

How to develop critical thinking (for Law)

In order to develop critical thinking in law you need to ask questions of the law.

Ask the questions below whenever you come across or discover new information or when you are presented with a statement - in lectures/seminars/reading.

Let's take an example:

e.g. You have been told that there has been a significant change to the law on the right to protest.

You need to ask the following questions: **The 5 Ws + H**

WHO	Who benefits from this change to the law? Who does this law harm? Who is/will be most directly impacted by this change?	Who is discussing this? Who is raising concerns about this? Who is championing this change and why?
WHY	Why is this a problem/challenge? Why is this relevant to me/others? Why are people influenced by this?	Why now? Why is there a need for this change/perceived need for this change?
WHAT	What is the change? What are the strengths and weaknesses of this change? What would an alternative approach look like?	What is the primary driver here?
WHERE	Where have there been similar changes? Where is there most need for this/supposed need for this?	Where can I get more information about this?
WHEN	When is this acceptable/unacceptable? When would this benefit society? When would it not?	
HOW	How is this change similar to X? How do we know the truth about this/statistics being presented?	How does this benefit us/others? How does it do harm?

Adapted from a source produced by the Global Digital Citizen Foundation

WHY x 5 The Five whys technique is often used in problem solving. It might also be helpful in your interrogation of a source, principle. E.g. Why was a change to the law introduced? Then ask why, of that response, and repeat 5 times.