LLM Law

Programme Specification

Primary Purpose

Course management and quality assurance.

Secondary Purpose

Detailed information for students, staff and employers. Current students should refer to the related Course Handbook for further detail.

Disclaimer

The University of Portsmouth has checked the information given in this Programme Specification. We will endeavour to deliver the course in keeping with this Programme Specification; however, changes may sometimes be required arising from annual monitoring, student feedback, review and update of units and courses. Where this activity leads to significant changes to units and courses, there will be prior consultation of students and others, wherever possible, and the University will take all reasonable steps to minimize disruption to students. It is also possible that the University may not be able to offer a unit or course for reasons outside of its control, for example; the absence of a member of staff or low student registration numbers. Where this is the case, the University will endeavour to inform applicants and students as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the University will facilitate the transfer of affected students to another suitable course.

Copyright

Contents

1.   Named Awards

LLM Law

2.   Course Code (and UCAS Code if applicable)

C1752F, C1752P

3.   Awarding Body

University of Portsmouth

4.   Teaching Institution

University of Portsmouth

5.   Accrediting Body

Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX)

6.   QAA Benchmark Groups

Law Benchmark Statement

7.   Document Control Information

July 2018

8.   Effective Session

2018/19

9.   Author

Joanne Atkinson

10. Faculty

Business and Law

11. Department

Portsmouth Law School

Curriculum

12. Educational Aims

- To provide an advanced educational experience that enables law graduates, non-law graduates and lawyers to develop their specialist legal interests at postgraduate level.
- To enhance the scholarship of students by equipping them with a range of conceptual and analytical skills to enable them to understand law within the area of their particular interests.
- To equip students with a sound knowledge of aspects of law and the conceptual depth to be able to transfer and apply this knowledge to a variety of problems and circumstances.

- To provide students with relevant skills and knowledge to undertake research in an area of law of particular interest.
- To ensure that the research and professional expertise of staff, informs the curriculum.
- To provide a challenging and stimulating study environment that will expose students to a range of legal skills.
- To assist in the personal development of students to enable them to improve the contribution that they make to the organisation in which they are or will be employed.

13. Reference Points

The following reference points have been consulted in the development of this programme:

- University of Portsmouth Curricula Framework Document
- The scholarship and research expertise of academic members of staff
- QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in Higher Education
- Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) National Qualifications Framework
- The Subject benchmark Statement for Law (SBS) – although this is only available for undergraduate programmes the course team is aware of the level and coverage of this statement.
- The recommendations and feedback from external examiners of the University's existing postgraduate law programmes through annual reports, unit reports and scrutiny of samples of work, assessments and procedures.

14. General Learning Outcomes

Level 7

Master's degrees/Postgraduate Certificates/Postgraduate Diplomas are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

- a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice
- a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship
- originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline
- conceptual understanding that enables the student:
  - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
  - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

- deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level
- continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level

And holders will have:

- the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
  - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility

- decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
- the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development

15. Learning Outcomes

A. Knowledge and Understanding of:

A.1 Legal principles, legal methods, research methodologies and legal arguments developed at an advanced level.
A.2 The critical and contextual dimensions of law.
A.3 Legal remedies and the procedures by which such remedies are sought.
A.4 A particular area of law at an advanced level principally through research and independent study.
A.5 The range of research methods and resources available and the research process attached to undertaking extended research in the form of a dissertation or professional practitioner project.

B. Cognitive (Intellectual or Thinking) Skills, able to:

B.1 Identify and critically evaluate the nature and significance of key developments in subjects across the programme.
B.2 Identify the relevant law and apply it to problem situations in order to provide arguable conclusions.
B.3 Synthesise, analyse and interpret information from a variety of sources.
B.4 Summarise, analyse and critique legal positions, government policy and other official stances.
B.5 Locate, extract and analyse legal, quantitative and other appropriate data from multiple sources, including the acknowledgement and referencing of sources.
B.6 Act independently in planning and undertaking learning tasks in areas across the programme.
B.7 Demonstrate research and information retrieval skills in areas across the programme.
B.8 Reflect on own learning and seek and make use of feedback.
B.9 Make a critical judgement of the merits of doctrinal and policy arguments.

C. Practical (Professional or Subject) Skills, able to:

C.1 Identify and retrieve up-to-date legal and other information using paper and electronic sources.
C.2 Use primary and secondary sources of a legal and a non-legal nature relevant to the topic under study.
C.3 Understand and use the English language proficiently in relation to programme subjects.
C.4 Read and discuss legal and other appropriate materials which are written in technical and complex language.
C.5 Present knowledge or argument, both in writing and orally, in a way that is comprehensible to others and which is directed at their concerns.
C.6 Use a range of IT skills to process and progress professional tasks, including where appropriate, accessing electronic databases for the manipulation and interpretation of primary and secondary legal resources.
C.7 Update professional knowledge using appropriate resources on the internet.

D. Transferable (Graduate and Employability) Skills, able to:

D.1 Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively.
D.2 Make sound judgements in the absence of complete data and communicate conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.
D.3 Use IT as a research, investigative and communication tool.
D.4 Read, understand and be critically aware of complex documents from own and related fields of practice.
D.5 Identify problems and use problem–solving methods in own professional practice and developing areas.

16. Learning and Teaching Strategies and Methods

Knowledge and understanding of aspects of law will be conveyed through a combination of lectures, seminars, group work and individual study. (A1 – A5)

Where the objective will be to convey to the students the key principles of a given area then more structured lectures will be employed to achieve this. (A1 – A3)

However, even here seminar discussion and group work will be used to reinforce learning. In the more discursive areas of the course, particularly in relation to the project units and the dissertation, students will be given every opportunity to explore aspects of the syllabus through research and independent study. (A4 -A5)

The cognitive skills will be developed through participation in lectures, seminars, group work and individual research. (B1 – B9)

The dissertation and its associated research proposal will develop skills. (B1 – B9)

As part of the development of their practical, professional and subject specific skills all students will be provided with an introduction to the library with particular focus on its law related resources and how these resources can be utilised to achieve the programme aims and individual unit learning outcomes. Skills C1 – C5 will be further developed as part of the taught units. The dissertation with its emphasis on research and independent study will also help to strengthen these skills as well as develop C6. The students have full access to the range of library and other skills workshops, including presentations by Lexis and Westlaw, run by Portsmouth Law School. (C5 – C7)

Interactive classroom discussions complemented by problem solving activities, case studies, contextual and situational presentations and independent research. (D1 – D5)

17. Assessment Strategy

Knowledge and understanding of each of the units offered will be assessed by coursework or examination or by a combination of coursework and examination. This will include essays, problem based and numeracy based questions as well as case studies. (A1 – A3)

The dissertation and the project units will allow the assessment of the students' ability to analyse and develop coherent arguments and their ability to undertake research. (A4 – A5)

All the forms of assessment used will assess varying aspects of the aforementioned cognitive skills. However, the following will help to assess particular aspects of the skills outlined. The coursework and/or examination for each unit will facilitate the assessment of the students' ability to identify, summarise and convey accurately crucial areas of knowledge across the programme. (B1 – B3)

The dissertation will facilitate the assessment of the students' ability to interpret, analyse, and critique material and display research skills. (B4 – B9) In some units coursework includes presentation and live simulation.

Unit based assignments and examinations will be used to assess skills C1 – C7.

The project units and the dissertation will assess skills C1 – C7.

Coursework including professional reports, independent contextual and situational presentations, case based group work and the dissertation (D1 – D5).

The assessment strategy enables each student to demonstrate that s/he has realised the learning outcomes of the programme and reached the standards required for the award.

It enables students to develop a systemic understanding and mastery of the academic content and its application to the legal environment.

All units include formative as well summative assessment elements.

Formative and summative assessment artefacts include unseen examinations, coursework, presentations, professional reports, portfolios, research exercises and a substantial self-directed project in the form of the dissertation.

Options, where available, allow students to develop additional skills and knowledge in addition to the core material. All options include both formative and summative assessment modes.

The assessment strategy

- ensures that individual students are treated fairly,
- assists in the learning process and
- ensures that the standard of the award is maintained.

Assessment methods are appropriate to the learning outcomes being assessed and reflect the teaching and learning strategies used.

The assessment strategy encourages problem solving, critical analysis and synthesis of knowledge.

18. Course Structure, Progression and Award Requirements

See *Unit Web Search[1] for full details on the course structure and units*

The course consists of 120 credits of taught units followed by a 60 credit dissertation.

The 120 taught credits are provided by a range of 30 credit option choices (a 30 credit unit entitled Legal Approach to Business is core for those students without an undergraduate law degree or equivalent).

Each credit represents 10 hours of study time (300 for a 30 credit unit).

Recognition of prior learning is possible.

The course is offered as a full time course over 12 months or a part time course over 2 1/2 years.

Opportunities for blended learning and work based learning will provide some flexibility in delivery.

The LLM Law programme requires the accumulation of 180 credit points. Successful accumulation of 120 credits entitles the student to an exit award of Postgraduate Diploma in Law whereas successful accumulation of 60 credits entitles the students to an exit award of Postgraduate Certificate in Law.

19. Employability Statement

The development of the curriculum is supported by formal and informal links with employers and with professional bodies (e.g. CILEx).

A mentoring programme is available for all postgraduate students.

There are opportunities to develop employment skills through work-based learning (Work-Based Learning Unit). This unit will develop students' employability skills, help students to gain an insight into how the workplace operates and extend the students' self management and research skills. Students will be supported by both an academic mentor and a mentor in the workplace.

Students are encouraged to engage with the School's pro bono activities on an extra-curricular basis.

Students who hold a qualifying law degree will be able to take the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives accredited CILEx Level 6 Practice and Client Care Skills units. Successful completion of these units allows students, on registration with CILEx, to seek employment as a trainee legal executive.

Students will have access to a number of careers support activities run by Portsmouth Law School. These include a Law Careers Fair, a mentoring scheme and a series of careers workshops and guest speakers. In addition to this the students are able to use the facilities run by Purple Door.

Portsmouth Law School has built up a range of less formal relationships with relevant employers and agencies. Portsmouth Law School will continue to develop these relationships.

---

[1] www.port.ac.uk/unitwebsearch

Students on this programme will have a personal tutor. Personal tuition will be based around timetabled tutorial sessions and individually arranged appointments. In addition to personal development planning and pastoral care, the personal tutorials will be used to help support learning through the year.

Personal Development Planning (PDP) is delivered through the personal tutoring programme.

The School supports an active Student Law Society which both runs and enters many legal skills competitions each year (including mooting, negotiation and client conferences). Participation in external competitions allows students to meet potential employers and develop their networking skills, as well as their legal skills. Academic staff support this with assistance as judges, as well as coaching, writing appropriate legal problems, administrative support and the School pays fees to enter some competitions. The School itself also organises and participates in competitions and skills exercises, including internal mooting competitions sponsored by barristers' chambers and mock trials.

Course Management

20. Support for Student Learning

- The Course is managed by a Course Leader.
- Extensive induction programme introduces the student to the University and their course.
- Each student has a personal tutor, responsible for pastoral support and guidance.
- University support services include careers, financial advice, housing, counselling etc.
- The Academic Skills Unit (ASK).
- The Additional Support and Disability Advice Centre (ASDAC).
- Excellent library facilities.
- The University of Portsmouth has consistently been awarded an excellent rating for student support and guidance in a number of Quality Assurance Agency inspections.
- Student course and unit handbooks provide information about the course structure and University regulations etc.
- Feedback is provided for all assessments.
- Personal Development Planning (PDP) for all awards.

21. Admissions Criteria

A. Academic Admissions Criteria

Minimum entry requirements are in accordance with University regulations*

Applicants seeking entry to the course must satisfy the University that there is a good expectation that they will be able to fulfil the defined objectives and to achieve the standard required for the award. Applicants will be expected to have a relevant first degree or relevant experience and will be expected to possess basic numeracy skills. This will normally be the case if the applicant has one of the following:

1. An undergraduate degree with a classification of at least 2.2 in a subject area compatible with this course
2. Qualifications of national and overseas examination bodies and professional institution which are recognised as being equivalent to the above.
3. A BTEC or EdExcel Higher National Diploma of a good standard, or equivalent professional qualification, in a relevant discipline and at least three years relevant experience in employment.

Applicants who do not hold any of the above qualifications will be considered for entry on the basis of other academic, professional and/or vocational qualifications awarded by any institution or

examination body recognised as equivalent to any of the above qualifications. Accreditation of prior certificated or experiential learning (APEL) may be granted as all or part of the admission qualification.

For students whose first language is not English, IELTS average 6.5 and no lower than 6 in each category or equivalent is required

*Currently Academic Regulations: Admission to the University, AR 1.15 Release 2.4

B. Disability

The University makes no distinction in its admissions policy with regard to disability and will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments in order to make it possible for students to study at Portsmouth on a course of their choice.

22. Evaluation and Enhancement of Standards and Quality in Learning and Teaching

A. Mechanisms for Review and Evaluation

- Course Leader's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Head of Department's Annual Standards and Quality Evaluative Review.
- Unit and Course Level student feedback considered at Board of Studies.
- Unit Assessment Board consideration of student performance for each programme.
- Annual Standards and Quality Reports to Board of Studies, including consideration of Subject and Award External Examiner Reports.
- Periodic Programme Review.
- Student Representatives and Student/Staff Consultative Committees.
- Staff Performance and Development Review.
- Peer Review and Development Framework.
- Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee.

B. Responsibilities for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Unit Co-ordinators for unit content and delivery.
- Course Leader for day-to-day running of course.
- Board of Studies with overall responsibilities for operation and content of course.
- Head of Department.
- Associate Dean (Academic).
- Associate Dean (Students).
- Quality Assurance Committee.
- Unit, Award and Progression Board of Examiners.

C. Mechanisms for Gaining Student Feedback

- Student Representation on Board of Studies.
- Student Staff Consultative Committees.
- Unit and Course level student feedback questionnaires.

D. Staff Development Priorities

- Academic staff undertake activities related to research, scholarship, teaching and learning and student support and guidance.
- Annual staff performance and development reviews match development to needs.
- Managers undertake a variety of management development programmes.
- New academic staff required to undertake PgCert Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.

- All academic staff encouraged to seek Higher Education Academy membership.
- Academic staff new to teaching required to undertake Graduate Student Professional Development Programme (GPROF) or Associate Lecturer Professional Development Programme (ALPROF).
- Support Staff are encouraged to attend short courses in areas such as minute taking, and specific IT packages.

23. Assessment Regulations

The current University of Portsmouth academic regulations will apply to this programme (*see Assessment and Regulations*[2]).

24. Role of Externals

Subject External Examiners who will:
- Oversee unit assessment and usually attend Unit Assessment Boards
- Review unit assessment strategy
- Sample assessment artefacts
- Present report to Unit Assessment Boards

Award External Examiners (usually also a Subject External Examiner) who will:
- Oversee and attend Award/Progression Boards
- Scrutinise and endorse the outcomes of assessment
- Ensure that the standard of the award is maintained at a level comparable with that of similar awards elsewhere in the United Kingdom

25. Indicators of Standards and Quality

A. Professional Accreditation/Recognition

Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) from 2009

B. Periodic Programme Review (or equivalent)

Approval of the LLM Corporate Governance and Law/GRAD ICSA, LLM Law and LLM International Business Law in 2009.

Quality Assessment Report by the Higher Education Funding Council for England Business School Learning Resources awarded top marks in related Teaching Quality Assessment held in November 2000.

Approval of the LLM Corporate Governance and Law/GRAD ICSA, LLM Law and LLM International Business Law in 2011.

Periodic Programme Review 2013.

C. Quality Assurance Agency

QAA Higher Education Review, March 2015, judgements about standards and quality meet UK expectations (*for full report see Higher Education Review of the University of Portsmouth, March 2015*[3]).

D. Others

None.

---

[2] www.port.ac.uk/departments/services/academicregistry/qualitymanagementdivision/assessmentandregulations/

[3] www.qaa.ac.uk/en/ReviewsAndReports/Documents/University%20of%20Portsmouth/University-of-Portsmouth-HER-15.pdf

26. Further Information

Further information may be found in:

- Student Handbook
- University of Portsmouth Curriculum Framework Document
- University of Portsmouth Prospectus
- [University of Portsmouth](#)[4] and [Portsmouth Law School](#)[5] websites

---

[4] www.port.ac.uk/

[5] www.port.ac.uk/school-of-law/