

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF LAW

Credit Unit Statement for the Master of Laws Programme
(Applicable to students admitted in the 2023-24 Academic Year or thereafter)

The curriculum requires candidates to complete not fewer than 72 credits with a total study load of not fewer than 1,800 learning hours (including about 270 - 288 contact hours), except where the candidate opts to complete one or more experiential courses. Where the candidate opts to complete one or more experiential courses, the total number of learning hours may be less than 1,800 (e.g. not fewer than 1,755 learning hours where the candidate opts to complete one experiential course and seven other courses). All law courses in the curriculum are 9-credit in value, except research courses, which are either 9-credit or 18-credit. We use 225 hours of student learning activities (including 30-36 contact hours) as the norm for a 9-credit course, except for the experiential courses, which normally involve 180-225 hours of student learning activities. Some of the courses are assessed with 100% continuous assessment. For courses assessed by a combination of coursework and examination, the actual percentages may range from 20% to 80% of respectively continuous assessment and in-hall examinations or vice versa. The Head of Department, on this basis, will ensure a proper balance in the allocation of weight to different modes of assessment. The four categories of law courses are summarized as follows:

1. Foundation Courses (9 credits per course, 225 hours of student learning activities)

These are mostly courses emphasizing foundational legal concepts and institutional framework. They also include courses on cross-disciplinary knowledge, as well as linguistic/technical skills. These courses are taught in small or large seminar/ lecture format and assessments are generally in the form of class presentation, class participation, periodical assignments, short research papers with a total output of at least approximately 6,000 to 7,000 words and/or in-hall/take-home examinations, with the actual weighting of coursework ranging from 0% to 100% and the actual weighting of examinations ranging from 100% to 0%.

2. Seminar Courses (9 credits per course, 225 hours of student learning activities)

These courses offer specialized/advanced legal or cross-disciplinary knowledge. They are mainly taught in seminar format with heavy reliance on extensive reading before the seminars and active participation in class discussion. These courses aim to further enhance students' knowledge of legal concepts as well as analytical and evaluative skills. Assessment for this category of courses is by way of a combination of class presentation, class participation, periodical assignments, in-hall/ take-home examination and/or research papers, with a total output of at least approximately 6,000 to 7,000 words, with the actual weighting of coursework ranging from 0% to 100% and the actual weighting of examinations ranging from 100% to 0%.

3. Research Courses (9 or 18 credits per course, 225 or 450 hours of student learning activities)

These courses (including 9-credit courses and 18-credit courses) aim to provide students with theoretical insights and/ or cross-disciplinary knowledge, as well as an opportunity to pursue advanced and independent research. These courses try to help students develop original and critical thinking through independent research. An 18-credit dissertation shall comprise a paper with required length ranging from 16,000 to 20,000 words on a legal topic approved by the Faculty Higher Degrees Committee. A 9-credit dissertation shall comprise a paper on a legal topic likewise approved with required length ranging from 8,000 to 10,000 words. In both cases, the dissertation must provide evidence of original work and a capacity for critical legal analysis and argument. These courses (including 9-credit courses and 18-credit courses) are assessed by coursework with the actual weighting of coursework (notably research paper) at 100%.

4. Experiential courses (9 credits per course, 180-225 hours of student learning activities)

Experiential courses include internships and placements in Hong Kong, Mainland China or elsewhere, clinical legal courses and any other courses of an experiential nature. These courses aim to offer opportunities for students to apply and test their legal knowledge and critical and analytical legal skills they have learned in other courses. Students in this category of courses are assessed by a report of at least approximately 6,000 to 7,000 words with an intensive feedback from academic staff and/or practitioners. Each course is assessed by coursework with the actual weighting of coursework at 100%.

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