



### Course Outline

<b>Course number</b>	RBA127					
<b>Course title</b>	Legal Research Methods					
<b>Credit points</b>	3 ECTS					
<b>Total hours</b>	75					
<b>Lecture hours</b>	20					
<b>Seminar hours</b>	12					
<b>Independent studies</b>	43					
<b>Course level</b>	Bachelor					
<b>Prerequisites</b>	None					
<b>Category</b>	<b>Mandatory</b>	<b>X</b>	Elective		Free elective	

### COURSE RESPONSIBLE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Laura Ratniece	PhD, MA <i>cum laude</i>	Senior researcher

### COURSE TEACHERS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Laura Ratniece	PhD, MA <i>cum laude</i>	Senior researcher
Kalvis Logins	LL.M	Visiting lecturer

### COURSE ABSTRACT

This course provides an introduction into research in social sciences in general, and legal research in particular. Students will become familiar with the main approaches to legal research and the main methodological issues. The course introduces the key elements of writing legal research papers, and it prepares students for writing them.

Passing this course is a mandatory precondition to be admitted to writing a Y1 Research Paper.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course has the following main objectives:

**Knowledge:**

1. Students understand the meaning of the concept of academic integrity (honesty), and students have acquired the necessary knowledge of the formal requirements for writing research papers.
2. Students are aware of the main approaches to legal research and understand the key issues of them.
3. Students are aware of the most important issues related to comparative legal research, interdisciplinary research, and empirical legal research. Students have a more in-depth knowledge and understanding of doctrinal legal research.

**Skills:**

1. Students have developed and improved legal research skills.
2. Students have improved argumentation skills.
3. Students have improved writing skills.

**Competences:**

1. Students are able to formulate a topic of a research paper, set one or more research questions, explain and justify their formulated topic and research question.
2. Students are able to explain the role of an introduction and a conclusion in academic research. Students are able to identify the most important elements of an introduction and a conclusion. Students are able to write an introduction and a conclusion (at a level of Y1).
3. Students are able to design a structure of a short research paper.
4. Students are able to explain the most important issues of a doctrinal legal research, and students can argue about advantages and disadvantages of a doctrinal legal research. Students are able to explain the most important issues of a comparative legal research, empirical legal research and interdisciplinary legal research.
5. Students are able to conduct a doctrinal legal research (at a level of the first semester of Y1).

**GRADING CRITERIA**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Project (in groups, take-home)	20%
Exam (individual, in-class, closed-book)	80%

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

In order to pass the course, a student has to participate in the group project and pass the exam. The final grade of the course will be the average grade of the group project, and the exam (based on the 20% - 80% proportion). If a student does not participate in the group project, the student receives a grade "0" for the respective component, and the student is not admitted to the exam. Participation in the group project is a mandatory requirement to be admitted to the exam. If a student receives a negative grade for the group project (1 – 3), it is not possible to re-take this component. However, the student is still admitted to the exam. If a student fails the final exam, the student is entitled to take a re-exam. However, the re-exam grade will still count only 80% towards the final grade. If after the re-exam the final grade is still negative, unfortunately the student has to re-take the course.

## **COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Main subjects</b>	<b>Planned hours</b>
1	Practical issues related to the course and legal research.	4
2	Approaches to a legal research. Legal research methods.	28