

LLB Programme Specification

1	Institution	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
2	Award(s)	LL.B
3	Programme title	Bachelor of Laws with Honours
4	Programme type	Degree
5	Programme recognised by the Law Society for England and Wales and the Bar Council as a Qualifying Law Degree giving exemption from the first (academic) part of professional training.	
6	UCAS Code	M101
7	QAA Subject Benchmarking Group(s)	Law
8	Date of production/revision	02.05.01, 01.05.02, 09.10.02, 14.04.03 and 07.07.04

9 Educational Aims of Programme:

A. To provide a programme which

- delivers a rigorous liberal education in the discipline of law informed by scholarship and research;
- enables students to develop an understanding of the nature of law and the theoretical and multi-disciplinary influences on its development;
- develops students' analytical, problem-solving and critical skills in relation to how law is made, interpreted, applied and developed;
- provides students with opportunities to study a range of specialist law modules often linked to specific research interests of teaching staff, approved non-law modules and, where appropriate, to engage in extended research;
- develops intellectual and key skills to equip students for future learning and employment;
- produces graduates who are equipped for training and employment in the legal professions and in other fields of employment or to undertake postgraduate study.

B. To fully

- satisfy the requirements of the Joint Announcement for qualifying law degrees including the need to teach 'The Foundations of Legal Knowledge'.
- meet and, in Stage 3, exceed the requirements of the QAA Benchmark Statement for Law degrees;
- conform to the criteria for an honours degree laid down in the FHEQ and
- comply with University policies.

10 Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

The programme facilitates the development of the following knowledge, understanding, discipline-related and key skills.

A Knowledge and understanding of:

- 1 The major concepts, values, policies, principles and rules of the Foundations of Legal Knowledge, these being Public Law, Contract, Land Law, Criminal Law, Tort, European Union Law and Equity;
- 2 The principal institutions and processes of the law;
- 3 Legal topics, from a range of options, beyond the Foundations of Legal Knowledge;
- 4 Multi-disciplinary and theoretical perspectives used to analyse the law and legal processes.

B Subject-specific/professional skills

The ability to

- 1 engage in legal problem-solving by identifying relevant issues, applying relevant concepts, principles and rules, identifying evidence needed, making judgements and reaching supported conclusions on the basis of sound and informed reasoning;
- 2 write, speak and think with care and precision in the analysis and synthesis of the law;
- 3 structure argument and analysis and
- 4 identify issues for research and to retrieve accurately relevant legal and other sources in, as appropriate, primary and secondary form, both in paper and digital formats.

C Cognitive skills

The ability to

- 1 analyse: to identify and order issues by relevance and importance;
- 2 synthesise materials derived from diverse sources;
- 3 exercise critical judgement by discriminating between the merits or otherwise of particular arguments and
- 4 exercise skills of evaluation in making a reasoned choice between competing solutions or arguments.

D	Key skills
	The ability to
1	(a) read, interpret and understand English language accurately in relation to complex technical texts and (b) present argument intelligibly and accurately;
2	word process essays and other academic work in an appropriate form, use the internet and email and demonstrate some competence in digital information retrieval;
3	(a) act independently in organising time, tasks and meeting deadlines (b) undertake independent research both in areas already studied and those investigated without prior study and (c) reflect on the learning process using feedback and
4	work in teams.

Intended learning outcomes	Teaching/learning methods and strategies
A. Knowledge and understanding	<p>The Law School strategy is as follows.</p> <p>First, to enable students to acquire a basic level of knowledge and understanding through lectures. Beyond the Foundations, although lectures are still used, there is more diversity of approach within seminars and, at Stage 3, workshops are used within some modules.</p> <p>Secondly, to take the basic exposition further by the universal requirement for students to engage in independent learning, using reading lists directing them to primary and secondary sources.</p> <p>Thirdly, to deliver seminars so as to provide opportunities for students to engage in problem-solving exercises, the discussion of legal principles and theoretical issues, and to check their learning and understanding.</p> <p>Finally, in all modules there is a requirement to submit written work this gives a further opportunity to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding.</p>

<p>B. Subject-specific/professional skills</p>	<p>B1 is developed initially through the Legal Institutions and Method module and then further developed and demonstrated <i>via</i> seminar assignments, examinations and compulsory written work. B2 and B3 are inculcated by means of regular seminar work, examinations and compulsory written work. Induction activity, Law School intranet guides and the Legal Institutions and Method module specifically address B2 and B4 and the latter skill is further developed <i>via</i> seminars and compulsory written work. B1-B4 are further developed and demonstrated through oral presentations and client-interviewing. Students can enhance their development of these skills by pursuing research based assessed coursework and dissertation modules at Stage 3 and, throughout the programme, by voluntary participation in mooting and client-interviewing competitions within and outside of the Law School.</p>
<p>C. Cognitive skills</p>	<p>C1 to C4 are primarily developed and demonstrated through seminar discussions, problem-solving and in researching and writing seminar essays and assessed coursework essays, research papers, dissertations, examinations, preparing for and delivering oral presentations and preparing for and participating in mooting and client-interviewing.</p>
<p>D. Key skills</p>	<p>D1, D2 and D3 are introduced in induction programming at Stage 1. Under D1, the ability to argue orally is developed primarily through seminars, or interactive lectures and further developed in modules in which oral presentations are formally assessed. Students may, finally, develop oral skills by participation in voluntary mooting. Again under D1, literacy is developed through seminar essays and course work assessments. D1 and D2 are developed further in induction at Stage 2. Coursework provides the opportunity for students to develop and demonstrate IT & C literacy (D2). D3 is developed by preparation for seminars and researching and writing coursework essays, research papers and dissertations. D4 is developed through group exercises in seminars and workshops in particular modules. Students may develop team work skills further by participation in mooting and client-interviewing.</p>

Intended learning outcomes	Methods of Assessment
A. Knowledge and understanding	At Stage 1 knowledge and understanding is assessed formatively by means of seminar essays submitted at regular stages across the year. Summative assessment of knowledge and understanding consists largely of unseen examinations. At Stage 2, each Foundation of Legal Knowledge is assessed 33% by coursework and 67% by examination. At Stage 3 there is a mix of methods extending from modules employing the same regime as for Stage 2 to those assessing solely on the basis of coursework, a research paper or a dissertation.
B. Subject-specific/professional skills	At Stage 1, formative assessment is by means of seminar essays and summative assessment is largely by means of unseen examinations. At Stage 2, each Foundation of Legal Knowledge is assessed 33% by assessed coursework (including provision for an oral presentation in one module) and 67% by unseen examinations. At Stage 3 there is a mix of methods. This extends from modules assessed 33% by coursework (with some including provision for an assessed oral presentation) and 67% by unseen examination to those assessed entirely by coursework, a research paper or a dissertation.
C. Cognitive skills	C1 to C4 are formatively assessed by seminar essays at Stage 1 and summatively at all Stages by examinations; at assessed coursework is used for summative assessment at Stages 2 and 3. In addition, research papers and dissertations are used to assess these skills.
D. Key (transferable) skills	D1 is assessed through seminar essays, assessed coursework, unseen examinations, oral presentations and an optional research paper and dissertation. There is no formal assessment for D2 but it is indirectly assessed through course work essays, research papers and dissertations. There is no formal assessment for D3 but it is indirectly assessed through course work essays, team work exercises, oral presentations, research papers and dissertations. D4 is not formally assessed but the product of a team work exercise is assessed on an individual basis in the form of an oral presentation.

11 Programme Curriculum and structure

The programme is studied full time over three years based on 30 weeks attendance per year.

Each year of study is known as a Stage. Each Stage must have modules to a total credit value of 120. Every 10 credits of a module's value is designed to take 100 hours of student time inclusive of contact time in lectures and seminars, independent learning, completion of compulsory written work and preparation for examination assessment. Modules in the programme vary from 10 credits to 40 credits.

Stage 1 consists of a compulsory diet in which students are introduced to Legal Institutions and Method and in which three Foundations of Legal Knowledge are studied: Public Law, Contract and Land Law. For academic reasons, due to the progressive nature of the programme and the need to prepare students for later subject study, the three substantive subjects are designated as core. They, together, provide the context within which legal techniques of thinking and expression are developed.

Stage 2 comprises a compulsory diet of core modules that progress from Stage One and complete the Foundations of Legal Knowledge, conferring not only the essential core knowledge but also further development in “thinking like a lawyer”.

Stage 3 allows students to select modules from the prevailing options list. A feature of this Stage is that, apart from the 40 credit dissertation, most options in Law are of 20 credits in value. This means that finalists will often study across six subjects thus offering the opportunity for greater breadth whilst also allowing students to specialise in areas of particular interest that link to career aspirations and/or academic development. Stage 3 modules extend students to develop depth of understanding and, in several instances, cross-disciplinary study (eg through the use of sociological, philosophical, economic, medical and ethical perspectives). The Law School allows, subject to approval, final year students to select up to 40 credits outside of the Law list of options. This facility is used by a relatively small group who, for example, wish to resume language study, or take up a subject relevant to prospective employment (e.g. marketing or business enterprise) or academic interests (e.g. history or sociology).

The pattern of study is set out below.

Stage 1	Module	Credits	Comp	Core
LAW110	Legal Institutions and Method	30	Y	N
LAW120	Public Law	30	Y	Y
LAW121	Contract Law	30	Y	Y
LAW122	Land Law	30	Y	Y

Stage 2	Module	Credits	Comp	Core
LAW260	Criminal Law	30	Y	Y
LAW261	General Principles of Tort	30	Y	Y
LAW262	EC Law	30	Y	Y
LAW263	Equity	30	Y	Y

Stage 3	Module	Credits	Comp	Core
LAW310	Company Law	20	N	N
LAW313	Criminology	20	N	N
LAW315	Environment and Conservation Law	20	N	N
LAW316	Evidence	20	N	N
LAW336	Family Law	20	N	N
LAW317	Foundations of Public International Law	20	N	N
LAW320	Labour Law	20	N	N
LAW321	Law, Society and Social Change	20	N	N
LAW324	Medicine and the Law	20	N	N
LAW325	Private International Law	20	N	N
LAW326	Religion and English law	20	N	N
LAW327	Research Topic in Law	20	N	N
LAW328	Revenue Law	20	N	N
LAW331	Succession	20	N	N
LAW332	Legal Theory	20	N	N
LAW333	Consumer Law	20	N	N
LAW334	Human Rights Law	20	N	N
LAW335	Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism	20	N	N
LAW398	Dissertation	40	N	N

Note: Students may select non-law modules in Stage 3 having a 40 credit value, subject to approval of the Degree Programme Director. Such modules are neither core nor compulsory.

12 Criteria for Admission:

GCSEs required

No specific requirement beyond the University's General Entrance Requirements.

A-Level Subjects and Grades

AAA at the first attempt and in one sitting. No subject specified but General Studies excluded.

Alternative entry qualifications

Six points may be offered from AVCE or two AS levels as long as two A levels also offered. Other A level equivalent qualifications are acceptable on an individual basis. Overseas students with appropriate qualifications are considered on an individual basis and, particularly in view of the nature of legal studies, the application must demonstrate a good command of English.

Arrangements for non-standard applicants

Non-standard applicants are considered individually and must demonstrate ability to cope with academic study of law at degree level. Those taking accredited access courses are normally expected to pass at Merit level in all units taken.

Admissions Policy

We seek to recruit students of above average academic ability who can respond to the academic rigour of the programme and may reasonably be able successfully to complete the programme. Whilst academic achievement is the principal measure for entry, we also look for evidence of participation in extra - curricular activities of an intellectual, sporting, artistic or voluntary nature, whilst being mindful of possibly limited opportunities in this area. Students offered a place are invited to an Open Day where an opportunity is given to meet staff and undergraduates and to learn more about the programme and the Law School, together with other practical issues. It is Law School policy to interview non-standard applicants considered for a place.

Any Additional Requirements

There are no additional requirements.

13 Support for Students and their Learning

Study Skills

Induction programme for new and returning students, providing orientation, detailed information on the programme of studies, assistance with the development of study key skills, and careers guidance.

Learning Resources

Module teaching materials, including module outlines and reading lists, are on the Law School intranet and a hard copy is supplied to students.

The Robinson Library services, including a dedicated Law Library housed in the Law School and partly funded by the Law School.

Extensive University Computer network across campus and in halls of residence, including a cluster of PC's housed in the Law School.

Newcastle Law School Online resources include Degree Programme Handbook, guides on Legal Writing, Problem Solving and Legal Information Retrieval, access to electronic legal information services and past examination papers.

Academic Support

Academic support is provided for specific academic problems *via* the module leader and the seminar programme. For general academic problems, progress issues and options choices, the Personal Tutors and Degree Programme Director provide advice and guidance.

Pastoral Support

Pastoral support is available from Personal Tutors, Year Tutors and the Degree Programme Director. Other University agencies may be accessed either directly by the student or on referral from the Personal Tutor etc where appropriate. These include the Saville Medical Practice, the University's Student Progress Office (the link on financial assistance issues), the University Counselling Service, the University Chaplaincy and the University Disability Unit (extending to issues of dyslexia and incapacity for assessment as well as the more obvious cases). Finally, the University Careers Service provides extensive and very well received support in close co-operation with the Law School in guiding and informing students on career issues principally by means of a series of talks facilitated by the Law School.

14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning:

Evaluation Questionnaires

LAW modules, other than the research based Dissertation, are the subject of regular evaluation by students in a standard format. Such evaluation extends to lectures and seminars and each teacher is the subject of a separate evaluation. Additionally, Stage Questionnaires and Programme Questionnaires are annually issued to students to evaluate Stages and the Programme as a whole. The results are considered in detail by the Law School Teaching and Learning Committee in conjunction with the Module Review exercise. The Board of Studies receives a report on any problems and general issues. Where necessary, such issues are referred to Staff-Student Committee for further consideration.

Module Reviews

Module leaders are required to conduct an annual module review taking into account the experience during the year, evaluation questionnaires and assessment results. Issues arising are included in an action plan. The reviews are considered in detail by the Law School's Teaching and Learning Committee. The Board of Studies receives a report on any problems and general issues. Where necessary, such issues are referred to Staff-Student Committee for further consideration.

Peer Review of Teaching

Each member of Law School staff is regularly subject to a structured review of teaching. Large group teaching is reviewed in one cycle and small group teaching in another cycle. The review is in the form of teaching observation, coupled with a briefing in advance and a de-brief after the observation. The review is conducted by a member of the Law School's Teaching and Learning Committee. Results are first relayed to the Head of School and fed back to staff on an individual basis. A report on any general issues is made to the Board of Studies. Where necessary, such general issues are referred to Staff-Student Committee for further consideration.

Progress Reviews

As well as the Degree Programme Director conducting progress checks on individual students in each semester, the Personal Tutorial provides a routine mechanism for checking progress. The Board of Studies annually reviews progression rates, distribution of degree classes and graduate employment statistics.

Programme Reviews

In accordance with the University's quality assurance mechanisms, the Board of Studies conducts an annual Degree Programme Review. The review is formally evaluated at Faculty and University level.

External Examiner Reports

External examiners are required to make annual reports to the University and are formally considered by the Board of Studies. Responses go to the External Examiners after scrutiny at Faculty level.

Subject Review

The University has in place a Subject Review Programme in which University academics independently assess the quality of provision for particular degree programmes every five years.

Feedback to students

The Law School formally feeds back quality evaluation and other related issues *via* Staff-Student Committee and the Board of Studies. Both bodies have student representation from the degree programme.

15 Regulation of Assessment

Assessment modes

At Stage 1, all modules except Legal Institutions and Method are assessed by unseen examination. For Legal Skills, the assessment is partly by an assessed client interview (10%) but mainly by an examination including a case note exercise.

At Stage 2, all modules are assessed 33% by assessed coursework and 67% by unseen examination.

At Stage 3, the main pattern is as for Stage 2 but some modules, quite apart from the Research Topic and the Dissertation, are assessed 100% by coursework.

Weighting of results for honours

Stage 1 is a preliminary examination and carries no weight for the eventual honours class. Stage 2 counts for 40% of the final degree class whilst Stage 3 counts for 60%.

The University Common Marking Scheme

All assessed coursework and examination scripts are marked using the University Common Marking Scheme :

70% or more is a First Class mark

60-69% is an Upper Second mark

50-59% is a Lower Second mark

40-49% is a Third Class mark

Less than 40% is a failing mark except that for "non-core" modules in the first year, a mark of 35% will allow a pass provided that the student has achieved an average of 40% across all modules.

External Examiners

The Board of Studies nominates External Examiners for Faculty approval. The University has standards for both the appointment of Externals and the conduct of business by the appointee. The Law School presently has five External Examiners, all of whom are distinguished in their fields and experienced in assessment. The Externals approve assessed coursework titles and examination papers, check marking for consistency and standards, assist in resolving marginal results, attend the Examination Board and contribute especially on the award of Honours to ensure the maintenance of standards with comparable institutions.

16 Indicators of Quality and Standards:

External Examiners Reports

Range of support from and involvement with professionals and other employers through for example Law School Advisory Board, specific skills based student activity such as mooting and client Interviewing and Careers activities.

Employment statistics

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

In addition, information relating to the course is provided in:

The University Prospectus

The School Prospectus

The University and Degree Programme Regulations

The Degree Programme Handbook

QAA Subject Review Report

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