



FACULDADE DE DIREITO  
Universidade de Lisboa

## Curricular Unit Sheet

### Master's Degree in Law and Legal Practice –2025-2026 – 2nd semester

#### Curricular Unit

International Human Rights Law

#### Complementary Information:

Duration: Semester,  
Work hours: 2h/week,  
Credits ECTS: 7

#### Responsible Academic staff and respective workload in the curricular unit (enter full name)

Cláudia Sofia Oliveira Dias Monge – 2 hours

#### Other academic staff and respective workloads in the curricular unit

Not applicable

#### Learning outcomes of the curricular unit

The learning objectives of the course unit, in the field of technical and legal knowledge, are as follows:

- (i) Recognise the importance of defending and protecting human rights in the fulfilment of the mission of Public International Law;
- (ii) Recognise the importance of human rights in defending the Rule of Law;
- (iii) Identify, understand and know how to critically apply universal international human rights protection systems and regional human rights systems;
- (iv) Recognise how international justice contributes to the effective protection of human rights;
- (v) Recognise the special relevance of regional systems for the realisation of human rights;
- (vi) Recognise the importance of the European Union's legal regime for the protection of human rights;
- (vii) Critically assess current challenges through the analysis of topics.

The learning objectives of the course unit, in terms of the skills to be acquired, are as follows:

- Be able to explain human rights systems, work with their protection mechanisms and outline the importance of their effects;
- Recognise how the means of effective protection of human rights contribute to the defence of the Rule of Law;
- Be able to discuss and take a position on current human rights issues.

#### Syllabus

- Introduction
  1. Public International Law and International Human Rights Law;
  2. Concept of human rights;
  3. Sources of International Human Rights Law – framework and historical evolution;
  4. Public International Law and International Protection of Human Rights; human dignity, prohibition of discrimination, equal dignity and the state's duty to protect human rights;
  5. The universal system and regional systems; the highest level of protection and protection mechanisms;
  6. In particular, the relevance of international justice as an instrument for the effective protection of human rights – the relevance of international justice, the role of national courts and the effective protection of human rights.



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- Chapter I – The universal system of human rights protection
  1. The objectives and principles of the United Nations;
  2. International protection regime within the framework of the United Nations:
    - a) The Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; development in conjunction with specific international conventions;
    - b) The institutional structure and instruments for the protection of human rights.
- Chapter II – Regional human rights systems
  1. Framework;
  2. The European human rights system under the aegis of the Council of Europe
    - 2.1. Normative instruments;
    - 2.2. The work of the European Court of Human Rights, the binding effect of judgments and the effective protection of fundamental rights;
  3. European Union law
    - 3.1. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the effects of its legal value equal to that of the Treaties and the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union;
    - 3.2. Protection instruments;
  4. The American Convention on Human Rights system and the role of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights;
  5. The judicial system of the African Convention on Human Rights and the role of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights
- Chapter III – International Human Rights Law – thematic analyses
  - Theme 1: The right to health protection;
  - Theme 2: The right to the environment; the combined protection of the right to health protection and the right to the environment;
  - Theme 3: The protection of children;
  - Theme 4: The prohibition of age discrimination;
  - Theme 5: Combating domestic violence;
  - Theme 6: The protection of refugees.
- Assessment
  1. The relationship between the universal system and regional human rights systems;
  2. The importance of regional systems and the work of regional human rights courts and the defence of the rule of law;
  3. The relationship between the international legal order, the legal order of the European Union and the Portuguese legal order for the defence of human rights;
  4. Rule of Law and human rights justice.

#### Demonstration of the syllabus coherence with the curricular unit's objectives

The initial framing of human rights as a means of implementing public international law in the subsistence and functioning of the international community is an appropriate way to recognise the importance of studying this subject. The alignment of international protection of the human person with its essential elements, human dignity and prohibition of discrimination, provides the backdrop for the effective protection of human rights and recognition of the importance of international, regional and national human rights justice.

The cross-cutting nature of the defined content allows for the combination of different systems of human rights protection, both universal and regional, and recognises how international justice and the work of regional human rights courts and the Court of Justice of the European Union contribute to the evolution and application of law in the European legal order and in the national legal order.

The analysis of topics of recognised current relevance promotes critical thinking and the taking of a position on essential issues that constitute present and future challenges to international human rights law and to whose analysis and scientific responses international and regional justice have contributed.

#### Teaching methodologies (including evaluation)

Classes will be theoretical and practical. Combined with the initial presentation of content by the lecturer, student participation will be encouraged according to the topics and respective materials previously indicated in accordance



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with the programme. Materials will be made available for study and case law analysis to promote critical assessment and practical discussion of the theoretical content covered. Debates and individual presentations will also be held.

The materials will be made available on the Moodle platform, accessible via the [link Direito Internacional dos Direitos Humanos \(3033EN-2526\)](#)

Assessment is based on the following elements:

- Oral presentation of programme topics and participation in classes and debates (20%);
- Oral presentation of individual work (15%);
- Presentation of a paper (10 pages) (15%);
- Written examination (50%).

#### Demonstration of the coherence between the teaching methodologies and the learning outcomes

The theoretical-practical method is appropriate for presenting the theoretical foundations and learning the practical tools necessary to achieve the course aims. Assessment in the classroom, combined with written paper, allows for consistent evaluation of learning in accordance with the aims established. The encouragement of classroom work, preparation of topics, presentations and debates, and the preparation of a paper help to develop research skills and deepen knowledge appropriate to a master's student.

#### Bibliography - Highlight

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