

SOLM171 INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE LAW

GUIDANCE NOTES & INSTRUCTIONS FOR COURSEWORK 2024 / 25

LIST OF SAMPLE TOPICS

For those who may need some inspiration to decide on the essay topic and on how to frame it in a way that is conducive of a deep, analytical approach, here comes a list of examples:

1. What constitutes "effective protection"? An analysis of an evolving concept in refugee law.
2. Access to asylum and extraterritorial border controls: Are interdiction practices of State Parties to the 1951 Convention in line with Article 31 of the Convention?
3. Detention of asylum seekers: What are the limits of administrative convenience under Articles 26 and 31 of the 1951 Convention?
4. Should child soldiers be excluded from refugee status?
5. Terrorism and its impact on exclusion from refugee status: How should "membership of a terrorist organisation" be defined?
6. Gender and refugeehood: Should women automatically qualify as "particular social group"?
7. Credibility assessments in LGBTIQ+ applications: How should sexual orientation be proven?
8. Does the IFA / IPA have a basis in the 1951 Convention or is it an additional exclusion clause in disguise?
9. The limits of refugee protection in emergency situations: Are there exceptions to non-refoulement?
10. Covid-19 and international protection: Is a policy of "asylum suspension" in line with the Refugee Convention?
11. Are "climate refugees" really refugees?
12. Regional approaches to international protection: What are the limits and prospects of an expanded refugee definitions in Africa and/or Latin America?
13. Cessation: Is return to the country of origin ever (truly) an option for ceased refugees?
14. Do Palestinian refugees have a right to return?
15. Is there a subjective "right to asylum" of individuals in international law or only a "right of asylum" of sovereign States?
16. Should "political opinion" encompass gender-based grounds for persecution?
17. Can non-State actors provide "effective protection" from persecution?
18. Is there an obligation to provide temporary protection to large groups of internationally displaced persons in cases of mass influx?
19. Under which circumstances is "resettlement" a durable solution for refugees?
20. What is the role of borders in creating and/or entrenching refugee hood?

FINAL ASSESSMENT

Requirements

The final product should resemble a 'mini' LLM dissertation (see guidance in LLM student handbook):

- Submissions should be in Word or pdf format;
- In Times New Roman, 12 pt, 1.5 spacing;
- Include a bibliography at the end;
- Use OSCOLA for references—see link [here](#);
- 5.000 words maximum (including footnotes, excluding bibliography).

Deadline: General coursework deadline for Term 1 submissions in January 2025 (see LLM student handbook)

Marking criteria

The marking criteria used to assess the final essay are the same as those used to make the LLM dissertation (See LLM student handbook for details).

What follows below is for guidance purposes. Please, remember that each and every one of you can achieve a distinction—there is no ‘internal classification’ within the module of best or worst essays.

Mark	Classification	Description (for guidance)
70-100	Distinction	70-100%, generally ‘outstanding’ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An essay that scores a first-class mark will show an authoritative grasp of the concepts involved, its methodology and factual content;• Presentation and argument structure will be clear and compelling;• It will select and organise the material with consistent relevance but also with originality, possibly making a distinct contribution to the field;• Excellent command of academic and other sources and referencing style.
60-69.99	Merit	60-29.99%, generally ‘very good/good’ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A merit essay will show an above average level of understanding, organisation and interpretation of the relevant evidence;• The essay will highlight concepts directly, fully, and convincingly;• A clear understanding of the concepts involved and lucid presentation of the relevant material will be demonstrated;• Competent use of sources and good referencing style.
50-59.99	Pass	50-59.99, generally ‘average’ <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A pass essay will show a competent overall grasp of the material involved in the specific topic under examination used within the essay, but without the consistency, directness and fullness that is found in a merit classification;• Focus on the fundamental elements will often be inadequate and there may also be a lack of rigour in the selection of material and maintenance of overall relevance in the argumentation;• Description will dominate, with analysis being superficial and unconvincing;• Some use of source material will be made, but without meaningful critical engagement and inconsistent referencing style.
0-49.99	Fail	0-49.99, insufficient <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A fail essay will show basic knowledge, but insufficient to highlight the key areas covered in the essay, which are likely to be ignored, by-passed or simply addressed in a wholly inadequate manner;• Poor presentation and argument structure;• Lack of analysis;• Poor use of sources and referencing style.

Resources

For improvement of academic writing skills and study guidance, there are several resources to bear in mind, including one-on-one tutorials, reading workshops, drop-in sessions, small writing groups, etc., available via:

- <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/library/academic-skills/>
- <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/library/academic-skills/onetoone/>