

Nottingham Trent University Course Specification

Basic Course Information

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| 1. | Awarding Institution: | Nottingham Trent University |
| 2. | School/Campus: | Law/City |
| 3. | Final Award, Course Title and Modes of Study: | LLM Legal Practice Course (part-time) |
| 4. | Normal Duration: | 2 years |
| 5. | UCAS Code: | |

6. Overview and general educational aims of the course

The Law School has an established reputation for the teaching and delivery of its academic and vocational legal courses. This course has been developed to build upon the School's expertise by offering a route to gain a qualification that satisfies the requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority ("SRA") for an Legal Practice Course ("LPC") and, at the same time, provides an opportunity for students to gain a Masters qualification in law.

Students who enrol on the course will have a degree in law (or equivalent), and the course will offer students the opportunity to study the Skills, Compulsory Practice Areas and Electives prescribed by the SRA together with a market leading module in Professional Legal Practice that seeks to develop awareness of the practical and commercial factors that face the legal profession and provide a bridge to practice. As the course is at Masters level, the course is designed to build upon the knowledge and understanding of the law and skills that students have developed during their undergraduate legal studies and students will be expected to conduct independent study and research culminating in the production of a dissertation on law and legal practice or a project for the Professional Legal Practice module.

The LLM in Legal Practice at Nottingham Law School aims to:

- prepare you for practice by learning how to solve clients' legal problems and to adopt attitudes which encourage professionalism.
- provide a course that builds on your graduate legal knowledge and skills by:
 - ❖ integrating substantive law and procedures;
 - ❖ further developing core legal and professional skills in a transferable context;
 - ❖ inculcating a professional, commercial and ethical approach to practice;
 - ❖ developing a problem-solving approach to your studies, and ultimately to your practice as a solicitor.
- develop your skills as an independent learner so that you have the ability to access and manipulate legal resources to

	<p>an advanced level, and can plan and manage your workload effectively;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop a high level of knowledge and practical and commercial insight into the area of professional practice;• provide you with knowledge and skills that are highly relevant to a career in professional legal practice and/or to progression to further academic study or a career in academia.
7.	Course outcomes Course outcomes describe what you should know and be able to do by the end of your course if you take advantage of the opportunities for learning that we provide.
	Knowledge and understanding By the end of the course you should be able to:
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. recognise, appreciate the impact of, and apply in context the key ethical requirements of the SRA principles of Regulation and Code of Conduct; (LPC(4) (5))2. demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the areas of Wills and Administration of Estates and Taxation (LPC (5))3. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the principles and criteria that underpin good performance in the skills of Practical Legal Research, Writing, Drafting, Interviewing and Advising, and Advocacy; (LPC(5))4. demonstrate a systematic knowledge and understanding and a critical awareness of current issues and developments in the law and procedures relating to professional legal practice; (LPC(5) (6), M)5. demonstrate advanced scholarship in the areas of law studied and the ability to critically analyse and evaluate law and legal practice and current research related to it; (M)6. apply knowledge of law and legal practice accurately, effectively and strategically within practical and commercial contexts in the field of professional legal practice; (LPC(1), M)7. evaluate and critique methodologies and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses (M)
	Skills, qualities and attributes By the end of the course you should be able to:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• perform the skills and tasks required to advance professional legal transactions by planning, researching and applying knowledge of the law and legal practice. (LPC(1) (3), M)

- determine a client's objectives and demonstrate self-direction and creativity in planning complex transactions and achieving objectives and an awareness of the financial, commercial and personal priorities and constraints to be taken into account **(LPC(2), M)**
- communicate conclusions clearly to both specialist and non-specialist audiences; **(M)**
- analyse the costs, benefits and risks involved in transactions or courses of action. **(LPC(2))**
- reflect on knowledge and understanding to develop skills through continued learning and practice **(LPC(7), M)**

8. **Teaching and learning methods**

When you enrol on the LPC you will be given an Ipad (or equivalent), and this will be a key piece of equipment for your teaching and learning experience on the course.

For the first stage of the course in year one (Stage 1), the teaching and learning of the Core Practice Areas (CPAs) will take place in workshops of two hours duration that are specifically designed to simulate the experience of the professional workplace. You will prepare for these workshops by undertaking some directed reading and engaging with live lectures on strategic topics, and vodcasts (interactive recordings in a range of multi-media format). Your learning experience will be dynamic and interactive and will involve practising many of the professional skills elements of the course at the same time as you develop and acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding of the areas of law and practice. Typically, a workshop may involve you watching video clips, taking client instructions, carrying out "live" research using your Ipad and practising writing, drafting and other professional skills.

Alongside the practice of professional legal skills within the workshops you will be provided with bespoke skills sessions that will support you in learning and developing the necessary skills and give you the opportunities to practice them.

During the second stage of the course in year two (Stage 2), you will study three elective subjects and carry out the majority of the work for the Dissertation or Professional Legal Practice module. The electives will also be taught through a combination of live lectures, vodcasts and workshops of one hour duration. Throughout your study of the elective subjects you will continue to practise and develop your professional legal skills.

You will be provided with an introduction to the Dissertation or Professional Legal Practice module, together with vodcasts on research techniques and methodologies, and guidance and supervision by an allocated tutor.

9. Assessment methods

The Course is assessed at the level of a Masters award, but the compulsory skills, Professional Conduct & Regulation, Solicitors' Accounts and Wills & Administration are assessed at level 6 (the level of the final year of an undergraduate degree).

The CPA and Elective assessments are assessed by way of supervised assessments and are set in the context of legal transactions in order to allow you to demonstrate the depth, realism and coverage required for a vocational course at this level.

Skills are assessed in the first stage of the course and separately from the CPAs. The assessments involve the practice of the skill and reflect the nature of the particular skill.

As required by the SRA you will also have separate supervised assessments in Professional Conduct & Regulation, Solicitors' Accounts, and Wills & Administration.

You will be given the opportunity to practice for all assessments through the programme of formative assessment and feedback included within the course. Formative assessment will include mock assessments, review and feedback on written work, and online consolidation and self-assessment activities.

The dissertation module will be assessed by way of a research based written assignment of 7,500 words. Students may choose the topic of research which should be informed by an aspect of law and legal practice. The chosen title will be subject to approval by the Course Leader.

As an alternative to the dissertation, you may undertake a Professional Legal Practice module which will be assessed by way of a project of 5,000 words informed by the teaching and learning that has taken place within the workshops for the module.

The award is graded, so that you may be awarded a Pass, Commendation or Distinction.

10. Course structure and curriculum

The curriculum and structure of the course are partially prescribed by the SRA, as the course's external validating body.

The course is studied on a part-time basis over two academic years. Year one (Stage 1) comprises 8 study weekends (Fri-Sun) and two separate five day blocks (Mon-Fri). Year two (Stage 2) comprises 7

study weekends (Fri-Sun). For the most part, there will be no attendance requirements for Fridays, but you are recommended to set this day aside for preparation and viewing of LGSs and vodcasts. There may also be some assessment activities that are scheduled to take place on Fridays of a teaching weekend.

Stage 1

The course begins with a short foundation programme in Professional Conduct and Regulation, Research, Business Accounts, and Taxation, immediately followed by the delivery of the CPAs. Students choosing the Professional Legal Practice module will also undertake workshops for this module during this stage. Teaching and learning within the CPAs will build on knowledge and skills that you have acquired during your undergraduate academic legal studies, and will integrate the LPC skills and the pervasive topics introduced in the foundation programme to ensure that you are continually practising and developing your professional legal knowledge and skills.

The CPAs are assessed in August/September of Stage 1. All other Stage 1 modules are assessed at the end of the relevant teaching block during the Stage 1 teaching period.

Towards the end of Stage 1 you will elect whether you wish to undertake the Dissertation module or Professional Legal Practice module, and supervision and deadlines are in place to support your work planning for this module.

Stage 2

During this stage you will study a total of three Electives to be chosen from the list of Elective modules available. The course and curriculum are designed to ensure a progressive approach to the acquisition of both knowledge and skills. There is an increased emphasis, in particular, on the development of independent research skills both within the teaching and learning of your chosen Electives and in your studies for the Dissertation or Professional Legal Practice module.

The Elective modules will be assessed at the end of the teaching block, and you will be expected to submit the assessment for the Dissertation module no later at the end of Stage 2 teaching if you wish to graduate with the full LLM award at the final examination board in July. If you are unable to complete the assessment within this period you will have further opportunities to submit but will not be eligible for an award until you have either completed this assessment or elected not to do so. If you elect not to complete the assessment for the Dissertation module you will be eligible for the alternative award of a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice. If no election is made, but you fail to complete the assessment within 9 months of completion of the course you will be automatically be given the alternative award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

All students who have successfully completed the LPC Stage 1 and Stage 2 modules will receive the transcript that is required by the SRA to allow you to progress to the next stage of your legal training regardless of the final award.

The CPA and Elective modules are delivered and assessed at the same level, but have different credit values to reflect the difference in learning hours dedicated to the CPAs and Electives respectively, as required by the SRA. The Skills, Professional Conduct & Regulation, Solicitors' Accounts, and Wills & Administration are delivered and assessed at level 6 (equivalent to the final year of undergraduate study). This is to reflect the fact that teaching and learning of these modules is delivered over a shorter teaching block and that it cannot be assumed that all students have had previous practice in all of the Skills. However, Skills are integrated within the teaching and learning of the Electives and it is expected that you will, therefore, continue to develop the Skills beyond the level achieved at the point of assessment in Stage 1 of the course.

The allocation of credit points is set out in the table below. The total number of credits for the LLM award is 180, and complies with the notional learning hours of study prescribed by the SRA.

The completed LLM requires the attainment of 180 credit points at level 7 (Masters level) but an interim award of a Postgraduate Diploma upon completion of 140 credits can be made if students elect not to complete the assessment for the Dissertation or Professional Legal Practice module.

Students who have been awarded the Graduate Diploma in Law will either be awarded the LLM in Legal Practice upon completion of all modules including the Dissertation or Professional Legal Practice module or the Graduate LLB and a Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice if they elect not to complete this additional module.

There is, on payment of a separate fee, the option to enrol on the LLM Legal Practice (DL) which will allow students to top-up the Postgraduate Diploma to a LLM award at a later date.

The SRA envisages that some students may choose only to complete Stage 1 of the course, and may either decide to complete Stage 2 at a later date or with another LPC provider. Students electing this route will be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education provided they have successfully completed modules totalling 60 credits from Stage 1, and will be provided with a transcript for SRA purposes.

There will also be a possibility of a Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education for students who successfully complete 120 credits.

Module	Level	Credits
Business Law & Practice (including Taxation and Business Accounts)	M	30
Civil and Criminal Litigation	M	30
Property Law	M	20
Elective one	M	10
Elective two	M	10
Elective three	M	10
Wills & Administration of Estates	6	5
Professional Conduct and Regulation	6	5
Solicitors Accounts	6	4
Advocacy	6	2
Research	6	4
Interviewing & Advising	6	4
Writing	6	3
Drafting	6	3
Total credits		140
Research dissertation/Law in Practice	M	40
Total credits		180

11. Admission to the course

General criteria

The principal criteria for admission are:

- A Qualifying Law Degree (minimum 2:2); or GDL/CPE with an undergraduate degree (normally a good honours degree); or Institution of Legal Executives qualification
- Demonstration of a commitment to a career in the law
Applicants would be expected to demonstrate their commitment to a legal career in their personal statement, and relevant work experience and/or Accredited Prior Learning would be relevant indicators.

Accreditation of Prior Learning

Students who have completed Stage 1 of a Legal Practice Course at another institution will be considered for admission to Stage 2 on production of a transcript indicating satisfactory completion of all

Stage 1 modules.

International students

The same admission requirements apply to international students plus, where appropriate a 6.5 IELTS or its equivalent.

12. Support for learning

You will participate in an introductory programme designed to facilitate initial orientation, and induction to the course, familiarisation with relevant sources of both academic and pastoral support and awareness of University support services.

A Course Handbook is made available electronically via the Course Learning Room on the Nottingham Trent University Online Workspace (NOW). The Course Handbook details relevant staff contacts, syllabus and assessment details, and teaching and learning methods.

Your learning will be supported through the various preparatory and teaching materials made available to you in the form of directed reading, lecture materials, vodcasts, and workshop materials.

All course information and materials, including library resources can be accessed electronically on NOW, and NOW is also used to provide updates relating to both the Course and developments in the law.

Lectures are recorded in various media to allow you to access and view or listen to these remotely.

Workshops provide on-going face to face feedback from academic tutors during the course of study. Academic and pastoral support is provided by subject tutors, a dedicated personal tutor, and the Course Leaders.

The personal tutor monitors and reviews both pastoral welfare and academic performance through termly meetings, and student progress reports. An open door policy is in place to encourage you to contact your personal tutor where support is required.

There are many opportunities for you to undertake practice assessments and to receive feedback in order to improve future performance.

The University provides a range of student support services including Financial Support Services, Accommodation, Counselling, Disability Support, International Student Support, Mature Student Support, Language Support, Chaplains and Religious/Cultural Advisers and access to affiliated health centres. Further details can be found via the University website.

13. Graduate destinations / employability

The course is specifically designed to satisfy the requirements of the SRA for the vocational stage of training for solicitors' but as an LLM it will also provide you with advanced knowledge and skills that will be beneficial to a range of careers at graduate and post-graduate level.

The Course has its own specialist careers service and has dedicated links to the University's extensive legal careers service. All of the teaching staff are qualified lawyers who are able to offer personal advice. A comprehensive careers programme has been developed to provide advice on employment opportunities, application and interview technique. Individual interviews with careers advisors are also available to students. There are opportunities to participate in a mentoring scheme between students and trainee solicitors with local law firms. The Law School has excellent links with practising lawyers in both branches of the legal profession, and benefits greatly from the relationships with the profession that it has developed over many years in offering professional legal training.

NLS offers a wide range of pro bono activities that are open to all students within the Law School. These include voluntary opportunities with Streetlaw, NACRO, the Family Welfare Association, Citizens Advice Bureau and Victim Support. The Law School also has its own Legal Advice Clinic that provides further volunteering opportunities. As most part time students are in full time employment and many do not live locally the time and opportunity to participate may be limited.

14. **Course standards and quality**

A Course Standards and Quality Report (CSQR) is submitted annually to the Course Committee. The latter comprises both staff and student representatives. In addition a separate, more extensive, Annual Report is submitted to the SRA. Together these reports provide information and data relating to the on-going monitoring and review of both module and course feedback from students together with external examiner reports, module leader reports and admission and progression statistics in order to identify and promote good practice and to inform relevant action points.

- The CSQR is submitted for consideration and approval to the School Academic Standards and Quality Committee and is used to inform Law School strategy and policy.
- There is on-going consultation with students regarding module and course developments through regular Course Committees. Student feedback is obtained through questionnaires at the end of each Stage of the Course.
- Regular review meetings take place for each module to ensure that teaching and assessment materials and methods remain up to date and relevant to the learning outcomes of the Course.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External examiners are regularly consulted regarding intended Course developments and full feedback is provided to them in respect of any recommendations contained in their annual reports.• The Course is validated by the SRA.	
15.	Assessment regulations This course is subject to the University's Common Assessment Regulations (located in Section 16 of the Quality Handbook). Any course specific assessment features are described below:	
	<p>Derogations from the University's Common Assessment Regulations are set out in the Assessment Regulations for the Course.</p> <p>The main areas for divergence are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no provisions for compensation;• Some minor modifications of the University "fit to sit" policy have been made;• There has been some adaptation of the policy for the Notification of Exceptional Circumstances; <p>There is a separate process for deferral of assessments</p>	
16.	Additional Information Collaborative partner(s): Course referenced to national QAA Benchmark Statements: Course recognised by: Date implemented: Any additional information:	Yes Solicitors' Regulation Authority September 2014