



# DIPLOMA IN LAW

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SEPTEMBER 2023



LAW SOCIETY  
OF IRELAND



The image shows the exterior of the Education Centre. The building features a brick facade with a grey horizontal band above the entrance. The words "EDUCATION CENTRE" are mounted on the brick wall. To the right is a stone building with a circular window and a balcony. A large tree with autumn leaves is in the foreground, and a green lawn is at the bottom.

EDUCATION CENTRE

"I really liked the small class size, interactive workshops and online access to watch webcasts of lectures."

PAUL O'SHAUGHNESSY,  
DIPLOMA IN LAW GRADUATE



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The Diploma in Law from the Law Society of Ireland has been created for those seeking a greater knowledge of the law, professionals who would like to gain new skills and, in turn, add value to their current roles, and graduates keen to acquire new expertise and who are thinking of commencing the solicitor qualification.

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<b>START DATE</b>	8 September 2023
<b>DURATION</b>	12 months/24 months
<b>FEE</b>	€4,600
<b>DELIVERY METHOD</b>	Live Wednesday evening lectures and one block weekend each month
<b>CONTACT</b>	Patricia Harvey, Programme leader
<b>HOW TO APPLY</b>	



Patricia Harvey, Programme leader

This course is open to non-law graduates from any discipline or suitable non-graduates with a demonstrable level of work experience in the area of law. Students have the option to study the programme over one or two academic years via blended learning.

To download an application form please visit our website: [www.lawsociety.ie/diplomalaw](http://www.lawsociety.ie/diplomalaw). Alternatively, contact the programme leader Patricia Harvey on 01 881 5726 or email [diplomlaw@lawsociety.ie](mailto:diplomlaw@lawsociety.ie).

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## COURSE STRUCTURE

An intensive postgraduate diploma spread over eight modules, this course is designed for those who require an introduction to the discipline of law in a number of core areas. This course is unique in that it integrates the academic theory with the practice of law. Our module tutors are experienced practitioners who are well placed to provide instruction in the various substantive topics of law with the added benefit of being able to relate to the real life practice of law when required.

### SEMESTER 1 (SEPTEMBER – JANUARY)

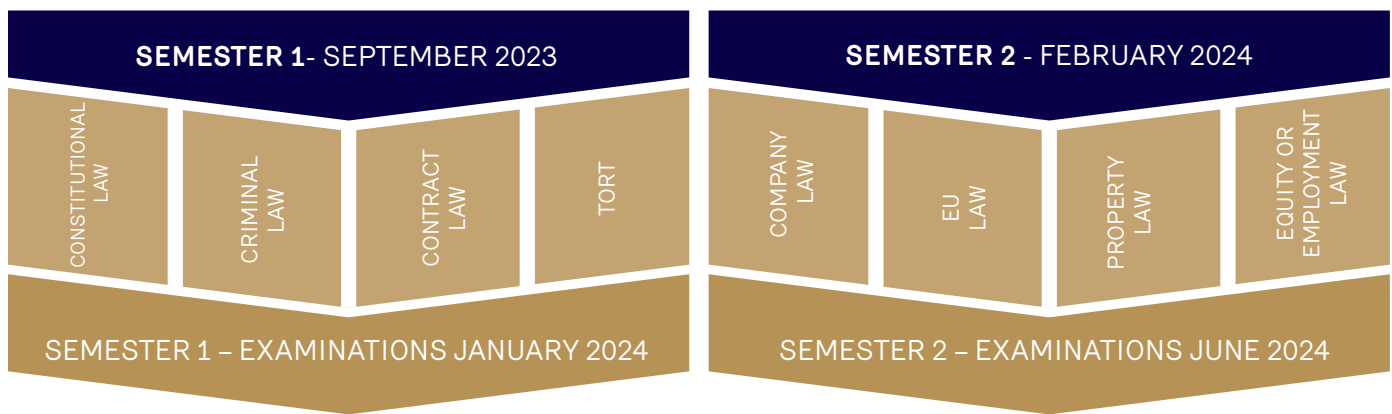
Module 1: Constitutional Law  
Module 2: Criminal Law  
Module 3: Contract Law  
Module 4: Tort

### SEMESTER 2 (FEBRUARY – MAY)

Module 5: Company Law  
Module 6: EU Law  
Module 7: Property Law  
Module 8: Equity or Employment Law

## STUDY OPTIONS

Students can choose between a one-year or two-year option of study to best suit their needs. Those students who select the two-year option generally elect to study two modules per semester.



## MODULE DESCRIPTORS

### INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL SYSTEMS & THE STUDY OF LAW

We launch the course with an additional online module which acts as a support to students beginning their studies in law. Available for the duration of the course, it features online activities, self-assessed quizzes, suggested readings and video content. This online material is supported by a number of follow-up revision sessions and interactive workshops held throughout the course. The aim of the module is to equip students with the necessary skills they need to study law and to approach examinations and assignments with confidence. Topics covered include:

- An introduction to the Irish legal system
- Sources of Irish law
- Civil & Criminal Procedure
- Remedies
- Reading judgments
- The legislative process
- Introduction to legal writing
- How to answer exam questions
- Legal research

### SEMESTER 1

#### CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

The Irish Constitution (Bunreacht na hÉireann) is the cornerstone of the Irish legal system. In this module, students are introduced to the study of constitutional law and theory and come to understand the Constitution as a living document. With a specific focus on current cases and topical issues, students are asked to critically analyse, discuss and apply the principles of Irish constitutional law. Topics covered include:

- Constitutional interpretation
- Judicial Review
- Separation of Powers
- The President
- The Attorney General
- The election and referenda provisions
- Enumerated personal rights
- Unenumerated personal rights
- Socio-economic rights
- The Family
- The Courts and the administration of justice
- The Executive
- The Oireachtas
- Constitutional justice
- Consequences of a declaration of unconstitutionality
- The impact of the *European Convention of Human Rights Act 2003* on constitutional issues

#### CRIMINAL LAW

Criminal law marks out certain conduct as being wrong and condemns or convicts those who engage in such activity. It is an area of public law in which the individual against whom the allegations of criminal activity are made is prosecuted by the State in the name of the people and, if convicted, will be subject to court-imposed sanctions which are prescribed by law and enforced. Led by experienced criminal practitioners, this module covers five broad headings of criminal law:

1. Principles of criminal law
2. Criminal Procedure
3. Offences against the Person
4. Offences against Property
5. Defences

Students also have the opportunity to engage with the practice of criminal law through an interactive and engaging mock court skills session.

#### CONTRACT LAW

Many contractual relationships are entered into on a daily basis even where one has not considered it. For example, a legally binding contract exists when buying a train ticket or newspaper. This module reviews the elements which make up a legally enforceable contract and considers available statutory protections. The breakdown of a contract is examined and students learn how a contract can be breached if one or more of the parties involved do not fulfil their part of the agreement.

Resolving broken contracts in the form of claiming damages and other potential remedies are also addressed. In addition students have the opportunity to practice the lawyering skills of contract negotiation and drafting contracts in the modules skills session.

#### TORT

Tort is a civil wrong which deals primarily with private disputes between individuals. A tort has also been described as a civil wrong which causes someone to suffer loss, resulting in legal liability for the person who commits the tortious act.

The module covers three sections;

1. Analysis of the development of the key principles which have developed through case law. Topics include:
  - The nature and function of the Law of Tort
  - Causation
  - Negligence.
2. The principal causes of action that come before the courts including:
  - Occupiers' liability
  - Employers' liability



- Vicarious liability
- Non-delegable duties
- Trespass to the Person and Trespass to Land
- Statutory Duties and Rights; Defamation
- Nuisance (both public and private)
- The Rule in *Rylands v. Fletcher*.

### 3. Damages, defences & limitation of actions

## SEMESTER 2

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### COMPANY LAW

The *Companies Act 2014* was the largest piece of legislation ever introduced in the state. Essentially a consolidation of Irish companies' legislation, the Act also introduced a number of innovations. In this module, students will come to understand the principles and rules of Company Law in Ireland as now governed by the 2014 Act under the following headings:

- Types of companies and business organisations
- Formation and registration
- Incorporation and its consequences
- Lifting the Veil
- Corporate contracts
- Authority of Corporate Agents and capacity of Companies
- Corporate governance
- Members' and Directors' meetings
- Duties of Directors and others
- Statutory regulation of transactions involving Directors and Companies
- Accounts, investigations and inspectors
- Debentures, Charges and their registration
- Receivers
- Examinerships and Schemes of Arrangement
- Winding up

### EU LAW

The EU law module considers the constitutional foundations of the European Union and traces the development of EU law through the case law of the community judicature. The opening section of the module covers the institutions of the European Union and their role, before addressing the fundamental principles of EU Law such as direct effect, indirect effect, and supremacy. The module then examines the "four freedoms" which underpin the single market concept before concluding with an introduction to EU Competition Law. At all times there is a particular focus on topical issues in this area and the critical analysis of important decisions of the European Court of Justice. In addition, a skills session specifically prepares students to engage with European treaties and legislation when answering problem questions.

### PROPERTY LAW

Beginning with an exploration of the historical background and evolution of Irish property law, this module looks at the various forms of interest available in real property (land and buildings as distinct from intellectual property or personal possessions).

The grounding doctrine of "the estate" is introduced and the various types of interests in land that can be held are considered in detail. Students learn how these interests may be transferred to other parties and the problems that may arise.

A number of discrete and interesting topics are also covered including:

- Landlord and tenant
- Co-ownership
- Mortgages
- The Family Home
- Succession Law
- An introduction to Trusts.

### EQUITY

Equity originally developed as a body of principles which evolved with the aim of mitigating the severity of the rules of common law. The word equity means fairness or justice and that is certainly where the use of the term derives from, however the term has developed a separate legal meaning in modern times and this module examines in detail the history, doctrines and remedies of the modern law of Equity and Trusts. Topics covered include:

- Nature
- History and development of equity
- Maxims of equity
- Equitable Interests and the Doctrine of Notice
- Specific Performance
- Rectification and Rescission
- Injunctions
- Equitable Estoppel
- Undue influence
- Nature and classification of Trusts
- Constitution of Trusts
- Administration of Trusts
- Secret and half-secret Trusts
- Constructive Trusts
- Resulting Trusts
- Purpose and charitable Trusts.

### EMPLOYMENT LAW

Employment law governs the relationship between employer and employee and is based on a contract of employment. This module studies the contract of employment in detail from the drafting stage to termination and conflicts that may arise during this relationship. The statutory rights which workers are entitled to under relevant legislation are also considered in detail, along with an in-depth analysis of the *Workplace Relations Act 2015* which was introduced with the aim of simplifying and streamlining the process of seeking redress in employment matters. There will be a problem-based focus to this module with practical scenarios and case studies used to enhance the learning experience.

### ASSESSMENT

All modules are assessed through a mix of continuous assessment (written assignments and online tasks) and a written examination. Examinations are held at the end of each semester. Semester 1 examinations take place in January and Semester 2 examinations are held in June. Students are allowed to bring unmarked copies of permitted legislative sources into the exam in a number of modules.

**Students can choose between Equity and Employment Law as their final elective.**





## HEAR FROM OUR DIPLOMA IN LAW STUDENTS

**SCOTT JEVONS,**  
DIPLOMA IN LAW GRADUATE

The Diploma allowed me to broaden my understanding of law and gave me a more rounded competence which allowed me to perform my role better and, importantly, gave me confidence in doing so. The broad mix of modules studied created a rich learning experience over two years that I refer back to on a daily basis. The resources were exceptional and the lectures expertly delivered. I would absolutely recommend this course.



**SHAYNE WILSON,**  
DIPLOMA IN LAW GRADUATE

The Diploma in Law was such a rewarding learning experience, both personally and professionally. It will certainly challenge you intellectually, but the Diploma Team provides tremendous support. The blended learning is a gift for those unable to attend the lectures, but I found being in the historical surroundings only enhances the experience. I would highly recommend the Diploma in Law course with the Law Society.



**KATE MULHOLLAND,**  
DIPLOMA IN LAW GRADUATE

The Diploma in Law provided me with an excellent understanding of the legal principles and concepts to get me started on my career in law. Whilst having never studied law before, I found that the style of teaching in the Diploma was comprehensive and coherent, and that the materials and resources were first class. Interaction between students and lecturers is very much encouraged, allowing for thought-provoking discussions and an in-depth understanding of the law. I would highly recommend the Diploma in Law for anybody wishing to pursue a career in law or looking to further their knowledge and understanding of the subject.



**SEÁN SMITH,**  
DIPLOMA IN LAW GRADUATE

I started the Diploma in Law in 2017 and had a truly great experience. I found the Diploma to be a solid springboard for the FE1s, which I have now successfully completed. I started a new job during the summer and it has been a hectic transition! I'm working in a law firm now and will heartily recommend the Diploma at the Law Society to all I encounter.



**ANNETTE DONOVAN**  
DIPLOMA IN LAW  
STUDENT

The Diploma in Law has been a truly fantastic experience. Coming from a non-legal background, I found the course to be an excellent primer for the FE1s. The module contents provide a solid foundation for each subject, lecturers are engaging, insightful and extremely approachable, and the education team at the Law Society offers a high level of support to students throughout. I would highly recommend this diploma to anyone seeking an introduction and springboard to the world of law.





## FACULTY

This course is unique in that it integrates the academic theory with the practice of law. Our module tutors are experienced practitioners and are well placed to provide instruction in the various substantive topics of law with the added benefit of being able to relate to the real life practice of law when required.

### COURSE TUTORS INCLUDE:

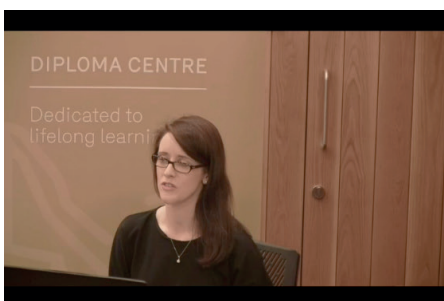
Dr Gabriel Brennan, Solicitor, Law Society of Ireland | Anna Broderick, General Counsel and Company Secretary, Mater Misericordiae University Hospital | Damien Coffey, Solicitor, Sheehan and Partners | Tom Conlon, Solicitor, DPP Ireland | Claire Cummins BL | Eithne FitzGerald, former Partner A & L Goodbody, Module Tutor | Conor Duff BL Stephen Kirwan, Associate Solicitor KOD Lyons | The Hon. Judge (retired) Patrick McMahon | John Darby, Consultant, Flynn O’Driscoll | Joe Thomas, Partner, O’Reilly Thomas | Damien Conroy, Partner, General Litigation, Augustus Cullen Law | Ciaran Doherty BL | Julie Galbraith, Senior Associate, Eversheds Sutherland | Cormac Little, Partner, William Fry | Padraic Courtney, Solicitor, Law Society of Ireland.

### Flexible learning options

- Our lecturers and tutors are selected from highly experienced legal professionals
- All lectures can be accessed from home or work via webcast
- You will have access to the Law Society library and legal seminars
- You will acquire highly transferable skills attractive to a wide range of businesses
- Participate in workshops to consolidate learning with experienced tutors to guide you
- Participate in Mooting

### State of the art facilities in Dublin’s historic legal quarter:

- IT rooms
- Library
- Coffee bar, canteen and student bar
- Car park on campus
- Transport links
- City bikes | Luas | Buses | Heuston Station.



Search this recording

Contents	Time
Introduction to the Irish Legal System	0:00
Discussion	0:22
Notes	0:27
Domestic Sources of Law	0:29
Learning Outcomes	0:49
Domestic Sources of Law	1:45
Q1 / 3	3:32
Constitution - Bunreacht na hÉireann	4:51
Q2 / 3	5:18
Legislation	

**PANOPTO**  
The course online hub features streamed lectures with inbuilt interactive features





## LAW SOCIETY OF IRELAND

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The Law Society of Ireland is the educational, representative and regulatory body of the solicitors' profession in Ireland. It exercises statutory functions under the *Solicitors Acts 1954 to 2008* in relation to the education, admission, enrolment, discipline and regulation of the solicitors' profession.

The award-winning Diploma Centre, as part of the Society's Education Department, provides postgraduate courses that are open to solicitors, trainees and barristers and welcomes other suitably qualified professionals. We aim to provide a rewarding, high-quality learning experience, offering value for money and a high level of friendly, efficient customer service.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Diploma Centre, Law Society of Ireland, Blackhall Place, Dublin 7.  
T 01 672 4802 W [www.lawsociety.ie/diplomalaw](http://www.lawsociety.ie/diplomalaw) E [diplomalaw@lawsociety.ie](mailto:diplomalaw@lawsociety.ie)

*Please note that the Law Society of Ireland's Diploma Centre reserves the right to change or modify the course that may be offered and course price may be subject to change.*

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