

# Pathways to Professions: Law

## Introduction

Law is one of the most exciting and rewarding careers for students to aim for. It can encompass dramatic court cases in criminal law, helping families get through difficult times, or changing poor corporate behaviour. It is an incredibly diverse field, with a broad range of careers. Aspiring to study law at university, or planning to move into the legal profession post degree, is a prestigious, exciting and competitive life plan. The law pathway to profession is designed to give you the opportunities, experiences and insight required to complement A Level study in order to progress towards the legal profession. Law is one of the most competitive university subjects, and careers at the top end of the legal profession as solicitors, barrister and judges are some of the hardest to achieve. The law pathway is designed to optimise your chances, open your eyes to the plethora of careers available in the legal sector and give you the edge at interviews.



## Year 11 – before you start Dixons Sixth Form

The best preparation for an application for law is to achieve highly at GCSE. We will work closely with Dixons Academies Trust, at key events such as the Grade 9 Conference, to raise aspirations and achievement at GCSE. Law schools at university take into account a broad range of factors when students apply. They look at predicted grades, personal statements, LNAT test scores, references and interviews; however the GCSE grades are one of the most important and reliable sources of information about academic potential that they have. Students with exemplary GCSE results have a much higher chance of gaining entry.

However, GCSE results alone will only go so far. Law schools are looking for academic commitment, excellent attention to detail and a fastidious work ethic. It is a good idea to read widely around the subjects you are interested in, both at GCSE and A Level, with a particular focus on going beyond the requirements of your current courses.

## Year 12 – programme

### EPQ

The EPQ is a 5000 - word researched project that also includes a formal presentation. Students exploring medicine are in the same group for their EPQ course. This not only means you are with a group of students with the same interests and applications, it also means that you will learn about all the specific medical topics that students in your group choose to do their EPQ on. The final presentations for students are held as an evening gala event (to which parents are invited) and this formal presentation further develops students' communication skills. For aspiring lawyers, their EPQ should be focused on legal research.

### Wider reading

We will provide law pathways students with a reading list of suggested reading for law applications. We will also encourage students to read widely around the law and keep a close eye on the news and current events for significant legal developments.

### Bar mock trial

The bar mock trial competition is a unique opportunity for students from all over the UK to gain unparalleled insight into the justice system. The competition immerses students in all aspects of a criminal trial, as they take on the roles of barristers, witnesses, clerks, ushers and jury members.

Students appear in real crown courts in front of real judges and are assisted in their preparations by professional barristers. We will run a trial within the Sixth Form Academy and participate in wider competitions. This is excellent preparation for legal applications, provides real insight into the challenges and skills required in this sector and has the bonus of being highly enjoyable.

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## **Debating**

We will encourage all law pathways students to join the Sixth Form debating team. This will provide weekly opportunities for developing excellent communication skills, rapid research and presentation practice, and the challenge of competing with your peers. The school debating team will enter national and regional competitions and compete with local schools on a regular basis. This is excellent practice for the legal profession and provides students with a range of experiences that can be utilised on UCAS forms and in interviews.

## **University visits**

Students will be taken on a visit to law departments in local partner universities. This will give them an opportunity to experience study of law at university, discuss the subject with real legal academics and seek advice for their applications in Y13.

## **Trips and speakers**

Law pathways students will get the opportunity to visit local legal courts to see law in action in their home environments. Law pathways students will also have the opportunity to go on the London trip which will encompass a visit to Parliament and the High Court. These opportunities will give students the experience they need to bring real colour to their applications. Similarly the law pathways students will have external speakers from local law firms to speak to them, to gain insight into the everyday working of the legal profession.

## **Bespoke UCAS advice**

The programme in Year 12 will culminate in intensive UCAS and personal statement guidance and support in order to ensure students have the best possible chance of course entry.

## **Year 13 – programme**

### **Personal statement support**

You will stay with the same progress director from year 1 to year 2 and that enables them to give you continuous feedback and support as you develop your personal statement over the summer holidays.

### **Aptitude test support**

The most prestigious universities offering law degrees require the completion of the Law National Aptitude Test (LNAT). In the lead up to the test students will be given guidance and support on how to achieve on this test, including a marked mock. Alongside this, follow up support will be given to all students, based on how they performed, on where they should consider applying. Students who wish to apply to Oxford and Cambridge, will have to submit their UCAS by the 15th October, before the LNAT is sat.

### **Interview preparation**

Some law courses, such as Oxford and Cambridge, also require interviews to their courses. We will provide interview guidance, mock interviews and general support for this process.

### **Post offer academic support**

Law is a highly competitive degree, once the application process has been completed and offer have been made, the primary focus must then shift to academic achievement. We will push and support law pathways students to achieve as highly as possible through challenge, accountability and encouragement.