

LAW AND SOCIAL SCIENCES PROGRAMME

Programme Summary

Pathway	International Foundation Year	
Programme Title	International Foundation Year (IFY) in Law and Social Science	
NQF	Level 3	
Mode of Study	Full time	
Mode of Delivery	Face to face	
Delivery Model	Standard Delivery Model (SDM)	
Teaching Institution	Birmingham City University International College	
Awarding Institution	Birmingham City University	
School	Law and Social Science	
Teaching Location	4 Cardigan Street, Birmingham	
	Two Semesters	January and September

Credit Breakdown

Length	Credit Weighting	Notional Hours	Contact Hours	Directed Learning	Independent Study
Two Semesters	120	1500	450	150	900

Articulation Programmes

DEGREE PATHWAYS	DEGREE AWARDS	NQF AWARD LEVEL
Law	LLB (Hons) Law	6
Social Science	BA (Hons) Criminology	6
	BA (Hons) Criminology, Policing and Investigation	6
	BA (Hons) Sociology	6
	BA (Hons) Sociology and Criminology	6
Education	BA. (Hons) Education Studies	6
	BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies with Graduate Practitioner Competencies	6

Regulatory and Quality Frameworks

The International Foundation Year (IFY) in Law and Social Sciences at BCUIIC is delivered within a structured quality framework aligned with UK expectations for academic standards, quality of provision, and student outcomes, appropriate to its role as a Level 3 pathway to undergraduate study.

The programme is informed by the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024). It reflects:

- Principle 7, through a coherent and progressively structured curriculum aligned to progression requirements for law and social science disciplines;
- Principle 10, via integrated academic skills, critical reading, and language support tailored to international students;
- Principle 11, ensuring that teaching, learning, and assessment develop analytical, evaluative, and argumentation skills required for undergraduate study.

The IFY is positioned at Level 3, comparable to UK Level 3 qualifications, and is designed to support progression to FHEQ Level 4 programmes in law and social sciences. Academic standards are aligned to sector expectations and informed by international benchmarking through UK ENIC (Ecctis).

While not a regulated higher education award, the programme operates within the regulatory environment of the Office for Students (OfS) through its association with Birmingham City University. It aligns with relevant OfS Conditions of Registration, including:

- B1 (Academic Experience) – a coherent, intellectually rigorous, and discipline-relevant curriculum;
- B2 (Resources and Support) – access to academic guidance, learning resources, and student support;
- B4 (Assessment and Awards) – valid and reliable assessment of academic readiness and progression;
- B5 (Sector Recognised Standards) – alignment with sector reference points and progression expectations.

Delivery at BCUIIC operates within the academic governance framework established with Birmingham City University, ensuring alignment of curriculum, assessment, and progression criteria with undergraduate entry requirements.

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The programme is additionally governed by Navitas UK quality assurance frameworks, including programme approval, moderation, external examining, and annual monitoring processes.

Together, these frameworks ensure that the IFY maintains appropriate academic standards and prepares students effectively for progression to undergraduate study.

Course Description

The International Foundation Year (IFY) in Law and Social Sciences at BCUIC is a Level 3 preparatory programme designed to equip international students with the academic knowledge, critical thinking skills, and communication competencies required for progression to undergraduate study within Birmingham City University.

The programme introduces students to key areas including legal principles, sociology, politics, and contemporary social issues, alongside the development of critical reading, argumentation, and research skills. Students engage with foundational concepts and develop the ability to analyse information, construct arguments, and evaluate evidence in a structured academic context.

Teaching and learning emphasise analytical reasoning, independent inquiry, and academic communication, preparing students for the demands of degree-level study. Assessment is designed to reflect undergraduate expectations and includes written coursework, presentations, and examinations.

The programme is delivered in one-, two-, and three-semester modes, providing flexible entry points for students with varying academic and English language profiles. Extended routes offer additional time to develop academic literacy, subject understanding, and confidence in engaging with UK higher education practices.

On successful completion, students are prepared to progress to a range of undergraduate programmes at Birmingham City University, including degrees in Law (LLB), Criminology, Sociology, International Relations, and related disciplines, subject to meeting progression requirements.

Programme Aims

The International Foundation Year (IFY) in Law and Social Sciences aims to prepare international students for successful progression to undergraduate study within Birmingham City University. The programme aims to:

1. Provide a strong academic foundation that supports transition from diverse educational backgrounds to FHEQ Level 4 study in law and social science disciplines.
2. Develop core subject knowledge and understanding in legal systems, social theory, and contemporary societal issues aligned to undergraduate entry requirements.
3. Equip students with critical thinking, analytical, and argumentation skills, enabling them to interpret information, evaluate evidence, and construct reasoned arguments.
4. Enhance academic and English language proficiency, ensuring students achieve a minimum B2 (CEFR) level, equivalent to IELTS 6.0, to support academic study.
5. Foster independent and collaborative learning, enabling students to work effectively both individually and in group-based academic contexts.

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6. Support transition to UK higher education, promoting understanding of academic conventions, ethical practice, and academic integrity.
7. Encourage awareness of social, legal, and ethical issues, supporting informed progression into academic and professional pathways within law and the social sciences.

Delivery Modes (2 Semesters)

2-Semester Route (Standard)

- Balanced development of subject knowledge, academic skills, and critical thinking
- Progressive strengthening of legal and social science concepts
- Suitable for students meeting standard entry requirements

PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

International Foundation Year – Law & Social Sciences (RQF Level 3 – pre--degree foundation provision) This programme supports progression to undergraduate study in Law, Criminology, Sociology, Psychology, Policing and related Social Science disciplines at BCU.

On successful completion of the programme, students will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

A: Knowledge and Understanding:

KU1. Demonstrate a broad understanding of fundamental principles, concepts and terminology within law and the social sciences.

KU2. Explain key legal, social, psychological and criminological frameworks and their application within local, national and global contexts.

KU3. Describe the social, cultural, ethical and regulatory factors influencing law, social behaviour and institutions.

B. Cognitive/Intellectual Skills

C1. Apply basic analytical and critical thinking skills to evaluate legal and social issues using appropriate evidence.

C2. Identify, interpret, and compare information from legal and social science sources to develop reasoned arguments.

C3. Apply introductory research and enquiry skills to investigate contemporary legal and social science issues.

C: Practical Skills

P1. Communicate ideas, arguments and information effectively using written, oral and digital formats appropriate to academic study.

P2. Apply academic conventions, including referencing and structured argumentation, in written and oral work.

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P3. Demonstrate effective independent learning, time management, collaboration and reflective practice to support progression to undergraduate study.

Stage(s) of Study



Curriculum Structure

Law

	<i>Module Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Semester 1	ILSC L3	Interactive Learning Skills and Communication	15
	TEE103	Digital Skill with AI	15
	HUM101	Mass Communication	15
	LAW103	Foundations of Law & Legal Skills	15
Semester 2	ILSC L3	Interactive Learning Skills and Communication	15
	BUS103	Globalisation	30
	LAW104	Introduction to Contract, Tort & Criminal Law	15

Social Sciences and Education

	<i>Module Code</i>	<i>Module Title</i>	<i>Credits</i>
Semester 1	ILSC L3	Interactive Learning Skills and Communication	15
	TEE103	Digital Skill with AI	15
	HUM101	Mass Communication	15
	TEE101	Numerical Techniques 1	15
Semester 2	ILSC L3	Interactive Learning Skills and Communication	15
	BUS103	Globalisation	30
	TEE104	Numerical Techniques 2	15

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy for the International Foundation Year in Law and Social Sciences is designed to support international students in developing the academic,

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analytical and communication skills required for progression to undergraduate study within the School of Law and Social Sciences at Birmingham City University.

The programme is delivered by Birmingham City University International College (BCUIC) using a student-centred- approach that combines lectures, seminars, workshops, case based- learning and guided independent study. Teaching activities are constructively aligned to the programme learning outcomes and scaffolded to reflect RQF Level 3 pre -degree expectations.

Learning activities introduce foundational legal and social science concepts while developing critical reading, structured writing, discussion and argumentation skills. Case studies, debates and applied examples are used to contextualise learning and support engagement with real-world- legal and social issues.

The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) supports access to learning materials, assessment information and feedback, promoting reflective and independent learning. The teaching strategy prepares students for the academic demands of FHEQ Level 4 undergraduate study.

Student Engagement and Academic Support Strategy

The Student Engagement and Academic Support Strategy aims to promote academic confidence, effective transition and sustained engagement within UK higher education.

Students receive a structured induction introducing academic expectations, assessment practices, legal and social science study conventions and available support services. Engagement is supported through small class sizes, regular tutor contact, seminar based- learning and collaborative activities.

Academic support is embedded through focused development of academic English, critical reading, essay writing, referencing and research skills. Attendance and engagement are monitored by BCUIC staff to support early identification of students who may require additional academic or pastoral support.

Pastoral support is provided through personal tutors and access to wellbeing services. Opportunities for peer interaction, debate and discipline relevant- enrichment activities support integration and confidence ahead of undergraduate progression.

Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy is designed to be transparent, inclusive and constructively aligned to the programme learning outcomes and teaching activities.

Assessment methods are appropriate to foundation level- study and reflect the analytical and discursive nature of law and social science disciplines. Students are assessed through a combination of written coursework, essays, presentations, reflective tasks, portfolios and examinations, as specified in individual module guides.

Formative assessment is embedded throughout the programme to support learning development, provide timely feedback and encourage reflective practice. Summative assessments are clearly briefed, use published marking criteria and support preparation for undergraduate assessment expectations.

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All summative assessments are moderated in accordance with BCUIC academic regulations, with oversight from BCU link tutors and external examiners, ensuring consistency, fairness and academic standards. Assessment practices promote academic integrity, assessment literacy and independent learning in preparation for progression to FHEQ Level 4-degree programmes.

Assessment Principles

- Constructive alignment with learning outcomes and teaching activities
- Assessment methods and criteria are clearly published and assessable
- Reliable and consistent
- Fair and inclusive
- Fit for purpose and timely
- Feedback is purpose driven and supports learning
- Transparent, efficient and manageable
- Assessment literacy encouraging academic integrity
- Marking and moderation process are consistently applied
- Efficiency of assessment boards
- Systemic enhancement through feedback from stakeholders

Progression and Award Requirements

Each module offered on the programme has a minimum overall pass mark. Please refer to Module Guide (MD). The College's Policy and Regulation (CPR9) explain all our assessment regulations for further details on the assessment regulations and failing to progress. - <https://bcuic.bcu.ac.uk/about/policies/>

Final and intermediate awards

Students that successfully complete the programme with the minimum 120 credits in a two semester will be eligible to progress to their chosen BCU degree programme as per offer letter and CAS and receive a transcript.

Course Structure, Moderation, Progression and Award Requirements

This programme is delivered across one and two semester full-time. Both the delivery and assessment of the programme is in English. The mode of delivery is standard delivery mode.

A subject specialist within the College moderates a ten percent sample of each assessment. Link tutors from Birmingham City University and appointed external examiners are invited to review these samples.

Each module offered on the programme has a minimum overall pass mark. Please refer to Module Guide (MD). The College's Policy and Regulation (CPR9) explain all our assessment regulations for further details on the assessment regulations and failing to progress. - <https://bcuic.bcu.ac.uk/about/policies/>

Final and intermediate awards

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Students that successfully complete the programme with 120 credits in a two semester or 75 credits on a one semester will be eligible to progress to their chosen BCU degree programme as per offer letter and CAS and receive a transcript.

Categories of Performance

A (High Distinction, 70 - 100%) – Distinctive level of knowledge, skill and understanding which demonstrates an authoritative grasp of the concepts and principles and ability to communicate them in relation to the assessment event without plagiarism or collusion. Indications of originality in application of ideas, graphical representations, personal insights reflecting depth and confidence of understanding of issues raised in the assessment event.

B (Distinction, 60 - 69%) – Level of competence demonstrating a coherent grasp of knowledge, skill and understanding of the assessment and ability to communicate them effectively. Displays originality in interpreting concepts and principles. The work uses graphs and tables to illustrate answers where relevant. Ideas and conclusions are expressed clearly. Many aspects of the candidate's application and result can be commended.

C (Merit, 50 - 59%) – Level of competence shows an acceptable knowledge, skill and understanding sufficient to indicate that the candidate can make further progress. The outcome shows satisfactorily understanding and performance of the requirements of the assessment tasks. Demonstrates clear expression of ideas, draws recognisable and relevant conclusions.

D (Pass, 40 - 49%) – Evidence of basic competence to meet requirements of the assessment task and event. Evidence of basic acquaintance with relevant source material. Limited attempt to organise and communicate the response. Some attempt to draw relevant conclusions.

F (Fail 0- 39%) – The candidate's application and result shows that the level of competence being sought has not yet been achieved. The assessed work shows a less than acceptable grasp of knowledge, skill and understanding of the requirements and communication of the assessment event and associated tasks.

Progression Criteria:

*** ILSC module 'Interactive Learning Skills and Communication' requires a minimum pass mark of 60% achieved in all assessment events for progression.**

*** Minimum pass mark of 40% achieved for all other modules listed.**

NB: See individual module Guides for details marks classification

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Assessment Map

Modules	Group/Individual Presentation	Project/Reflective Journal	Essay/report	Exam	Course Work/Quiz/MCQ
Interactive Learning Skills and Communication			70%	30%	
Globalisation			60%		40%
Digital Skills with AI				40%	60%
Mass communication	50%				50%
Introduction to Contract, Tort & Criminal Law				60%	40%
Foundations of Law & Legal Skills			50%	50%	
Numerical Techniques 1&2				100%	

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Appendix 2: Constructive Alignment Matrix (Programme Level – Level 3)

International Foundation Year – Law and Social Sciences

Programme Learning Outcome	Teaching & Learning Activities (TLA)	Assessment Methods (AM)
KU1 Demonstrate a broad understanding of fundamental principles, concepts and terminology within law and the social sciences.	Lectures introducing legal and social science principles; seminars exploring applied health contexts; guided reading and tutor led discussion	Written coursework; examinations
KU2 Explain key legal, social, psychological and criminological frameworks and their application within local, national and global contexts.	Discipline contextualised lectures; applied seminars; case-based learning	Coursework; short answer examinations
KU3 Describe the social, cultural, ethical and regulatory factors influencing law, social behaviour and institutions.	Ethics workshops; case-based seminars; tutor guided discussion	Written coursework; reflective tasks
C1 Apply basic analytical and critical thinking skills to evaluate legal and social issues using appropriate evidence	Research skills sessions; guided data collection exercises; formative enquiry tasks	Coursework; research informed reports
C2 Identify, interpret and compare information from legal and social science sources to develop reasoned arguments.	Numeracy workshops; applied data interpretation sessions; supervised practice	Examinations; applied coursework
C3 Apply introductory research and enquiry skills to investigate contemporary legal and social science issues.	Lectures introducing psychosocial concepts; discussion-based seminars; reflective learning activities	Written coursework; reflective journals
P1 Communicate ideas, arguments and information effectively using written, oral and digital formats appropriate to academic study.	Academic English skills sessions; presentation workshops; supported writing practice	Written coursework; presentations

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P2 Apply academic conventions, including referencing and structured argumentation, in written and oral work.	Digital skills workshops; VLE supported learning; guided practice	Digital coursework; technical submissions
P3 Demonstrate effective independent learning, time management, collaboration and reflective practice to support progression to undergraduate study.	Guided independent learning; group activities; tutorial support; reflective tasks	Reflective coursework; portfolios

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Appendix 3: Mapping of Programme and Module Learning Outcomes (Level 3)

International Foundation Year – Law and Social Science (RQF Level 3)

Key P = Learning outcome present PP = Learning outcome prominently developed and/or assessed

Core Modules (Health, Life Sciences & Education Routes)

Core Modules	KU1	KU2	KU3	C1	C2	C3	P1	P2	P3
Interactive Learning Skills & Communication (ILSC)	P	–	P	P	–	–	PP	PP	PP
Globalisation	–	PP	P	P	–	PP	PP	P	P
Introduction to Contract, Tort & Criminal Law	P	P	–	–	P	–	–	–	–
Foundations of Law & Legal Skills	P	PP	PP	P	–	PP	P	–	P
Numerical Techniques 1&2	–	–	–	–	PP	–	–	–	P
Digital Skills with AI	–	P	–	–	–	–	PP	PP	P
Mass Communication	–	PP	P	P	–	PP	PP	P	P

Explanatory Note

This mapping demonstrates how the International Foundation Year in Law & Social Sciences supports the development and assessment of programme learning outcomes across knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, and practical and transferable skills. Core modules provide analytical foundations, while applied social science and skills-based modules develop ethical awareness, communication and independent learning, supporting progression to FHEQ Level 4 undergraduate programmes at Birmingham City University.

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Appendix 4: Key Skills Map

The table below identifies where key skills are Taught (T), Developed (D) and/or Assessed (A) across the programme.

Skills Area	ILSC	Globalisation	Mass Communication	Foundations of Law & Legal Skills	Numerical Techniques	Digital Skills	Foundations of Law & Legal Skills
Knowledge base- Law & Social Science	TD	TDA	TDA	TDA	–	–	TD
Ethical & professional awareness	TDA	TD	–	TDA	–	–	TD
Research & enquiry skills	TDA	TD	TD	TD	–	–	TD
Numeracy & data interpretation	TD	TD	TD	–	TDA	–	–
Analysis	TD	TDA	TD	TD	TD	–	TD
Evaluation	TD	TD	–	TDA	–	–	TDA
Application of knowledge	TD	TDA	TD	TDA	TDA	TD	TD
Academic communication	TDA	–	–	TD	–	TD	TDA
Digital competence	TD	–	–	–	–	TDA	TD
Reflection	TDA	TD	–	TDA	–	–	TD
Teamwork & collaboration	TD	TD	–	TD	–	TD	TD

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Autonomy & independent learning	TDA	TD	TD	TD	TD	TD	TD
Study skills for progression	TDA	TD	–	TD	TD	TD	TD
Cultural & social awareness	TD	–	–	TD	–	–	TDA
Independence & lifelong learning	D	D	D	D	D	D	D

Explanatory Note

This skills map illustrates how the Law and social Science International Foundation Year systematically introduces, develops and assesses academic, scientific, numerical and professional skills essential for undergraduate readiness. Law and applied social science modules build disciplinary understanding and analytical capability, while academic, digital and communication skills are scaffolded through ILSC and skills-based provision, supporting progression to FHEQ Level 4 undergraduate study.

Version Control Table

Version	Date	Author	Approved By	Summary of Changes
1.0	30/06/2025	DASS	Navitas Academic Registry	
2.0	31/03/2026	DASS/CDP	Navitas Academic Registry 13/04/2026	Enhanced structure of the Programme Specification, clarity of LOs, LTA and Engagement strategies