



International Law

LMH Oxford Summer Programmes are provided by Lady Margaret Hall, a college in the University of Oxford

Course:	International Law
Available:	Programme Session 2: 20 th July 2026 to 7 th August 2026
Lectures:	18 Hours
Seminars:	12 Hours
Tutorials:	3 Hours
Independent Study:	Approximately 120 Hours
Recommended Credit:	15 CATS / 7.5 ECTS / 4 US Credits

About this Course:	<p>In the present moment international law is at the forefront of discussion and debate. People across the globe are ever more conscious of its promises and shortcomings. Knowledge of the subject of international law is vital, not just to those who hope to become lawyers, but to anyone who intends to be a well-informed citizen. The course begins with an introduction to international law as a discipline. We will consider the sources and subjects of international law, and we will explore the settlement of international disputes and enforcement of international law, including in relation to human rights. We will discuss international legal institutions such as the United Nations Security Council, the International Court of Justice, the International Law Commission, and the International Criminal Court.</p> <p>International Law has been researched and taught in Oxford for more than four centuries. It has long been important at Lady Margaret Hall in particular: our first law tutor was Elizabeth Thorneycroft, a distinguished specialist and practitioner in the subject.</p>
Course Overview:	<p>Week 1: International Law as a Discipline</p> <p>Week 1 offers an introduction to international law as a discipline, beginning with the history of the field as a topic of university study, particularly in Oxford. Attention then turns to key institutions in which international law is identified, developed, and put into practice, including the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations; the International Law Commission established the General Assembly of the United Nations; and domestic courts. Texts constituting and generated by institutions such as these will make up much of the reading assigned throughout the course.</p>

	<p>Week 2: The Sources of International Law and State Responsibility</p> <p>Week 2 examines the sources of international law and State responsibility. Particular focus is given to treaties and customary international law, but general principles and the secondary role of judicial decisions and juristic writing are also considered. The concept of statehood and the role of States in making international law are discussed. The law of State responsibility is introduced.</p> <p>Week 3: The Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes and Human Rights</p> <p>Building on the foundation laid in Weeks 1 and 2, Week 3 addresses—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the prohibition on the use of force in international relations; • methods by which States can peacefully settle their disputes; • the role of the Security Council of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security; • international criminal law; and • international human rights law.
Key Texts:	<p>The Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice</p> <p>The Statute of the International Law Commission</p> <p>The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties</p> <p>The Draft Articles on the Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts</p> <p>The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court</p> <p>The International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights</p> <p>The European Convention on Human Rights</p> <p>Relevant decisions of the International Court of Justice</p>
Learning Outcomes:	<p>By the end of this course, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental principles of international law, including the roles of statehood, sovereignty, and non-State actors. • Be able to analyse and evaluate the functions and limitations of key international legal institutions. • Develop a critical vocabulary to discuss contemporary legal debates around human rights and conflict resolution. • Gain skills in analysing legal research and case studies, and developing and communicating coherent arguments.
Admissions Requirements:	<p>LMH Oxford Summer Programmes are designed for students who want to gain and develop knowledge in their chosen subject area. LMH Oxford Summer Programmes are intensive courses of study aimed at undergraduates who have completed one, two, or three years of their degree, or entry level postgraduate students.</p> <p>We will consider each applicant’s academic ability and expect successful applicants to have a minimum grade point average equivalent to 2:1 level on the British grading scale. For example, this would mean at least a 3.3 GPA on the 4.0 grading scale in the United States, and 80% in China.</p> <p>This course would suit students in Law, Political Science, and Social Sciences, especially those with a background in Law, Philosophy, Philosophy, Economics, Development Studies, Human Geography, or International Relations.</p>

	<p>To participate fully in the programme all students will need to have proficiency in English.</p> <p>English language requirements for students who are not native English speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOEFL iBT score of 98 • IELTS score of 7.0 (no less than 6.5 in each component) • Duolingo English Test score of 125 (no less than 115 in each section) • Cambridge English Scale score of 185 <p>If the language of instruction in your home institution is English you do not need to provide evidence of your English proficiency.</p>
Teaching Methods:	<p>Core syllabus material will be covered in lectures. Students attend four lectures each week and each lecture lasts 90 minutes. Seminars in smaller groups offer students space to discuss and debate, to dig deeper into difficult concepts, and to explore their own ideas. Student contribution to seminars is vital, and tutors will ensure everyone takes part in discussions. Seminars last 1 hour and students will take part in four seminars each week.</p> <p>Independent study is a crucial part of an LMH Oxford Summer Programme and of the Oxford teaching model. Tutors will recommend important reading to do between lectures and seminars that will enable students to come to class equipped to understand the information presented and prepared to take part in discussion and debate. Each week students will have an assignment of independent work to complete and submit in advance of the tutorial. There is an appropriate amount of space in the timetable to complete the necessary reading, preparation, and assignments. Students should expect to do around 40 hours of independent study each week.</p> <p>The final class each week is a tutorial, a very small class typically including only 2-4 students and central to the teaching methods used by the University of Oxford and on LMH Oxford Summer Programmes. Guided by their tutor, students will receive feedback on their assignments and be challenged to defend, justify, or even rethink their work and ideas. These rigorous academic discussions help develop and facilitate learning in a way that cannot be done with lectures and seminars alone.</p>
Assessment:	<p>On a three-week LMH Oxford Summer Programme students produce one piece of assessed work every week, which is submitted to the tutor and then discussed in a tutorial. At the end of each week students will receive a percentage grade for their submitted work. Each week's work counts for a third of the final percentage grade, so the final grade is an average of the mark received for each piece of work. Students who stay for six or nine weeks will receive a separate grade for each 3-week course.</p>
Academic Credit:	<p>Lady Margaret Hall will provide a transcript of students' assessed work, and can send this directly to your home institution if required. LMH Oxford Summer Programmes are designed to be eligible for academic credit, and we will communicate with home institution to facilitate this as needed. As a guide, we recommend the award of 15 CATS / 7.5 ECTS / 4 US Credits for each 3-week course.</p> <p>Lady Margaret Hall itself does not award academic credit, and the ultimate decision on the award of credit rests with your home institution.</p>