



# Curriculum Outline



The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) is an international, independent, non-political and non-profit organisation for law students and young lawyers. ELSA has local and national chapters in 43 countries. From Iceland to Spain, from Ireland to Azerbaijan.



ROLE is a program in which law students, often supported by young practising lawyers, give highly interactive lessons to high school students. The aim is to create a better understanding of the rule of law, i.e. the foundations of a fair justice system, rights in general and personal power, in terms of how to bring about change for the better.



This document contains an outline of the 6 lessons that form the heart of the ROLE curriculum, which has been created by experienced professionals who are members of ELSA Alumni. ELSA Alumni is the alumni organisation of ELSA, which is supporting the implementation of ROLE with resources, skills and contacts.

### Our vision

*'A just world in which there is respect for human dignity and cultural diversity'*

# Outline ROLE Curriculum

This curriculum is built in three parts:

- 6 lessons that form the heart of the curriculum.
- 2 optional extra lessons that can stand on their own: one on the rule of law and freedom of speech and opinion and the internet; and one on business and the internet
- 4 project-focused lessons enabling a class to form its own citizenship project or projects

## Contents

Lesson 1: Fair Play - an experiential introduction to the rule of law	3
Lesson 2: Defining the rule of law	4
Lesson 3: How do we establish an independent judiciary	4
Lesson 4: What does it mean to be 'equal before the law'	5
Lesson 5: Access to Justice	6
Lesson 6: How can I challenge injustice?	6
Contacts for Further Information	7

## Lesson 1: Fair Play - an experiential introduction to the rule of law

### **Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to

- Recognise structures in society that provide for fairness and justice or the opposite
- Relate good and fair rules to a just society
- Understand the goals of the course and the subjects of the coming lessons

### **Overview**

The activities in this lesson ('organisational simulation') provide an experiential introduction to the rule of law. Drawing on aspects of systems thinking (e.g. *Structure drives behaviour*), the activities are designed to elicit a deep realisation of how life feels in the absence of a rule of law system and recognition of systemic conditions that provide for fairness, justice and honesty.

It is designed to fit into a 1hr session.

The game is played in groups of 4-6.

Alternatively, there is a more complex and comprehensive game which takes at least 80 minutes:

<https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/secondary/non-electronic-games/purposyum.html>

The final debrief integrates the learning, highlights the value of rule of law, and sets up the remainder of the program.

## Lesson 2: Defining the rule of law

### **Objectives**

In this lesson, students will develop a more comprehensive understanding of the rule of law and its key components. By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain the key components of the rule of law
- Understand the meaning of 'separation of powers'
- Describe to others a personal definition of the rule of law
- Analyse news stories from around the world and identify rule of law factors at play

This lesson will also serve as an introduction to debates about the requirements of the rule of law, i.e. whether it passes judgement on whether particular decisions are "good" or "bad" and whether human rights are part of the rule of law.

### **Overview**

Explanation of components of rule of law

Activity: Sports game, separation of powers

Creating own definition of the rule of law

Activity: Mind Map or News Analysis

## Lesson 3: How do we establish an independent judiciary

### **Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand what constitutes a fair trial
- Explain why an independent judiciary is an important prerequisite for a fair trial
- Indicate what structures are helpful in securing independence – security of tenure, professional and personal standards, ways to select and appoint judges.
- Understand bias
- Identify arguments and processes available if they suspect that someone making a decision about them has a bias.

### **Overview**

**Explanation:** What constitutes a fair trial

**Exercise:** Maverick Judge (courtesy of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law)

*This exercise requires a handout to be made. Make it look attractive, insert images of a judge and separate out the various statements in boxes etc.*

**Explanation:** What constitutes an independent judiciary

*Alternative exercise: assess independency of own judiciary (depends on age of students) - see end of lesson*

Video 1: <https://www.osce.org/odihr/gender-diversity-justice-video> equal access to the judiciary

(Investigate independence of the judiciary)

Difference between independence and impartiality

Video 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKA4w2O61Xo> on confirmation bias

Individual exercise: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

**Reflection:** Investigate personal biases

## Lesson 4: What does it mean to be 'equal before the law'

### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the core rule of law requirement that all people should be treated equally
- Distinguish between different conceptions of equality
- Recognise situations in which treating people differently is necessary in order to achieve equality and justice
- Determine whether rules are executed equitably or not

### **Overview**

Explanation of equality before the law

Video 1: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCS7Rus4\\_-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCS7Rus4_-Y) Equity vs Equality

Video 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJAgPF5FNTQ> Advantage (running)

Activity A: Stop and Search Police officer interview *or*

Activity B: 'Wheel of multiple perspectives' on COVID19

## Lesson 5: Access to Justice

### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to

- Demonstrate an understanding of the core rule of law requirement that individuals should be able to access justice,
- Understand economic and skills-based barriers that prevent citizens from accessing justice,
- Understand various ways of alternative dispute resolution/ informal justice
- Recognise opportunities for technology to increase access to justice
- Explain how citizens can cross those barriers and help others to do so

### **Overview**

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzugJPASNB8> 'How to put the power of law in people's hands'

Explanation of barriers to accessing justice, informal justice, alternative dispute resolution

Exercise: Analyse press clippings

*[Optional extra: Invite people from a law clinic\* or other initiative to talk about their volunteering work (\*offers free legal advice to people who do not have the means to hire a lawyer)]*

## Lesson 6: How can I challenge injustice?

### **Objectives**

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- Find out how to challenge decisions about them or identify ways to do so
- Understand the relationship between Rules, Forum and Remedies
- Understand that there are things you can do to challenge injustices

### **Overview**

Videos (one or more of three):

- 1) Explains an app that helps people to document injustice without personal risk: <https://worldjusticeproject.org/world-justice-challenge-2021/tella>
- 2) Focuses on getting children out of detention to avoid COVID: [https://youtu.be/i\\_VgutVhuJs](https://youtu.be/i_VgutVhuJs)
- 3) About a group in the Netherlands that helps children in detention with creativity, in the Netherlands and abroad: <https://twitter.com/i/status/1476552223744315401> (<https://www.younginprison.org/> )

**Activity:** rule of law challenge – choose a topic, barriers and enablers, resources required, plan

**Explanation:** Challenging actions or decisions of your government

**Reflection:** Important human right

# Contacts for Further Information

## **ELSA Alumni**

Lisa Mead, Director for ROLE

[lisa@elsaalumni.org](mailto:lisa@elsaalumni.org)

## **ELSA International**

Jean Mattijsen, Vice President for Academic Activities

[academicactivities@elsa.org](mailto:academicactivities@elsa.org)