
Students speak up for A-level Law

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Earlier this year, we put together some endorsements for A-level Law from respected Higher Education Institutions. Now we have collected together some student statements about how A-level Law, far from putting them at a disadvantage, has helped them in their university studies.

Scarborough Sixth Form College

Louise studied Law at Newcastle University. “Academically, Law A-level gave me a solid foundation to be able to study law successfully at Newcastle. I am now a solicitor in Newcastle and still find my A-Level law useful. I can still hear in my head the law teachers talking about the reasonable person in criminal law!”

Sarah studied Law at York University and says that “Law was my favourite subject at sixth form college. I gained much more of an understanding of the law and the legal profession by studying A-level Law.”

Ben has recently qualified as a solicitor and now works in Leeds, where he practises in the corporate team. “At the point I chose my A-levels, I had no aspirations to become a lawyer. It certainly opened my eyes to a career in law, a career I had never considered previously. Had I not studied A-level Law, at no point would I have considered law for a career. It was also useful in giving me something of a head start in my degree as I had an understanding of basic issues at a much earlier stage. At A-level, skills are developed to identify a legal issue, understand why it is an issue and provide reasoned legal arguments using case law as to what the effects will be. At degree level, new areas of law are brought in, detail is added and the ‘technical’ aspects considered in more detail. Also, more technical legal issues are studied.”

Jack studied Law at York University. “Law A-level helped develop my skills in evaluating texts and explaining complex ideas clearly.”

Philip studied Law at Sheffield University and is now a solicitor in a prestigious law firm. Philip was dyslexic but was able to achieve a grade A in Law and says that “Studying A-level Law greatly helped my written and spoken English. The A-level was really useful in terms of sparking my interest in Law at degree level. Without it, I wouldn’t have studied the subject at university and it was a good training ground for my degree. The A-level was set at a good level to maintain our interest but not overwhelm. There is a significant difference between a Law degree and the conversion course. There’s a fundamental difference in style and content at each stage.”

Cardinal Newman College

Hasan, 2nd year Law student, LSE “But for studying A-level Law, I wouldn’t have had the confidence to apply to such a wonderful, prestigious institution as LSE. The preliminary understanding I gained from the A-level helped with my general subject awareness and, as an A-level student, encouraged me to apply for a degree in Law, certain that this was the subject I wished to pursue. During my time studying A-level Law at Cardinal Newman College, I was offered enrichment opportunities, including participation in the Bar National Mock Trial Competition, taking on the role of a barrister. Combined with studying A-level Law, this confirmed my aspiration

to work in the legal profession. My A* in A-level Law helped me to secure my place at LSE, a university where I thoroughly enjoy studying.”

The Sixth Form College, Farnborough

Lizzie, University of Exeter (1st year undergraduate LLB) “The Criminal Law module in the LLB programme overlaps a lot with A2 Law so having an A-level in Law provides a great foundation for studying Law as a degree. I have found that this gives you a huge advantage over the students who have not studied Law before, as you can focus purely on the new material rather than having to learn all the basic principles, eg precedent, from scratch. I really can't understand why you would want to jump straight in at degree level without having first tried Law out at A-level!”

Jonny, King's College London Law graduate “I can honestly say that studying Law at A-level provided a fantastic grounding to my further study of Law at university. The analytical and critical approach to work that the A-level course encourages is invaluable preparation for a Law degree, or any degree for that matter. It is very comforting when faced by a lecture theatre of 300 peers to have a basic grounding in the law! I even use my notes and handouts from A-level in my tutorial and seminar classes! The A-level course is a perfect taster to anyone (like myself two years ago) who is unsure whether law is for them, or even anyone who is still completely undecided. Ignore the myths and learn about the law in an enjoyable way while you still can!”

Sophie, University of Sussex (1st year undergraduate LLB) “I would highly recommend taking Law at A-level so you can gain an insight into what the subject is like and whether or not it is for you. It enables you to become more familiar and confident with legal terminology and knowledge that are used regularly in university lectures, of which you would otherwise not be aware. This prior knowledge of Law stands you in good stead and provides a solid basis for the beginning of your Law degree. I feel that A-Level Law is a friendly introduction into Law that smooths the transition between college and university and you should jump at the opportunity to study A-level Law.”

Jamie, University of Cambridge Law graduate (First Class) “Despite the myth that universities dislike Law A-level, it has proved indispensable in terms of my Law degree. Much of the first year of the degree is spent tackling the question: ‘What is law?’ I was lucky in that I had been considering this question for two years already! Furthermore, the general principles that I learnt from criminal law and the law of negligence at A-level meant that I had an automatic head start in my crime and tort courses. I wasn't surprised that my best exam marks were in criminal law and the law of tort (which encompasses areas such as negligence, defamation and nuisance)! Whilst other people were grappling with the basics (what the law is), I could consider more interesting issues (why the law is as it is and how we could do it differently). It is not sensible to do Law A-level simply because you want to do a degree in the subject as the two are quite different (in terms of work-load and depth of study) and Law A-level is by no means a requirement to entry on to law degree courses. However, if you are genuinely interested in the A-level course, it will definitely provide some help later on if you decide to do a Law degree and, contrary to rumour, will by no means be a hindrance.”

Stuart, University of Surrey (1st year undergraduate LLB) “Studying Law at A-level has undoubtedly helped me at university. Not only has the course provided me with the analytical skills, research skills and essay writing techniques essential for studying Law, it has also given me an extremely strong foundation on which I could start my studies. University can be a stressful experience with new surroundings, friends and teachers to get used to, so having a strong

understanding of the law has made that settling-in process a whole lot easier! Much of the course content covered over the A-level course will without doubt be covered again during your first year of university. For example, within my criminal module we are covering all the offences that I have previously studied, therefore giving me a big advantage when writing course assignments over students who are still coming to grips with certain legal principles. Although a challenging subject, A-level Law is extremely beneficial and will not only look great on your CV, but it will be the most enjoyable subject you study!"