

Exchange to University of Surrey, United Kingdom, Autumn 2019

I had the chance to experience domestic English law at the University of Surrey. I took Tax Law, Company Law, and Family law as third-year courses and Equity and Trusts as a second-year course.

Tax Law introduces UK tax law and some of the many public policy debates concerning taxation. First, the module provides a basic overview of the UK tax system including income tax, corporate taxation, inheritance taxation and VAT. Second, it explores a number of debates concerning fundamental questions in tax policy. These include whether to tax income, consumption or wealth, how and why to tax corporations and the role of taxation in environmental policy and responses to tax avoidance in both the domestic and international context.

The final exam was a 2-hour essay where you had to answer 2 questions out of 6 possible options. It has to be known that for every subject, there will be a formative exam(mock exam) in the middle of the study period, where students can test their knowledge in exam conditions and get graded as on a real exam.

Company Law critically examines the historical, political and economic background of the current English law. The aim of this module, therefore, is to enable students to acquire a sound knowledge base of the substantive and procedural aspects of company law and to develop a practical understanding of the legal aspects of setting up and running private limited companies. The final grade for this module was reached by completing 2 coursework essays each of 1500 words

Family Law

The module aims to provide students with a critical understanding of Family Law and the various contexts in which it operates. At the end of the module, students should be able to: Demonstrate a basic understanding of the nature and operation of the English family law; Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the doctrines and concepts which inform family law in the UK and in other jurisdictions; Demonstrate a basic understanding of the nature of a family in law; Identify the rights of those co-habiting, who are not married; Identify the rights of married persons upon separation and divorce; Identify the obligations of parents in relation to the financial support of their children; Analyse the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights on family law; Apply acquired knowledge to non-complex problems; Apply family law theories and principles to substantive issues; Evaluate critically the law relating to families; Undertake directed and undirected legal research to locate relevant materials

The module is assessed by means of a 2 hour examination.

In Equity and Trusts class we had to understand the origins and mechanics of the various equitable remedies. Be able to explain the formalities necessary for the creation of the trust (certainties, formalities, constitution). And understand equity's reluctance to recognise trusts for purposes and have a comprehension of the exceptions.

I found the substance of the material as hard as at RUG but the examination was easier since we were given the option to choose which questions to answer out of a pool of 3 times more than we are required to answer.

I would recommend Company Law since the way an English company is structured and operates is mostly identical as to the rest of the EU. Thought Tax law is mostly a domestic matter it does not have many applications in the international sphere, most EU countries have their tax system operating under the same legal and moral principles, therefore taking this course will result in obtaining a good foundation knowledge of a matter important in everybody's life.

The same thing applies to Family law, despite strictly governed by national law, the underlying principles are the same as in the rest of Europe. On the other hand, I would not advise students taking Equity and Trusts Law since equity is a creation of the common law system and does not exist in civil legal systems. Because you are studying domestic English Law all the courses were thought in English. The language preparation we had from RUG will be sufficient for not experiencing any difficulties.

On the day of arrival, there was an organised bus by the university to pick us from the airports for free during the whole day. As an exchange student, you have the privilege to stay at the student accommodations on campus. This is a cheaper option than to find a place in town out of campus. There are several types of on-campus accommodations depending on your budget. Living on campus is great, your lecture rooms are 2 min walking distance, the local night club is even less. There is a supermarket on campus as well though the prices are on the more expensive side. There are cheaper and bigger supermarkets outside of campus but you would have to walk 15-20 minutes. Life in England is expensive, especially when you go to London and since it is 20 min away by train you will be going a lot. With 450-500 pounds per month, you will live comfortably not missing anything. English universities are well funded, organized and managed. There is a dedicated office for incoming exchange students that answer fast and efficiently. One of the best things was that there are university clubs you can join, whether you are interested in art, sports, board games, or yoga.