

# A Level Law Wider Reading List

The following suggested pre-reading and wider-reading lists have been sourced from two UK universities, and a Guardian Online article. Please do read this thoroughly and remember to keep a log of any wider reading you complete.

## 1. University of Leicester

Source: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/law/undergraduate/new-students/preparing-to-study-law-at-university>

### Preparing to study law

Students that wish to prepare for their studies may find the following suggestions useful:-

#### **The Media**

A good Law student will have a broad awareness of current affairs (in particular relating to legal issues). For this reason, we recommend that one of the best ways to prepare for your Law degree is to read a good quality British newspaper or news website every day. Many newspapers have specific sections for legal news (included in the links below)

- The Independent
- The Telegraph
- The Guardian and Twitter @GdnLaw

#### **Books**

Below are specific texts and other resources that may help you to prepare for your law degree and expand your awareness of the scope of Law. These are recommendations only – we do not require students to have read these and A Level Law (and year 1 of university) teaching begins with the assumption of no legal knowledge. We have tried to restrict our recommendations to books that are not too expensive and may be of continuing use to you during your first year of study. You may find these books cheaply via the internet or some may be available in your local library.

Our first recommendations are books about how to study law:

- N.J. McBride, ***Letters to a Law Student: A Guide to Studying Law at University*** (Longman 2010)
- A. Bradney, F. Cownie, J. Masson, A. Neal and D. Newell, ***How to Study Law*** (Sweet and Maxwell 2010 )
- G. Williams, ***Learning the Law*** (14th edition; Sweet and Maxwell 2010)

Students who enjoy fiction may enjoy reading works with legal themes such as:

- Charles Dickens, ***Bleak House***
- Harper Lee, ***To Kill a Mocking Bird***
- Franz Kafka, ***The Trial***

## Online resources

The following websites may be useful tools and gateways to additional information:

- The Guardian website have published "Law: a student guide" with interesting articles about what to expect whilst studying law at university: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/series/student-guide>
- The Student Lawyer is a free online resource that brings together legal news and articles in an accessible format for future lawyers. The site is written by law students or practising professionals and is intended for law students of all levels: <http://thestudentlawyer.com/>
- The Twitter feed of the New Weekly Law Journal: @newlawjournal

There are a number of legal blogs that you may find interesting, including:

- Blogs written by two current University of Leicester students <http://studentblogs.le.ac.uk/law/>
- The blog of Leicester law graduate Philip Henson, who is now a partner and Head of Employment Law at an award winning London Law firm. He is regularly quoted as an expert in employment law in the national, international and HR media; including several appearances on BBC News 24, BBC Radio, ITN News and Sky News: <http://employmentlawupdate.wordpress.com/>
- Two blogs focusing on legal issues in the UK <http://obiterj.blogspot.co.uk/> and <http://charonqc.wordpress.com/>
- The blog of an in-house lawyer from the telecoms industry <http://lawactually.blogspot.co.uk/>
- The blog of a Leeds-based barrister who writes about the realities of entering the profession: <http://pupillageandhowtogetit.wordpress.com/>

## 2. Kings College Cambridge

Source:- <http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/files/undergraduate/law-reading-for-prospective-students.pdf>

If you would like some suggestions, the following may help in introducing you to legal skills/how lawyers think (don't worry if you can't find the latest edition):

- Glanville Williams, *Learning the Law* (14th Edition by ATH Smith, 2010) *This is a popular introductory book. It will not give you any specific, substantive legal knowledge, but it will provide you with useful information ranging from how to read cases to what the abbreviations mean.*
- Ian McLeod, *Legal Method* (7th Edition, 2009)
- James A. Holland and Julian S. Webb, *Learning Legal Rules* (7th Edition, 2010)
- Nick McBride, *Letters to a Law Student* (2nd Edition, 2010).
- For a short introduction to the substantive topics and themes that arise in the study of Law, see Jeremy Waldron, *The Law* (1990).
- Some leading cases are discussed in a highly accessible manner in Catherine Barnard, Janet O'Sullivan and Graham Virgo (eds.), *What about Law?* (2nd Revised Edition, 2011).

## 3. Guardian Online

Source:- <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2012/aug/08/six-best-law-books>

### **The Rule of Law by Tom Bingham**

Whatever did inquiring legal minds read before Lord Bingham published *The Rule of Law*? This slim volume has rapidly become the book Guardian-reading lawyers are most likely to recommend to anyone interested in the profession. As Joshua Rozenberg put it: "Bingham's definition of that much-used term is now entirely authoritative and will probably remain so for the next 120 years or more. In summary, it is 'that all persons and authorities within the state, whether public or private, should be bound by and entitled to the benefit of laws publicly made, taking effect (generally) in the future and publicly administered in the courts.'"

### **Letters to a Law Student by Nicholas McBride**

"Dear Sam, I hope you don't mind me writing to you in this way..." The only book to receive as many nominations as Bingham's was *Letters to a Law Student*, by All Souls fellow and director of studies at Pembroke College, Cambridge. Solicitous, authoritative and hardly discounted even by Amazon, it knows its audience - those who already have a place to read law are advised to skip the first chapters.

### **What About Law? by Catherine Barnard et al**

Recommended by - among others - Southampton University lecturer Mark Telford, *What About Law?* describes the various fields of law in engaging detail, though is less forthcoming with practical advice. Opens with the legal implications of the wild party 17-year-old Laura throws while her parents are away for the weekend.

### **Eve Was Framed by Helena Kennedy**

Baroness Kennedy, as listeners to her current Radio 4 series will know, is as much concerned with justice as the law. Much of this lively and highly readable book is devoted to exploring the myriad ways in which the legal system has let down women - as lawyers, victims and defendants - though there is also plenty of optimism, particularly about the ability of women to rise to the top of the legal establishment. Kennedy's *Just Law* was also nominated.

### **Bleak House by Charles Dickens**

Somewhere in the new Rolls Building, a modern *Jarndyce v Jarndyce* is doubtless lumbering - or perhaps the Technology and Construction Court is hosting a particularly lengthy dispute involving tree roots. Dickens was a

court reporter for four years and undoubtedly drew on his experiences, particularly at the Old Bailey, for his fiction - this coining trial may have inspired part of Great Expectations.

#### **Other nominations**

- • Cardiff and UCL academic Richard Moorhead: **The End of Lawyers by Richard Susskind**
- • UK Human Rights Blog editor and 1COR barrister Adam Wagner: **Geoffrey Robertson's The Justice Game**
- • Carrie Alcott: **How Law Works by Gary Slapper** ("Absolutely brilliant. Have just read it now, going in to my final year, and really wish I'd come across it before I began studying")
- • Lila Lamrabert: **The Law Machine by Clare Dyer and Marcel Berlins**
- • Michael Zymler and Jennie Evans: **How To Win Every Argument: The Use and Abuse of Logic by Madsen Pirie**
- • Jason Miller and Emma Morris: **The Case of the Speluncean Explorers by Lon Fuller** (Miller: "Jurisprudence isn't everyone's cup of tea but it shows a variety of legal and moral viewpoints.")
- • Stacey Roden: **Learning Legal Rules by James Holland**
- • Paul O'Grady: **A Short History of Western Legal Theory by John Kelly**
- • Marika Giles Samson: **The Best Defense by Paul Dershowitz**
- • Jack Gilbert: **The Colour of Law by Mark Giminez** ("on a purely motivational basis")