

Faculty of Law



DROI1282 Legal English

[30h] 3 credits

This course is taught in the 1st and 2nd semester

Teacher(s): Alain Wijffels
Language: English
Level: First cycle

Aims

The course should help students to acquire a general 'passive' knowledge enabling them to understand an English legal text; it should also contribute towards the development of a command of 'active' English and the ability to express oneself in writing when discussing legal materials or questions.

More specifically, the course will help to develop:

- command of a basic English legal vocabulary, in all traditional areas of the law;
- the technique of translating an English legal text into French, including the skill to render in French translation terms and phrases which have no precise equivalent in the legal system of the translation's addressee;
- a first introduction to the use of professional tools for translating English legal texts, in particular legal dictionaries.

Main themes

Part 1: elementary legal English: a general survey of the vocabulary in different areas of the law, and an introduction to key notions of the common law tradition.

Part 2: advanced legal English: an introduction to cases in the common law tradition.

Content and teaching methods

Contents (see also 'main themes', above):

Part 1: elementary legal English (general outlines for various areas of the law);

Part 2: advanced legal English (case studies).

Teaching Methods:

Part 1: reading, translating, explaining the difficulties and the technique to avoid or resolve any pitfalls specific to legal English;

Part 2: analysing cases according to a set structure (facts, proceedings, outcome, legal issues, arguments submitted on either side). The active participation of the students in this part of the course is encouraged.

Assessment and examination methods:

these are explained in the information published on the electronic notice board (including a full specimen of an examination).

A standard examination includes: (a) translating legal terms from English into French;

(b) explaining English legal terms in French (with the help of an English legal dictionary);

(c) translating sentences from an English legal text into French;

(d) analysing questions relating to a case (the text of which is made available at the examination).

Other credits in programs

DROI12BA Deuxième année de bachelier en droit (3 credits)