

GCE

LAW: RULES OF CRIMINAL LAW AND THEORY IN CRIMINAL LAW

DEFINITION OF CRIME SUGGESTED IDEAS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING



SUGGESTED IDEAS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

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| Teacher /Lecturer: | |
| Unit: | A Level Component 2 and 3 |
| Ref. to specification: | Criminal Law |
| Suggested time allocation: | 2 - 4 hours |

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| Course: | A LAW |
| Topic: | |
| Session: | DEFINITION OF CRIME |

Aims & Objectives: At the end of these sessions the student will be able to:

- **DEFINE** what a crime is.
- **EXPLAIN** the conflict between law and morals.
- **EXPLAIN** that crimes can be defined in statute or common law and give examples of both with case illustrations.
- **STATE** the two elements that must be proved for someone to be found guilty of a crime.

Main Teaching and Learning Activities

Teacher/Lecturer Activities:

- Introduce the session with reference to the aims and objectives outlined above.
- Set a small group activity for students to come up with a definition of what crime is.
- Using the power point presentation take students through the definitions of crime given by Diane Roe and in Proprietary Articles Trade Association –v- Attorney General for Canada (1931)
- Set whole group discussion set out in the power point to get students thinking about why certain actions are classified as criminal. Ensure that all students participate, asking direct questions if necessary.
- Ask students to look at the issue of law and morals. Divide them into small groups and set the questions outlined in the power point about law and morals. Monitor contribution to small group discussions to ensure each student participates. Allow for student feedback.
- Using the power point, explain that although most crimes are found in statutes, some are found in common law with the examples provided. Students should remember R -v- R (1991) from studying precedent during the AS course.
- Introduce the concepts of actus reus and mens rea to lead neatly into the next session.
- Set homework task for students to do some research on the internet to try and find out a few other common law crimes.

Student Activities:

- Take notes throughout presentations, asking and answering questions throughout.
- Participate in whole group and small group discussions.
- Participate in feedback to the whole group from small group discussion work.

Suggested links / resources:

- IWB/Whiteboard
- Any good A Level Criminal Law textbook
- Handouts

Assessment

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| During the lesson | Students will be continually assessed throughout the session on their note taking, asking and answering questions, contribution to whole group discussion, participation in small group work and feedback to the whole group. |
| Subsequent to lesson | Homework set will be a short research task to find out other common law crimes that have been developed by the Courts. |

TOPIC: DEFINITION OF CRIME

| Questions: | | Expected answers: |
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| 1. | How would you define crime? | An action that is against the law that is laid down by Parliament. |
| 2. | Who decides what actions are crimes? | Generally decided by Parliament but they may be influenced by sections of society. |
| 3. | There are problems between laws and morals. What are these problems and try and illustrate your answer with examples? | Morals change over time as society changes. Sometimes laws cover these changes. A good example is the changes in the law relating to homosexual acts. |
| 4. | Give some examples of crimes. | Murder, rape, theft, etc |
| 5. | Give some examples of behaviour that are morally wrong but not criminal. | Adultery is a common example. Others might be more controversial so guide any subsequent discussion. |
| 6. | Most crimes are laid down in statute law but some are laid down in common law. What is common law and give an example of a common law offence? | Common law is law that is decided in cases by Judges – also known as judicial precedent. An example of a common law offence is murder which is not set out in statute. |
| 7. | Following the power point presentation, what are the two elements that must be proved for someone to be found guilty of a crime? | Actus reus – guilty act Mens rea – guilty mind |