

MODULE SPECIFICATION

1. **Title of the module**

Dissertation

2. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

Pearson Business School

3. **The level of the module (e.g. Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 7

4. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

30 (15 ECTS)

5. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

The module will always be undertaken in the second term of a student's studies at level 6(H) (whether or not they start in September or January)

6. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

Pre-requisites: Research Project

Co-requisites: None

7. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

MLaw (Integrated Masters) Professional Legal Practice

8. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.**

On successfully completing the module students will be able to demonstrate:

Subject Specific Knowledge and Skills

1. A systematic understanding of the relevant area of law, coupled with a critical awareness of new developments in the field, as well as an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge even at this advanced level of understanding.
2. Having identified the legal issue/s raised within the professional practice area selected, an ability to independently identify, research and analyse relevant case and statute law, using both paper and electronic sources, whilst demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to legal research.
3. An ability to utilise accepted methods of referencing and citation for legal work, and employ legal terminology accurately.

General Transferable Skills

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1. An ability to work autonomously in the selection of key relevant issues for research, formulate them with clarity and precision, and conduct detailed research without guidance or supervision, selecting the most appropriate techniques from the range available to them.
2. An ability to synthesise information derived from independent research – distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant material; identifying gaps and inconsistencies; and evaluating reliability and quality of information – before critically analysing the results obtained and coming to a personal and reasoned judgment on the relevant issue, notwithstanding the absence of complete data.
3. An ability to exercise self-direction in researching into a new area, acting autonomously in planning and implementing tasks, and critically evaluating current research and methodologies.
4. An ability to continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level, exercising initiative and personal responsibility together with the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.
5. An ability to extract, explain and summarise key information from highly complex materials, critically evaluating current legal research and advanced scholarship.
6. An ability to make appropriate use of information technology for the purposes of their professional work and to manage available resources and use them efficiently.
7. An ability to communicate the conclusions of their research, both orally and in writing, using language accurately and appropriately given the needs of the audience.
8. An ability to demonstrate conceptual understanding that enables them to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline, to evaluate methodologies and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

9. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

The aim of this module is to develop students' ability to develop an independent idea or hypothesis derived from an area of professional legal practice, and to see it right the way through to completion with minimal guidance or supervision from academic staff. Ideally the dissertation should fuse the academic and professional elements blended throughout the programme, applying these joint themes in a new area of law / new aspect of a familiar area of law, of direct relevance to legal practice. In this context, students may liaise with an external legal services provider or other consumer of legal services e.g. a charity, researching into a particular area in response to a demonstrated need. Alternatively the dissertation may be undertaken independently. It is envisaged that students will demonstrate a high level of autonomy in this project, though they will be supported through limited supervision. By the end of the module, learners should be able to conduct independent research into a new area, analysing and synthesising the data thereby collected, and communicate their findings accurately and effectively with empathy to the needs and requirements of their audience.

10. **Synopsis of the curriculum**

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In the course of studying this module, students will cover the following key areas:

1. The definition of the issue / question / area to be investigated.
2. Research Design.
3. Data Analysis.
4. Devising Recommendations and Communicating Findings.

11. Reading List (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)

All textbooks and practitioner materials will be updated annually. Textbooks will be held in the latest edition and older editions will be withdrawn.

Core Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for Lawyers, Elkington, A et al, Legal Practice Guides
Recommended Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Legal Research, Knowles, J, Sweet & Maxwell • Writing law dissertations: An introduction and guide to the conduct of legal research, Salter, M & Mason, J. Pearson • Clinch, P. Legal information: what it is and where to find it, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies Library • How to write better law essays, Foster, S, Pearson • How to study law, Bradney, A, Sweet & Maxwell • Lawyers' Skills, Webb et al, OUP

12. Learning and Teaching methods

Approximately 4 hours of support will be given to students completing this module. This will take the form of lectures and group sessions on how to conduct research and write up the findings for the purposes of a dissertation / report at the beginning of the module, followed by one-to-one supervision, with a maximum of 4 hours available for the latter.

Activity	Notional Hours of Study
One to one supervision	4
Independent research and writing (including presentation)	296
Total	300

13. 13.1 Assessment methods.

This module will be assessed in three parts:

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Part A: Dissertation Proposal – Maximum 1000 words accounting for 10% of the total unit mark

Part B: Dissertation – Maximum of 12,000 words (excluding bibliography). This will account for 80% of the total unit mark

Part C: Presentation / Q&A Assessment – 25 minute presentation outlining project activities, findings and a critical reflection on the learning journey. This will be followed by a 15 minute Q&A session. This will account for 10% of the total unit mark

In order to successfully complete the module, students will be required to obtain a minimum pass mark of 50% in Parts A, B and C.

Formative feedback and advice on the direction of a student's work, will be provided by an allocated supervisor throughout the module.

Rationale

This methodology reflects two key objectives: firstly, and most importantly, to assess that the learning outcomes set out above have been achieved by the students. Secondly, to ensure that the student paces their work appropriately and conducts their work largely independently, albeit under the guidance of their supervisor.

13.2 Reassessment methods

14. *Map of Module Learning Outcomes to Learning and Teaching Methods and methods of Assessment*

Module learning outcome		KU 1	KU 2	KU 3	GT S1	GT S2	GT S3	GT S4	GT S5	GTS 6	GTS 7	GTS 8
Learning/teaching method	Hours allocated											
Private Study	296	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Supervision	4	X		X		X			X		X	X
Assessment method												
<i>Research proposal</i>			X	X	X						X	X
<i>Report</i>		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Presentation / Q&A</i>		X	X	X	X			X			X	X

15. Inclusive module design

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The Collaborative Partner recognises and has embedded the expectations of current disability equality legislation, and supports students with a declared disability or special educational need in its teaching. Within this module we will make reasonable adjustments wherever necessary, including additional or substitute materials, teaching modes or assessment methods for students who have declared and discussed their learning support needs. Arrangements for students with declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the Collaborative Partner's disability/dyslexia student support service, and specialist support will be provided where needed.

16. **Campus(es) or Centre(s) where module will be delivered:**

Pearson College London

17. **Internationalisation**

All the modules on the MLaw/LLB programme incorporate an international dimension wherever and whenever appropriate. This includes specific areas, such as EU statutory provisions in Contract and Employment Law and Human Right issues in Constitutional and Criminal Law, alongside an all pervasive discussion of the effects of international law on English Law as a whole. In addition to the formal incorporation of international jurisprudence within the programme, the students are actively encouraged to participate in the numerous opportunities the College offers involving comparative analysis within the business world including: guest speakers, industry workshops, alumni events, etc. Specifically, the MLaw/LLB programme provides a number of opportunities for all law students to participate in educational visits to various international institutions within the legal environment including the EU (in Strasbourg, Brussels and Luxembourg), the International Court of Justice in the Hague and the Nuremberg Trials Court House. These trips are heavily subsidised by the college to ensure affordability and maximum participation.

18. **Partner College/Validated Institution:**

Pearson Business School, part of Pearson College

19. **University School responsible for the programme:**

Kent Law School

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Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.

Date approved	Major/minor revision	Start date of the delivery of revised version	Section revised	Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet)