparation Report** for you – simply fill in the quick form on this page, and we'll send you subject-specific reading and podcast recommendations, tailored to your interests, to help guide your university preparation.

Take the University Preparation Report [here](#)