

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by School of Law  
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Law School Survival Skills Workshop

**Course Code:** LW5600

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 1.0

**Level:** P5

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This intensive preparatory course introduces students to the basic skills that are necessary to succeed in legal education and introduces them to the legal profession. The course offers an overview of the Hong Kong legal system and common law legal sources to help students to prepare for their first semester courses. This course will give students a foundation in how to read caselaw, statutes, and other legal materials and in using standard patterns of legal writing and methods of legal analysis that will be developed further in the first-year Legal Methods, Research and Writing (LW5622). The course focuses on helping students prepare for success in lecture, tutorials, assignments, and examinations. Individual and team-based learning will be utilized on a pass-fail basis. It is essential for all students starting legal education to attend this course.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Develop the ability to identify and discuss the common patterns and forms used in caselaw and statutory materials within the Hong Kong commonwealth legal system	30%	√	√	
2.	Develop basic analytical skills for legal reading and writing	30%	√	√	
3.	Engage in critical analysis and develop problem-solving skills using primary and secondary legal authorities and analysing their synthesis in legal argument	20%	√	√	
4.	Develop strategies for lecture and tutorial preparation, continuous assessments, and examinations	20%	√	√	√
		100%			

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

### 3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.				Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	
Lecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will engage with the basic features of and source of law in the common law legal system;</li> <li>• Students will gain exposure to the core expectations and foundational skills required in first-year courses</li> <li>• Students will encounter course preparation best practices from upper-level peers.</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	6
Exercises and Group Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will discuss and analyse practical problems and possible solutions with their peers;</li> <li>• Students will practice oral, analytical, and team-based skills in group exercises;</li> <li>• Students will practice evaluating, critically analysing, and working with legal sources together.</li> <li>• Through group exercises, students will develop an attitude of curiosity and critical thinking.</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	5
Readings	Students will engage with daily readings in preparation for class.	√	√	√	√	3
Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will engage with in-class exercises to solidify prior knowledge or explore new topics for the following class session</li> <li>• Students will critically assess each other's work and receive peer feedback on select assignments.</li> </ul>	√	√	√	√	2

**4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)**

*(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)*

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.				Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4		
Continuous Assessment: 100%						
Class Participation	√	√	√	√	30%	
Class Assignments (Individual or Group)	√	√	√	√	70%	
					100%	

This course is marked on a pass-fail basis and there is no course examination. Participation and class assignments will be marked on a pass-fail basis. To pass this course, students must pass both components. Due to the intensive nature of this course, unexcused absences of more than six (6) hours total from the course will result in a failing mark for the participation component and thus for the course.

**5. Assessment Rubrics**

*(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)* **[provide template for pass/fail course]**

Assessment Task	Criterion	Passing	Failure
Class Participation	Attends daily. Active participating in in-class activities and exercises. Actively contributes to team-based exercises and in-class discussions.	Adequate	Inadequate
Class Assignments	Timely completion of all assignments in accordance with instructions at a level that demonstrates appropriate effort and attention to detail in written work product.	Adequate	Inadequate

## **Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

### **1. Keyword Syllabus**

*(An indication of the key topics of the course.)*

Common law sources of law, caselaw, statutes, legal reasoning, legal interpretation, binding precedent, case analysis, legal reading, legal writing, legal profession, coursework skills, task management, team-based learning

### **2. Detailed Course Programme**

A detailed course programme will be provided in advance of the first class session as part of the Course Manual. The major topics covered in the course include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Introduction to the Hong Kong commonwealth system
- Reading skills for different purposes
- Introduction to legal writing forms and conventions
- Introduction to legal authority and precedent
- Reading case law
- Reading statutory law
- Using primary sources of authority
- Using secondary sources of authority
- Integrating statutory and case law sources
- Legal problem-solving skills
- Professionalism skills
- Working in teams; Group problem-solving
- Preparing for lectures, tutorials, and continuous assessments
- Preparing for exams

### **3. Reading List**

#### **3.1 Compulsory Readings**

*(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)*

The following course text is required: James Holland & Julian Webb, *Learning Legal Rules* (11<sup>th</sup> ed. OUP 2022). Note that this text will also be required in the first-semester legal research and writing course.

Additional compulsory readings will be distributed to students in advance of each class session. Where appropriate, copies of readings will be made available to the students either through the library catalogue, internet links, or by lodging materials with the library's semi-closed collection.

No external legal research is required for this course. However, students are encouraged to explore the law library and its print and electronic resources. These are available at:

- <https://www.cityu.edu.hk/lib/collect/law/index.htm>
- <http://lbsystem.lib.cityu.edu.hk/ereslist/index.php?type=db&format=subj&subj=law>
- <https://libguides.library.cityu.edu.hk/home> (click subject = law)

### 3.2 Additional Readings

*(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)*

Optional reading materials will be made available to students through a variety of ways. Where appropriate, copies of readings will be made available to the students either through the library catalogue, internet links, or by lodging materials with the library's semi-closed collection. The following may be taken as examples of indicative reading:

- Bradney, A., Cownie, F., Masson, J., Neal A. & Newell, D. *How to Study Law* (8<sup>th</sup> ed. London, Sweet & Maxwell, 2017)
- Charrow, Veda R., Myra K. Erhardt & Robert P. Charrow, *Clear and Effective Legal Writing* (5<sup>th</sup> ed. Aspen, 2013)
- Finch, Emily & Stefan Fafinski, *Legal Skills* (OUP 2021)
- Hunter, David, James Salzman; Durwood Zaelke *Cracking the Case Method, Legal Analysis for Law School Success* (West 2022)
- Neumann Jr, Richard K, *Legal Reasoning and Legal Writing: Structure, Strategy, and Style* (6th ed, New York: Wolters Kluwer Law & Business 2009)
- Mitchell, Jay, *Picturing Corporate Practice* (West, 2016)
- Smith, A.T.H., Glanville Williams: *Learning the Law* (17th ed, London: Sweet and Maxwell, 2020)
- Ip, Eric, *Law & Justice in Hong Kong* (Sweet & Maxwell, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2022)