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Level 2 Certificate in Legal Studies

## EU Law

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EU Law is a body of law that governs the European Union (EU), a political and economic union of 27 European countries. It is a unique legal system that operates alongside the national legal systems of EU member states. EU Law is based on treaties and legislation agreed upon by EU member states and the institutions of the EU, such as the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Union.

Key Terms and Vocabulary in EU Law:

1. **European Union (EU):** An economic and political union of 27 European countries that have agreed to work together on various issues, such as trade, environmental protection, and human rights.
2. **Treaties:** Legal agreements between EU member states that establish the rules and principles of the EU. The two main treaties are the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).
3. **Legislation:** Laws and regulations enacted by the EU institutions to implement the treaties and achieve the objectives of the EU.
4. **European Commission:** The executive branch of the EU responsible for proposing legislation, implementing EU policies, and enforcing EU law.
5. **European Parliament:** The directly elected legislative body of the EU that represents the interests of EU citizens and approves EU legislation.
6. **Council of the European Union:** The institution that represents the governments of the EU member states and is responsible for making decisions on EU legislation.
7. **European Court of Justice (ECJ):** The judicial body of the EU that interprets EU law and ensures its uniform application across all EU member states.
8. **Direct Effect:** The principle that certain provisions of EU law can be directly enforced by individuals in national courts without the need for national implementing legislation.
9. **Supremacy of EU Law:** The principle that EU law takes precedence over national law in cases of conflict, as established by the ECJ in the landmark case of *Costa v ENEL*.
10. **Free Movement of Goods:** One of the fundamental freedoms of the EU Single Market, which allows goods to be traded freely across EU member states without barriers such as tariffs or quotas.
11. **Free Movement of Persons:** Another fundamental freedom of the EU Single Market, which allows EU citizens to live, work, and study in any EU member state.

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12. Competition Law: The area of EU law that aims to prevent anti-competitive practices, such as cartels and abuse of dominant market positions, to ensure a level playing field for businesses in the EU.
  13. State Aid: Financial assistance provided by EU member states to companies that may distort competition in the EU Single Market, subject to strict rules and limitations under EU law.
  14. Consumer Protection: EU legislation that aims to protect consumers from unfair commercial practices, ensure product safety, and provide remedies in case of defective products or services.
  15. Data Protection: EU laws, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), that regulate the processing of personal data to protect individuals' privacy rights.
  16. Environmental Law: EU legislation that sets standards for environmental protection, such as pollution control, waste management, and conservation of natural resources.
  17. Human Rights: The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights guarantees a range of civil, political, economic, and social rights to EU citizens, which must be respected by EU institutions and member states.
  18. Internal Market: The area within the EU where goods, services, capital, and persons can move freely without barriers, promoting competition and economic growth.
  19. Customs Union: An agreement between EU member states to remove tariffs and quotas on goods traded between them and to apply a common external tariff to goods imported from non-EU countries.
  20. Single Market: The EU Internal Market without internal borders, where goods, services, capital, and persons can move freely, creating a unified economic area.
  21. Schengen Area: A group of EU member states that have abolished border controls between them to allow for free movement of persons, while maintaining common external border controls.
  22. European Economic Area (EEA): An agreement between the EU and three non-EU countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein) to extend the EU Single Market to these countries, ensuring the free movement of goods, services, and persons.
  23. Acquis Communautaire: The body of EU laws, regulations, and directives that EU member states must adopt and implement to comply with EU obligations and standards.
  24. Precedent: Decisions of the ECJ that serve as binding interpretations of EU law and guide the application of EU law by national courts.
  25. Regulation: A type of EU legislative act that is directly applicable in EU member states without the need for national implementing measures, providing uniform rules across the EU.
  26. Directive: A type of EU legislative act that sets out objectives to be achieved by EU member states, which must transpose the directive into their national laws within a specified timeframe.
  27. Decision: A type of EU legislative act that is binding on specific individuals, companies, or member states, providing a legal obligation that must be followed.

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28. **Enforcement:** The mechanisms used by the EU institutions, such as infringement procedures and referrals to the ECJ, to ensure compliance with EU law by member states and individuals.
29. **Harmonization:** The process of aligning national laws and regulations of EU member states to create a single set of rules within the EU Internal Market.
30. **Subsidiarity:** The principle that EU action should only be taken when the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by member states at the national, regional, or local level.
31. **Proportionality:** The principle that EU measures should not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives of EU law and should not disproportionately affect the rights of individuals or businesses.
32. **Mutual Recognition:** The principle that goods legally produced or sold in one EU member state should be accepted in all other member states without additional requirements or restrictions.
33. **Mutual Assistance:** Cooperation between EU member states in areas such as law enforcement, judicial cooperation, and combating cross-border crime, to ensure effective implementation of EU law.
34. **European Arrest Warrant:** An EU mechanism that allows for the swift extradition of individuals between EU member states to face criminal charges, based on a common set of rules and procedures.
35. **State Liability:** The principle that EU member states can be held liable for damages caused by breaches of EU law, including failure to implement EU directives or comply with ECJ rulings.
36. **Internal Market Information System (IMI):** An online platform that facilitates the exchange of information between EU member states on the implementation and enforcement of EU law in the Internal Market.
37. **European Ombudsman:** An independent institution that investigates complaints of maladministration by EU institutions and bodies, providing a mechanism for citizens to hold the EU accountable.
38. **European Citizens' Initiative:** A mechanism that allows EU citizens to propose legislation to the European Commission if they gather a certain number of signatures from EU countries.
39. **Enhanced Cooperation:** A mechanism that allows a group of EU member states to move forward with integration in a specific policy area, even if not all member states agree, while respecting EU principles.
40. **Substantive Law:** The body of rules and principles that govern the rights and obligations of individuals and businesses under EU law, covering areas such as competition, environment, and consumer protection.
41. **Procedural Law:** The rules and procedures that govern the enforcement, implementation, and interpretation of EU law, ensuring consistency and fairness in the application of EU legal principles.
42. **Legal Personality:** The status of the EU as a legal entity with the capacity to enter into agreements, sue and be sued, and exercise rights and obligations under international and EU law.
43. **Comitology:** The system of committees and expert groups that assist the European Commission in implementing EU legislation and making technical decisions in specific policy areas.

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44. **Enhanced Scrutiny:** The process by which national parliaments can review EU legislative proposals and raise objections if they believe the proposal exceeds the EU's powers or violates the principle of subsidiarity.
45. **Opt-Out:** The right of an EU member state to choose not to participate in certain EU policies or initiatives, while still remaining a member of the EU and subject to other EU laws.
46. **Opt-In:** The right of an EU member state to choose to participate in certain EU policies or initiatives, even if they are not mandatory for all member states.
47. **Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF):** The EU's long-term budget plan that sets out the spending priorities and limits for the EU budget over a period of several years, providing financial stability and planning.
48. **European Semester:** The EU's annual cycle of economic policy coordination, where member states submit their budgetary and economic plans to the European Commission for assessment and recommendations.
49. **Rule of Law:** The principle that all individuals, including government officials, are subject to law and must respect legal norms, ensuring equality, fairness, and accountability in the legal system.
50. **Legal Pluralism:** The coexistence of multiple legal systems within the EU, including national laws, EU law, and international law, which interact and influence each other in complex ways.

Understanding these key terms and vocabulary is essential for students studying EU Law at the Level 2 Certificate in Legal Studies. They provide the foundation for comprehending the structure, principles, and mechanisms of EU law, as well as its impact on individuals, businesses, and member states within the European Union. By mastering these terms, students can navigate the complexities of EU law, analyze legal issues, and engage critically with the evolving legal framework of the European Union.