



Module code	LWTO	NQF level	7
Credit value	20	Study duration	12 weeks

# Law of the World Trade Organisation

## Module description

This is a 20 credit level 7 module which forms part of the LLM in International Business Law. All students must complete this part of the course as it is a compulsory module.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) was established in 1995 and is the only international organisation which deals with the global rules of international trade between nations. The WTO agreements are negotiated and agreed by many of the world's trading nations and ratified through their parliaments. The WTO aims to contribute to economic development and growth across the world by reducing or removing obstacles to international trade. The WTO also provides a legal and institutional framework for implementing and monitoring the agreements, as well as settling disputes arising from their interpretation and application. The current body of trade agreements consist of 16 multinational agreements (to which all WTO members are party) and two plurilateral agreements (to which some WTO members are party).

The WTO has 162 members, of which 117 are classified as developing countries or separate customs territories. WTO activities are supported by a Secretariat of 700 staff under the Director-General. The Secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland and has an annual budget of \$180 million.

The module considers the development of the WTO in world trade, its remit and how it operates procedurally. It will also cover notable successes and failures as well as consider criticisms of the WTO.

The module will equip the students with an understanding of the concepts behind the WTO and the opportunity to critically analyse the effectiveness of the WTO and the law governing international agreements. Students will gain an in-depth knowledge of world trade through the agreements and procedures of the WTO.

## This module aims to:

- Introduce the WTO and look at how (and why) it developed out of the post war world
- Equip students with an understanding of the challenges and issues that lawyers and trading nations face in this area
- Provide students with knowledge of the WTO through its agreements
- Help students understand the remit, procedures and operation of the WTO
- Allow students to discuss successes, failures and criticisms of the WTO

## Learning outcomes

On completion of this module, students will be able to:

- demonstrate a thorough understanding of the legal principles of international trade through WTO agreements
- understand the remit, procedures and operation of the WTO
- understand the legal interpretation of WTO agreements
- know how the WTO agreements promote international trade

## Syllabus

- International Trade and the WTO
- WTO dispute settlement
- WTO principles: most favoured nation, and national treatment
- Tariff and non-tariff barriers
- Exceptions to the WTO rules 1: general and security exceptions
- Exceptions to the WTO rules 2: economic emergency exceptions
- Exceptions to the WTO Rules 3: regional trade exceptions
- Dumping and subsidies
- WTO annexed agreements 1: SPS agreement
- WTO annexed agreements 2: TBT agreement
- WTO annexed agreements 3: TRIPS agreement
- The future of the WTO in international trade

## Learning and teaching methods

The module will be delivered through the provision of specified reading materials which shall be provided on the module/ programme learning platform, which shall be supported by specified discussion forums and weekly online lectures. Weekly online lectures are normally of 30 minutes duration.

Students will be provided with indicative guidance on, and encouraged to look at, relevant websites which are appropriate to the module. The students will learn to identify and share appropriate web-based resources as learning support references with their fellow students. This will act as an indicator of their individual learning contexts with their tutors.

The Q&A sessions will include referenced use of selected case studies which will be drawn from the reading materials/web based module learning resources and the practice-based and professional/educational contexts and experience of the tutors. Self-managed learning will supplement lectures and students are given direction on required and indicative reading.

Description of unit of assessment	Length/Duration	Submission date	Weighting
Discussion activity	2 weeks	n/a	20%
Mid module assignment - case study	2,500 words	Mid term	40%
End of module project	2,500 words	End term	40%