

Module code: MOD008603	Version: 3 Date Amended: 03/Nov/2025
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1. Module Title
Legal and Social Obligations of Business

2a. Module Leader
Sebastian Smart

2b. School
School of Economics, Finance and Law

2c. Faculty
Faculty of Business and Law

3a. Level
6

3b. Module Type
Standard (fine graded)

4a. Credits
15

4b. Study Hours
150

5. Restrictions			
Type	Module Code	Module Name	Condition
Pre-requisites:	None		
Co-requisites:	None		
Exclusions:	None		
Courses to which this module is restricted:			

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

6a. Module Description

This module explores wider legal and social obligations that apply to businesses in England and Wales, building on your level 5 module Business Law. It supplements other modules on the law degree (level 5 optional module Commercial Law, level 5 optional module IP Law, level 6 optional module Employment Law) by providing an overview of other legal obligations that businesses face.

You will learn about the increasing obligations being assigned to businesses in relation to social responsibilities, including environment, social justice, business ethics and human rights.

If available, we will get a practicing lawyer to come and talk about the legal firm as a business for the final lecture.

This module is valuable to you if you are considering working in areas of corporate law, establishing your own business, or working within an established business - be that a law firm or any other kind of business.

6b. Outline Content

- The nature and function of modern business, stakeholder theory/ identification and competing stakeholder interests
- Business law vs business ethics (compliance/behaviour)
- Legal obligations 1: Registration for tax purposes; data protection; buying and selling, including on line; insurance obligations
- Legal obligations 2: Health and safety; fire safety
- Legal obligations 3: Environmental law obligations
- Legal obligations 4: Human rights related obligations
- Broader corporate obligations 1: Corporate sustainability
- Broader corporate obligations 2: Modern business accountability reporting
- The law firm as a 'business' (subject to availability of a guest lecture working in legal practice. If not available then the final lecture will look at the future direction of business obligations).

6c. Key Texts/Literature

The reading list to support this module is available at: <https://readinglists.aru.ac.uk/>

6d. Specialist Learning Resources

None

7. Learning Outcomes (threshold standards)		
No.	Type	On successful completion of this module the student will be expected to be able to:
1	Knowledge and Understanding	Critically evaluate how legal rules, doctrines, institutions, and processes in the legal and social obligations of business interrelate within and across complex social, political, commercial, and ethical contexts in balancing societal interests;
2	Knowledge and Understanding	Critically evaluate and synthesise legal materials relating to legal and social obligations of business, addressing complex legal uncertainty and justifying interpretations of competing views and approaches;
3	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Strategically apply and evaluate legal understanding to complex or ambiguous scenarios, and develop sophisticated solutions that integrate legal reasoning with practical, ethical, and policy implications;
4	Intellectual, practical, affective and transferrable skills	Communicate complex legal arguments persuasively and precisely, using critically informed structure and expression, and consistently adhering to professional standards, including accurate and comprehensive use of OSCOLA referencing and bibliography.

8a. Module Occurrence to which this MDF Refers				
Year	Occurrence	Period	Location	Mode of Delivery
2026/7	ZZF	Template For Face To Face Learning Delivery		Face to Face

8b. Learning Activities for the above Module Occurrence			
Learning Activities	Hours	Learning Outcomes	Details of Duration, frequency and other comments
Lectures	0	N/A	N/A
Other teacher managed learning	25.5	1-4	1 x 1 hour tutor led workshop OR 1 x 1 hour lecture x 11 weeks (weeks 1-11) AND 1 x 1 hour student led workshop OR 1 x 1 hour tutorial x 11 weeks (weeks 1-11) PLUS 1 x 20min screencast x 10 weeks
Student managed learning	124.5	1-4	To include such things as watching screencasts, online discussion boards, VLE exercises, private study (guided and autonomous), tutorial preparation, assessment preparation and completion.
TOTAL:	150		

9. Assessment for the above Module Occurrence					
Assessment No.	Assessment Method	Learning Outcomes	Weighting (%)	Fine Grade or Pass/Fail	Qualifying Mark (%)
010	Coursework	1-4	100 (%)	Fine Grade	30 (%)
• Individual Essay (2,000 words) Case study application of substantive law and critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the legal framework. • Group Presentation (10 minutes) A collaborative presentation exploring a relevant topic connected to the module themes					

Assessment components for Element 010				
Component No.	Assessment Title	Submission Method	Weighting (%)	Components needed for Mark Calculation?
010/1	Group Presentation (10 minutes)		20 (%)	All
010/2	Individual Essay (2,000 words)		80 (%)	

In order to pass this module, students are required to achieve an overall mark of 40% (for modules at levels 3, 4, 5 and 6) or 50% (for modules at level 7*).

In addition, students are required to:

- (a) achieve the qualifying mark for each element of fine graded assessment as specified above**
- (b) pass any pass/fail elements**

[* the pass mark of 50% applies for all module occurrences from the academic year 2024/25 – see Section 3a of this MDF to check the level of the module and Section 8a of this MDF to check the academic year]