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ENGLISH FOR LAW STUDENTS

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English for law students



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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, legal English has attracted increasing interest and awareness, especially because English is predominantly the language of international legal practice. Nowadays English is widely used in a variety of situations including the legal profession covering law-making processes, legal service, legal textbooks, law reports, Acts, etc.

This course book addresses to law students who wish to develop and improve their knowledge of legal English vocabulary to assist their legal studies, thus providing the necessary tools to operate with confidence in a business-law environment.

The book also uses a grammar-based approach integrated with communicative methods providing self-study exercises, ranging from short gap-filling exercises to more involved comprehension ones.

What are the aims of the course?

- To improve students ability to read and understand legal texts
- To introduce students to some of the language-related aspects of the work of a legal professional
- To build and strengthen the core skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking
- To familiarize students with legal documents
- To increase students' comprehension of legal English
- To increase speaking practice through extensive use of interactive pair and group work
- To prepare learners to communicate effectively in study or work situations

- To meet specific needs of the learner

How does this course achieve these aims?

The book focuses on several aspects of legal English and includes:

Skill objectives include:

- ✓ The analysis and production of authentic legal texts
- ✓ Language functions common to legal texts
- ✓ To ask questions, for example for clarification, while following a lecture, talk or presentation
- ✓ To follow discussion with only occasional need for clarification
- ✓ To deal with unpredictable questions
- ✓ To argue their case effectively and specify needs precisely
- ✓ To engage in an extended conversation with colleagues and clients
- ✓ Can control and sustain a topic-based discussions such as interviews, debates, contracts
- ✓ To communicate effectively in face-to-face situations in a legal context
- ✓ To follow and understand a range of spoken matter
- ✓ To develop the skill of speaking, reading, writing

Cognitive objectives include:

- ✓ Can understand the general meaning of more complex reports
- ✓ Can write most correspondence they are required to

- ✓ Can write a report that communicates the desired message
- ✓ Can deal with subject-specific terminology
- ✓ Can understand texts on complex topics
- ✓ Can deal confidently with a wide variety of law-related texts

How is the book organized?

The book consists of seven thematic sections namely: A Career in Law, Criminal Law, Tort Law, Commercial Law, Intellectual property and Employment Law which several grammar issues such as:

Each unit presents legal concepts in contexts and the topic –based activities are designed to acquaint students with the vocabulary related to each theme. It starts with an introductory discussion aimed to get students thinking and talking about the topic drawing attention to specific terminology and concepts. There are also activities which exploit the grammar and vocabulary and other activities aimed to encourage and develop students’ participation and acquisition.

Each unit also deals with important grammar topics including an explanation of grammar structures along with contextualized practice exercises. It enables students to learn and practice English grammar in context. There are five grammar tests so learners can identify by themselves those areas which need improvement.

Speaking activities are designed for oral debates or writing tasks about the legal jurisdiction students work or study in.

Teaching strategies and resources

The book combines different teaching activities such as pair or group work to get students involved in discussing, comparing and reading different texts. They can work alone preparing ideas or

making notes before a debate, doing a brief written task, or doing grammar or vocabulary exercises.

Discussions and sharing ideas encourage students to give opinions and enlarge certain topics, information gap activities stimulate individual participation. Problem solving assignments also stimulate meaningful communication, especially if students work together to solve them. Grammar and vocabulary exercises provoke lively conversations.

The teaching strategies pay great attention to active learning which is stimulated by solving exercises or other written tasks.

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3. Moneyworld Dictionary (UK):
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<http://www.lawgazette.co.uk/home.law>
5. The Lawzone/Lawyer.com (UK):
<http://lawzone.thelawyer.com/>

Assessment

The students' performance is measured by means of an overall criterion taking into consideration the communicative skills and the language functions, grammatical and lexical items, accuracy and appropriacy of the grammatical and lexical items, as well as fluency and promptness of response.

The tests enable students to find out how well they have mastered vocabulary and grammar and reflect at the same time the students' overall performance indicating the areas that need improvement.

UNIT ONE

A CAREER IN LAW

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the unit presents a general introduction to studying law listing the ways in which the law may be classified, offering, at the same time, a wide range of legal terms and concepts as well as an excellent introduction to the topics that law students need to deal with and understand.

The unit provides some basic features of the Romanian legal system with reference to brief descriptions of legal profession in our country.

The session includes language work on a range of grammar and functional areas such as present tense simple and continuous.

Learning objectives

After studying this unit, students will:

- Deal with the nature of law
- Classify the branches of law
- Make the difference between public and private law
- Describe core activities of legal professionals
- Demonstrate the ability of using correctly the legal concepts
- Appropriately and correctly use the tenses