RAISING THE BAR
The School of Law at the University of Reading is a transformative and international learning environment with a world-wide reputation for research. We welcome students from across the globe into our diverse, inclusive, supportive and highly ambitious community. We pride ourselves on achieving excellence in our teaching, learning and research. Our students develop as independent thinkers and learn about a variety of laws in relevant social, economic, cultural, political and global contexts. You will be taught by innovative, passionate teachers, who work on research that pushes boundaries, contribute to leading publications, receive international awards and grants for their research, and have a direct effect on policy and practice. The School of Law is very proud of its strong relationship with alumni and employers. We look forward to welcoming you on an exciting journey that will provide opportunities for you to thrive, in a department that is passionate about the development and impact of law at a global level.

"The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom. For in all the states of created beings capable of law, where there is no law, there is no freedom."

John Locke

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Professor James Devenney
Head of School and Professor of Transnational Commercial Law

www.reading.ac.uk/law
Imagine you are asked to defend the following case. The defendant and his friend agree to break into a neighbour’s house, with the intention of stealing. The defendant is aware that his friend has violent tendencies and foresees that if the neighbour retaliates, there is the risk that his friend might attack the neighbour with the intention of causing serious harm. The defendant and his friend did carry out the robbery, with the friend inflicting a fatal injury on the neighbour. Can the defendant be found guilty of the offence of murder committed by the friend?

In the past the law said yes. Collectively known as ‘joint enterprise’, this is a principle of common law stretching back hundreds of years by which a person may be found guilty of another person’s crime, if each were acting together for a joint purpose.

Where the person causing death had the intent to kill or cause serious injury, the secondary party was held equally guilty, because of foresight that death or serious injury might occur.

Dr Beatrice Krebs, Associate Professor at the School of Law argued “the threshold for conviction of secondary parties under the joint enterprise principle was lower than that required for convicting the person who actually wielded the knife or gun.”

Accepting Beatrice’s arguments cited in court by counsel for the defendants in the cases of R v Jogee and Ruddock v The Queen on February 18, 2016, the Supreme Court and the Privy Council reversed 30 years of English case law and effectively abolished the doctrine of ‘joint enterprise’ in murder cases.

Her research helped persuade judges to rule that only those who intend to seriously injure or kill someone and those who intend to assist or encourage others to kill or seriously injure, should be convicted of murder. Defendants’ foresight of the possibility that their associate would commit the offence can no longer be treated as equating to intent, although foresight can be regarded as evidence of intent.

The Supreme Court acknowledged that, in contrast to previous courts that had considered the joint enterprise principle, it had the benefit of a far deeper and more extensive review of the topic. In the wake of this decision, a large number of murder convictions in England and Wales may have to be re-examined, and MPs have debated the issues in the House of Commons.

Not only is Beatrice making an impact on the development of criminal law doctrine and practice in the area of accomplice liability, her teaching of our undergraduate law students. Students of criminal law benefit from her extensive insight and experience which feed directly into their learning experience.

“I am proud to have been part of a team that fought for the correction of this unfair law. At the University of Reading, we strive to have a positive impact on wider society. The impact we are having proves that anything is possible.”
As an aspiring postgraduate law student at Oxford University, Dr Ruvi Ziegler’s MPhil thesis focused on electoral participation of convicts from an international and comparative law perspective. He queried the potentially adverse effects of exclusion of convicts as members of their political communities and on protection of their rights.

Continuing his intellectual journey, Ruvi's doctorate appraised the unique political predicament of refugees, who are, in the main, in political limbo for an indeterminate period.

Since completing his doctorate, Ruvi has become an authority in matters pertaining to International Refugee Law, recognised as a Senior Research Associate of the Refugee Law Initiative and Editor-in-Chief of its working paper series. Ruvi has also established himself as a global expert on questions of political membership and participation, contributing to the work of the International Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the GLOBALCIT observatory at the European University Institute and the European Union.

From law student to change agent and social reformer, Ruvi has been able to make a real impact on policy and practice. Recently, much of his academic work as well as public advocacy has focused on the effects of the 2016 EU referendum on citizens’ rights on both sides of the channel.

Speaking at the Liberal Democrat 2018 Autumn conference, Ruvi argued that citizens of other EU countries who are long-term residents in the UK should be granted full voting rights to foster their inclusion. The Conference adopted a policy motion supporting this radical legislative change.

He also succeeded in moving amendments to the Liberal Democrat’s new Migration Policy that commits the party to a world-leading progressive and modern approach to asylum. Ruvi also co-authored a letter to the Israeli Attorney General, signed by 50 leading academics the world over, imploring him not to authorise plans to forcibly deport Eritrean and Sudanese asylum seekers from Israel. The controversial policy was averted with Israel’s announcement of cancellation of deportation orders and the subsequent renewal of permits.

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As an academic who is regularly involved in presenting contemporary issues in government forums and the media, Ruvi’s teaching and seminar discussions link theory with burning political issues.

Whether referring to the Israel-Palestine conflict while teaching international human rights law, or referring to the electoral rights of non-resident British citizens in his teaching of UK Public Law, Ruvi encourages energetic debate in class and an active contribution from his students.

"The challenge was to look at where the law stands and how it needs to be developed. The sense of accomplishment is in being able to set out ideas, engage with scholars, advocate ideas in relevant forums and pursue them until you achieve the desired long-term impact."
When Dr Peter Coe studied Media Studies at school, little did he know this would spark an interest that would inform his life’s research. After practising as a barrister, Peter is now a Lecturer in Law specialising in Media Law at the University of Reading. Peter’s research mainly focuses on free speech, media freedom and media regulation in the context of citizen journalism and other new types of publishers that have emerged in the digital age. Peter’s research interests stem from a broad interest in media power, the influence of the media over us as individuals and as a society, what it can do for us (both the positives and the negatives), how the law can regulate the media and deal with some of the issues that arise through press misconduct.

Peter’s research on citizen journalism and free speech and regulation directly feeds into his teaching on the immensely popular Technology, Privacy and Internet Regulation module. Co-leading the module with a colleague, Peter’s teaching sees him talk about free speech, the way the press is regulated, citizen journalism and data protection. They also look at the regulation of online harms, including, for instance, misinformation and disinformation and hate speech. Peter acknowledges that as lecturers, he and his colleague recognise that their role is to stimulate the conversation, but that it’s very much driven by the students. For example, a discussion focused on data protection may lead to conversations around the use of facial recognition technology and how the law can catch up to deal with this new technology.

Peter’s research does not only influence the content of the module, but also the module’s assessments. There are six broad topics that students can choose from to write a report about, with the questions or topics based on Peter and his colleague’s research. For instance, students may be required to engage with the online harms legislation. Whereas another may ask students to engage with how social media has contributed to the spread of misinformation around the COVID-19 pandemic or democratic elections.

Having written many publications on his specialist area, Peter’s forthcoming monograph ‘Media Freedom in the Age of Citizen Journalism’ will explore how the internet and social media have permanently altered the media landscape, changing the way that news is generated, published and consumed. It will consider whether individual bloggers should be subject to the same responsibilities and burdens that the traditional institutional press are subject to. For example, a discussion focused on data protection may lead to conversations around the use of facial recognition technology and how the law can catch up to deal with this new technology.

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When is a state allowed to use force against another? Once states are at war – what laws apply between them? How are war criminals, or people accused of crimes against humanity identified and prosecuted? Use of force, armed conflict and the regulation of states more generally are just some of the matters Dr Lawrence Hill-Cawthorne addresses in his lectures on international law.

Passionate about his subject, Lawrence believes International law is very different from other areas of law. People have sometimes questioned whether it is really “law”. Lawrence explains this is partly because there is no compulsory enforcement mechanism in place. There is no international police force, and no court that has general, compulsory jurisdiction. He notes, however, that all those who engage with international law on a daily basis treat it as law. Lawrence believes it is the unique nature of the subject that draws student interest in this realm of law.

Heavily involved in practice and policy making, he is able to feed his expertise into his final year international law lectures and teach students about developments in international law at the forefront of the field. Not only do they learn about the theory of international law, they also examine how it may – and sometimes may not – work in practice.

Highlighting the importance of getting students involved in research, Lawrence mentions that undergraduate students are given the chance to write a dissertation while postgraduate students benefit from the Global Law at Reading research and teaching hub. For example, one student of international law recently worked on humanitarian intervention in Syria and Libya.

Lawrence researches extensively in international humanitarian law and his work has made an impact on law and policy in a variety of ways. His book on detention in non-international armed conflict was cited by the Court of Appeal in England and Wales and the UK Supreme Court, and it has informed his advisory work with organisations such as the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. With regard to the use of armed drones in military operations he has advised the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary and Arbitrary Executions, co-written evidence on the subject for the UK’s Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights, and been appointed by the Human Rights Institute of the International Bar Association to a Task Force on armed drones.

“States can’t be bound by the rules of international law which they expressly refuse to be bound by, nor can they be subjected to the jurisdiction of an international court without their consent.”
Based at the stunning Grade II listed Foxhill House, you will be taught by leading academics in the field of law. Their expertise and commitment to their subject and students cultivates a stimulating learning environment that will encourage you to excel.

Our team of experienced academics are passionate about their subject and are recognised as experts in specialist areas such as medical, environmental, international and commercial law. As a law student at the University of Reading, you will benefit from teaching supported by applied research led by our academics who contribute regularly to global and UK policy development and law reforms through their work with governments and regulatory agencies. They are regularly invited to speak at conferences and to provide their expert opinion in the media. Some of our tutors are advisers to government and policy-making bodies like the Law Commission and the United Nations, whilst others have been involved with, or cited in, cases before courts, including the European Court of Justice and UK Supreme Court.

All of our programmes are supported by networking, conference and work experience opportunities for our students, which result directly from the strong industry links that our staff have developed in their disciplines in both academia and practice. Our academics are not only research experts in their specialist fields, many have applied and developed their knowledge and research interests through a career in legal practice.

Joining our School of Law will give you the opportunity to flourish in a dynamic and collaborative teaching environment and immerse yourself in legal debate and developments alongside academics, who are at the forefront of changes to global legal systems.

From day one, I felt that studying law at the University of Reading was the best choice I could have possibly made. I met professors who made me passionate about the subject, tutors who helped to develop my critical thinking, and friends from all over the world. My course has offered so many opportunities for having discussions, sharing ideas, and growing as an individual.  

Flavia Mongiello  
LLB Law graduate

The School of Law at Reading is a hub for high-quality research and teaching with impact.

In the Research Excellence Framework 2014, we were ranked 10th in the UK for research intensity, and 100% of our research was judged world leading, internationally excellent or internationally recognised. Our academics are established legal scholars who feed their acknowledged expertise into teaching, thus enriching the learning experience for our students.

Our academics undertake a wide variety of individual and collaborative research, much of which has made a discernible impact beyond the school. Aside from challenging the preconceptions of law, much of our academic research subjects the process of legal decision-making to strict analysis, often igniting debate and challenging governments and policy-makers to redress the balance from a legal perspective.

From court decisions and public policy made by central and local government and international organisations, to the activities of NGOs and charities, we aim to create positive change. Our subject experts undertake a wide variety of research, around themes such as Global Law; Justice, Rights and Legal Theory; Family, Gender and Sexuality; Public Policy; Legal History; Property, Transactions and Markets; Commercial Law and Financial Regulation.

Our recent research projects include: the changing legitimacy of health and safety, 1960–2015; the international legal regulation of detention in armed conflict; public attitudes towards – and justifications of – retention of the death penalty; and Civil partnership dissolution – expectations and experiences.

As a University of Reading law student, you will benefit directly from this and further research projects, as our academics encourage lively debate around their findings and invite their students to join them in thinking beyond existing laws and policies, to create positive change at a national and global level.
The School of Law at the University of Reading offers one of the widest ranges of pro bono activities of any law school in England and Wales.

Pro bono experience gives you the opportunity to work, on a voluntary basis, with local charities and other institutions where you will give legal advice and support to real people with real problems.

We strive to offer students an extensive range of opportunities to develop their career prospects and valuable transferable skills – including public speaking, formulation of legal arguments and the ability to think creatively – and to broaden their practical experience and awareness.

Pro bono work also enables students to make a meaningful contribution within the local community.

Recent pro bono projects include: the local CommaniCare Legal Advice Clinic, where you act as an adviser supported by local practitioners; our Streetlaw project, where you can work with local school students to give them an insight into law; and mediation training with Resolve, where you can apply in subsequent years to deliver mediation-related work.

Past students have volunteered with the Citizens Advice, Thames Valley Police, Launchpad, Reading Youth Offending Service and Reading Refugee Support Group.

In addition to pro bono activities, you will be given the opportunity to participate in our popular mock trials, known as moots. A moot usually involves arguments on a point or points of law. You will be required to argue either for or against a hypothetical decision, referring to relevant case law precedents and put forward a legal argument in the most convincing way. Law students find that mooting improves their ability to formulate and present legal arguments.

Through participating in our moots, as well as our negotiation, mediation and client interviewing competitions, you will have the chance to represent the University of Reading at national and international competitions, some of which are sponsored by leading law firms who offer work experience placements.

Successful completion of your law degree provides you with the first qualification for entry into the legal profession and it also equips you with a wide range of transferable skills that are widely sought after by employers.

Employers in Malaysia recognise the exceptional quality of graduates from the University of Reading. I secured my pupillage in a dispute resolution firm and I am now a full-fledged lawyer in one of Malaysia’s largest law firms.

Balamurali Tamilwanan
LLB Law graduate

In my first year I did a lot of pro bono work at the Youth Offenders Institute in Reading. There’s a programme called ‘Children Heard and Seen’ which focuses on children whose parents or carers are in prison. I also completed some legal work with solicitors back home, which I doubt I would have been eligible for without my connections from the University.

Rebecca Walker
LLB Law student
OUR DEGREE

LLB LAW M100
3 years full-time

Our LLB course is accredited by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and Bar Standards Board and provides you with the first qualification for entry into the legal profession, with the Law Society and Bar Council exempting our graduates from the first stage of professional training.

Gain a thorough understanding of the workings of the English legal system, with the chance to tailor your studies to your interests. You can complement your legal study selecting from a wide range of specialised optional modules including those offered by the Department of Languages and Cultures and Henley Business School.

Our induction programme is available to all students, as well as a dedicated Student Support Adviser, an excellent academic tutor system, and an established student peer support programme. You will benefit from integrated IT and e-learning within the curriculum, in addition to a well-resourced library and electronic legal databases including Westlaw and LexisNexis.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

If you want to study law at a British university but don’t have the correct qualifications, this course will prepare you for an undergraduate law degree. You will study the law module in the foundation year, which includes the English Legal System, Contract Law and Tort Law. Subject to successful completion of the International Foundation Year, you’ll be guaranteed a place on the three-year LLB law course at the University of Reading in September of the same year.

GO GLOBAL

The LLB Law with International Legal Studies is our year-abroad programme open to students by internal transfer who are on the three-year LLB to spend an additional year studying abroad, subject to the availability of placements with our partners.

If you wish to pursue a career in international law, business, human rights, or within an international or government organisation, or simply wish to travel and study as part of your law degree, this could be an excellent option to consider.

The teaching across various modules allows you to see where law fits into your life. For example, contract law has made me aware of the importance of the next contract that I sign, and tort law encourages me to consider issues of negligence and duty of care. Seeing law in the real world is what appeals to me.

William Page
LLB Law student
YEAR 1
Compulsory modules:
- Legal Skills & Legal Systems
- Tort
- Contract
- Public Law 1
- Criminal Law

Plus 1 x optional module:
- Research and writing skills

YEAR 2
Compulsory modules:
- Equity & Trusts
- Land Law
- Public Law 2
- EU Law

Plus 2 x optional modules:
- Legal Writing Credit
- Foundations of International Law
- Banking Law
- Crime and Society

YEAR 3
One compulsory module from the following:
- Research Writing Credit
- Pro Bono and Professional Placement
- Dissertation

Plus a choice from a list of optional modules such as:
- Company law
- Criminology
- Intellectual property law
- Family law
- Gender and law
- International human rights law
- Medical law
- Technology, Privacy and Internet Regulation
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Modules disclaimer
Sample modules are provided as a taster of some of the modules that may be available on this course. The sample modules listed may be compulsory (core) or optional modules. Information is correct at the time of going to press (Oct 2021) but the University cannot guarantee that a module appearing in this list will definitely run.

For optional modules, the University cannot guarantee that all optional modules will be available to all students who may wish to take them, although the University will try to ensure that students are able to take optional modules in which they have expressed interest at the appropriate time during their course. Optional modules vary from year to year and entry to them will be at the discretion of the Programme Director.

Some modules are available on more than one course; if you see a sample module under one course and want to know if it is available on another course, contact the relevant department.

Disclaimer
This brochure was issued in 2021 and is aimed at prospective undergraduate students wishing to apply for a place at the University of Reading (the University) and start a course in 2022. The brochure describes in outline the courses and services offered by the School of Law at the University. The University makes every effort to ensure that the information provided in the brochure is accurate and up-to-date at the time of going to press (Oct 2021). However, it may be necessary for the University to make some changes to the information presented in the brochure following publication—for example, where it is necessary to reflect changes in practice or theory in an academic subject as a result of emerging research; or if an accrediting body requires certain course content to be added or removed. To make an informed and up-to-date decision, we recommend that you check www.reading.ac.uk/Ready-to-Study.aspx for up-to-date information.

The University undertakes to take all reasonable steps to provide the services (including the courses described in the brochure). It does not, however, guarantee the provision of such services. Should industrial action or circumstances beyond the control of the University interfere with its ability to provide the services, the University undertakes to use all reasonable steps to minimise any disruption to the services.

Year abroad and placement fees
Some courses include an optional or compulsory year abroad or placement year. During this year you will only pay a partial fee which is currently set at 15% of the normal tuition fee. Check the website for the latest information: www.reading.ac.uk/fees-and-funding