



August, 2024

## **Honour School of Jurisprudence**

From the Law Tutors, St Edmund Hall

To those starting their course in October:

Dear all,

We hope this letter finds you well. We are very much looking forward to you joining the St Edmund Hall community in October.

The structure of the BA Jurisprudence means that there is a period of less than six months between the start of your course in October and the first University examination (Moderations) in the middle of March. We therefore recommend that you undertake some preliminary reading before you arrive at Oxford, and that you make your plans for the December/January vacation on the assumption that there will be a need for you to undertake serious revision during this period.

In the first two terms you will study Constitutional Law, Criminal Law and A Roman Introduction to Private Law. University-wide lectures on all three papers will be offered in by teams of lawyers delivering these lectures to the entire first year group.

So far as the scheduling of college tutorials in these three subjects is concerned, we currently envisage that you will study a set of eight tutorials in Constitutional Law in the first term (Michaelmas Term). Your tutor will be Dr Joanna Bell. You will also have around six tutorials in Criminal Law in this term with Mr Karl Laird (please note that, due to Mr Laird's busy criminal law practice outside of Oxford this may take place on Saturdays). In the second term you will study the final Criminal Law topics, and a full set of tutorials in Roman Law with Dr Brooke Marshall.

As indicated above, lectures for all three courses run across the two terms, so that for some topics, most particularly Roman Law, you will attend lectures in one term and have tutorials in the other: this is normal in Oxford, and the fact that you give your attention to a topic at two distinct points in the year will often mean that it is easier to understand.

For all subjects, regardless of when you study tutorials in them, it will be helpful to undertake preparatory reading over the summer. For Constitutional Law, Martin Loughlin's *A Very Short Introduction to the British Constitution* (OUP 2013) is an accessible introduction to many of the major themes, as is Jack Beatson's *The Rule of Law and the Separation of Powers* (Hart 2021). It may also be useful to purchase a copy of Mark Elliott

& Robert Thomas, *Public Law* (5<sup>th</sup> edn, OUP 2024) which is the textbook you will use for the course and to read chapter 1 before arriving (if you want to read on, do – chapters 1-11 are all required reading for the course). If you decide to buy this book before coming to Oxford, be sure to obtain the latest edition which, conveniently, was published earlier this year.

So far as the course in Roman Law is concerned, if you choose to buy a textbook, it is recommended that you buy the 2013 reprint of Thomas, *Textbook of Roman Law* (North-Holland, The Hague 1976) by Philip McDonald and available at Blackwells. We will draw upon this book frequently throughout the course. At this stage, it is advisable that you read pages 15-30, as background, and pages 31-60, 67-72, on sources, in preparation for the start of the academic year. The current translations of the set texts, from the Institutes of Gaius and Justinian, are provided by the Law Faculty.

For Criminal Law, Ormerod, Laird and Gibson (eds), *Smith, Hogan, and Ormerod's Criminal Law* (17th edition, 2024) is the text that you will use. To familiarise yourself with some of the issues you will encounter at the beginning of the course, you should read chapters 1 to 3. Do not worry if you find some of the concepts complex, as we will examine them in detail during your first weeks at Oxford.

With regards to the purchase of textbooks it may help to know that Teddy Hall permits all undergraduate students to apply for an Academic Grant every year. Up to £300 is available, and £100 of this can be put towards books. (Details: [Scholarships and Prizes | Undergraduates | St Edmund Hall \(ox.ac.uk\)](#))

Accompanying this letter, you will also find a document entitled 'Law Induction Course.' It explains **how to prepare for an introductory class which will be scheduled to take place during Freshers' week**, before the start of term. Make sure you read this document carefully; it is important that you complete the reading and go about the activities prescribed in it **before** arriving in Oxford. Please do not assume that you will have time to do it during Freshers' Week.

There should also be some Faculty-based lectures and classes right at the start of term which seek to provide the necessary orientation: you will, of course, attend these. One of those events will be a Welcome Event, hosted by the Associate Deans for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), and Undergraduate Studies. **The Associate Deans would like to invite you to read *In Black and White: A Young Barrister's Story of Race and Class in a Broken Justice System*, which may be discussed at the event.** You can acquire a copy on Amazon for £5.99 (and can recoup this through your book allowance at a later stage). The book's author, Alexandra Wilson, will be delivering the Faculty's Annual EDI lecture later in the year.

Finally, we would like to see that long before you begin, however, your tutors are on hand to answer questions and give guidance; we trust and assume that you will never hesitate to ask whatever appears to you to need asking. It makes all the difference to the success of your study.

We look forward to meeting you, or meeting you again, in October.

Dr Joanna Bell

Dr Brooke Marshall

Mr Karl Laird