

LLM and LL.M in specialized streams credit unit statement

The curriculum requires candidates to complete at least 72 credits with a total study load of 1,800 learning hours. All 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 36 contact hours) as the norm for a 9-credit course, except for the experiential courses which normally involve 180 to 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, 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. Introductory courses are taught in small or large seminar format and assessments are in the form of periodical assignments, short research papers with a total output of approximately 6000 to 7000 words and/or in-hall examinations (with coursework ranging between 20% - 80% and examinations 80%-20%)

2. Seminar course (9 credits, 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 course is by way of a combination of class presentation, take-home examination, in-hall examination and/or research papers, with a total output of approximately 6000 to 7000 words.

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

These courses aim to provide students with the theoretical insights and 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 range 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.

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

Experiential courses include internships and placements in Hong Kong, Mainland China or elsewhere, and the clinical legal course. These courses aim to familiarize students with the social environment in which law operates and the practical dimension of legal studies. They 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 approximately 6000 words with intensive feedback from academic staff and/or practitioners.