

Law for Journalists in Scotland



Course outline

Course Tutor:

FRANK SHENNAN

Course Content:

Law for Journalists is a two-year course at HND level, or a 16-week course on block release - we will attempt to cover the main points in seven hours! As a result, the tutor will concentrate on explaining the principles of the laws governing journalists and how the laws apply in the real world.

The course will also be as up-to-date as possible and will consider the implications of, for example, the Naomi Campbell case against the Mirror, Max Mosley against the News of the World, the first Twitter defamation cases, the George Galloway case against the Telegraph, and the Luke Mitchell case.

The tutor is a rare combination of working journalist and lecturer in media law, so he will emphasise those areas which most affect journalists in practice. At the same time he has omitted subjects which arise only periodically, such as election law.

Journalists are advised to buy and read Scots Law for Journalists, by Rosalind McInnes, 8th edition, published by W. Green.

Programme

- INTRODUCTION: LAW AND THE CRISIS OF JOURNALISM: Rights and duties, why restrictions and privileges apply; Sources of law: legislation, case law, Westminster, Holyrood, European Commission, European Court of Human Rights; Civil and criminal law.
- DEFAMATION AND THE "CHILLING EFFECT": Defamation; Defences; Privilege in Parliaments, courts and local government; Limited Privilege for news reporting; Cyberspace – not the hiding place you think; The web, Twitter and other social media; Section 1 – the 'live' defence protecting online posts
- USING AND ABUSING COPYRIGHT: Outline of copyright; How to protect your copyright; How to use material without permission; Navigating cyberspace (More detailed practical advice is given in The Effective Freelance and the Copyright & Commissioning courses: go to www.MediaFaculty.com for more information.)
- WHAT'S PUBLIC... : Access to meetings and information; Freedom of Information Acts (plural); Using them in practice
- ...WHAT'S PRIVATE...: Confidentiality and misuse of private information; The Data Protection Act; Human Rights Act
- ...AND WHAT NOW?: The Leveson Report – what it says...; What it means; What will be enacted?
- POLICE AND COURTS: Reporting of police investigations, arrest, charging, trial; Courts and procedure; what may be reported at each stage; Contempt of court; Defences to prosecutions for contempt

Course costs **£95 for NUJ members** and places can be booked by contacting joanm@nuj.org.uk

Law for Journalists in Scotland



Course outline

- **SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS AND TRIBUNALS:** Identification of children: children's hearings; Coverage of rape and sexual offences; Special courts: fatal accident inquiries, employment tribunals How an on-line petition helped elect a President; how Twitter toppled a dictator; how Facebook changed the law; how social media can help your union or organisation

What you should bring with you:

No requirements, however, you may wish to bring a notepad.

Qualifications:

No formal qualifications required.

Expected learning outcomes:

A better understanding or update on law for journalists especially after the Leveson enquiry.