Aims

1. Revision of the grounding in Ethics and Law given in Years 1 and 2;
2. Integration of ethical theory with your clinical experience to date;
3. Improvement in skills of ethical case analysis;
4. Understanding general topics in medical ethics and law, particularly those of consent, treatment of children, and research ethics.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Show how your learning in Years 1 and 2 can be applied to a clinical case study;
2. Demonstrate competence in ethical and legal analysis of a case study;
3. Articulate the ethical and legal requirements in gaining consent to treatment, including treatment of minors;
4. Summarise the main ethical and legal issues in the treatment of children and your duties in this area;
5. Outline the ethical and legal requirements in medical research.

Overview of the element

The ethics element in Year 3 comprises three core tutorials delivered in your Academies, and two online refresher tutorials going over material learned in Years 1 and 2. There is also available an online tutorial on how to write an essay. Teaching is delivered in four blocks, alongside teaching in pathology, the dates for which can be found in your student handbook. The topics covered in the tutorials are as follows:

Academy tutorials

1. Consent in adults
2. Treatment of children
3. Research ethics
4. 

Online tutorials (available on Hippocrates)

1. Confidentiality
2. Introduction to medical law
3. Writing an essay

The aim of the ethics and law teaching in Year 3 is to furnish you with sufficient knowledge and understanding of ethical and legal principles around consent and research to be able to recognise ethical and legal issues in practice, make an ethically and legally defensible decision about how to resolve them, and articulate your reasons. The emphasis is on (i) the application of clinical skills and knowledge in making ethically and legally sound clinical decisions, and (ii) the application of ethical theory and analysis to real-world clinical dilemmas. To this end you will not only build on what you learned in the ethics and law teaching from Years 1 and 2, but also acquire new knowledge and a greater understanding of ethics in practice.

The ethics element will be assessed by a 1000-word case study report, and there are three case studies to choose from. Please refer to the assessment guidance for further details.