

## Programme Specification

### Course record information

Name and level of final award:	LLM in International and Commercial Dispute Resolution Law  The LLM in International and Commercial Dispute Resolution Law is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.  MA in Conflict Prevention, Dispute Resolution  The MA in Conflict Prevention, Dispute Resolution is a Masters degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA second cycle degree or diploma compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Postgraduate Diploma Postgraduate Certificate
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Various University sites, primarily Little Titchfield Street, Riding House Street annex
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Richard Earle
Course URL:	
Mode and length of study:	FT one year or PT two years
University of Westminster course code:	
JACS code:	
UK PASS code:	
QAA subject benchmarking group:	
Professional body accreditation:	
Date of course validation/review:	June 2003; May 2010
Date of programme specification:	May 2006

### Admissions requirements

#### Entry criteria

Students are required to have achieved a good honours degree, in any subject, from a university in the United Kingdom, or the equivalent from a university in another country.

Alternative entry criteria are available for applicants who do not have standard qualifications.

Most students whose first language is not English are required to have been assessed as having a minimum IELTS (or equivalent) score of 6.5 in all elements of the IELTS assessment or, if excused assessment, to be capable of functioning at that level of ability.

### **Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)/Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)**

The University operates a system of awarding credit for prior learning, either accredited (APL) or experiential (APEL). If students think their prior experiential (for example work experience) or certificated (for example other study they may have undertaken) learning may qualify them for accreditation and thereby exemption from one or more modules they should contact the Course Leader in the first instance.

In respect of prior certificated learning the student will be required to submit specific evidence (such as original transcripts and syllabuses) which will be considered by the Course Leader.

In respect of prior experiential learning the Course Leader will either allocate the student with a Mentor, or will perform this role himself. The Mentor will assist the student in making their claim and will then pass it, together with their assessment of it, to a second assessor who will be a member of the Course Team, for an independent assessment. Once the second assessment has been made, the assessors make a joint agreed report to the AP(E)L Assessment Board. The Board comprises the Course Leader, the Chair of the Subject Board and one other member of the Course Team drawn from within Westminster Law School. It is the Board which makes the final assessment of what credit, if any, should be awarded to the student in respect of prior experiential learning. "Pass" only is generally deemed appropriate for APEL credits, although in some cases percentage marks may be awarded and can contribute to Merit or Distinction calculations.

Any credit awarded for prior certificated or experiential learning will be notified to the Conferment Board. Until a student who has applied for APL/APEL has been formally advised of the outcome of their application for credit, they should register for and participate in their normal module load, including any modules for which they are seeking credit.

### **Aims of the course**

The Course aim is to provide successful students with a deep, systematic and structured knowledge of the field of international and commercial conflict prevention and dispute resolution, including general and some special areas of that field. In particular, the Course aims to introduce students to the theoretical and practical legal

and socio-legal aspects of the field and to introduce them to a range of research methodologies; and they must show that they are able to apply these methodologies appropriately to their general and special areas of study. The Course aims to promote awareness of the range of specialist resources available for the study and understanding of these general and specialist areas, and also aims to promote the development of advanced research skills. The Course also aims to develop the ability and powers of students to evaluate problems in one or more general and specialist areas, to identify the appropriate issues, to locate relevant sources of information for the solution of problems, to analyse and synthesise all the elements in problems, to communicate their opinion (suitably justified by reference to appropriate sources) in an appropriate fashion, and to provide a critique of their own opinion..

### **Employment and further study opportunities**

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, ie employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

Students join the Course from a wide variety of national and international backgrounds. The Course equips each student for work in a broadly specialised area, subject to any necessary professional requirements. In general, the employment destinations of successful students reflect their backgrounds and the scope of the Course. Many students return to their own countries and re-join their employers. Other students strike out on their own or join new employments. The range of employers is wide, including law firms, private and public companies, governments, non-governmental organisations, and mediation organisations. And the range of work includes acting as judges, lawyers, managers, directors, entrepreneurs, and university lecturers.

More specifically, the employment destinations of students who have been successful on the Course include working for:

- the Centre for Excellence in Dispute Resolution (CEDR);
- the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators.

Some successful students from the Course have progressed successfully to PhD programmes at this and other universities in law, socio-legal or related disciplines. As a broad rule of thumb, students who pass all taught modules first time, and

achieve at least 65% in their dissertation have a reasonably good chance of being accepted onto an MPhil./PhD programme.

Other successful students progress to professional courses in this and other countries, including the Bar Vocational Course and the Legal Practice Course; although the LLM is not a qualifying degree for those courses..

### **Learning outcomes**

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

Modules on the Course are designed to equip the students with a deeper understanding of the relevant subjects than would be obtained on an undergraduate course, both by focusing on the subjects in greater detail, and by placing the subjects in a closer relationship with related subjects. In addition, the Course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the methodologies and techniques of research which are most appropriate to the field, and which are essential for all professionals and academics alike.

### **Specific skills**

In addition to an ability to demonstrate a critical awareness and understanding of a range of research methodologies and the ability to apply appropriate research techniques in their own work, each student will also be able to demonstrate powers of analysis, synthesis, evaluation and application in the context of the field; undertake a high level of independent research; and use appropriate strategies for solving problems relevant to the field.

### **Key transferable skills**

In addition to the ability to self-direct, the Course is designed so that students are able to develop the following transferable skills and attributes. Students operate in complex and specialised contexts. They work effectively as part of a team, they analyse problems at a detailed level, and formulate and present solutions. Students also work independently to present complex arguments, both orally and in written analyses. Students engage confidently in academic and professional communication with others; undertake complex research independently; make the best use of a range of available resources; present the results of this research in a useful and clear form. Students also develop the ability to learn independently so that they are able to continue with academic and professional study, making appropriate use of others.

### **Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

#### **Learning**

Students are expected to prepare for class sessions, and to engage in discussion in those sessions. They may be asked to present parts of a tutorial or seminar, either independently or in small groups.

### **Teaching**

The dominant form of teaching is by way of class sessions, mainly combining some form of lecture (often supported by PowerPoint presentations) with small group tutorial or seminar teaching.

At the start of each series of sessions, students are given a Module Handbook which includes a learning and teaching outline, an outline of the module content, and details of indicative reading.

Team teaching by tutors may be employed to make use of complementary staff skills, knowledge and research.

From time to time, subject experts present guest lectures which provide a deeper knowledge and understanding of specific subject areas within the field.

In researching for their dissertation, students are expected to undertake independent research with some limited guidance. This research is expected to be at a complex and detailed level into a topic chosen by the student and approved as being suitable by the Course Leader or the dissertation module leader.

### **Assessment**

Comment is made by tutors and by students on the arguments and knowledge presented in class sessions by student participants and by the tutor(s).

Students are also assessed by way of a combination of examination, coursework and performance assessments as described in each Module Handbook. Where a module is assessed wholly or partly by examination and coursework, feedback will be available to students on the coursework element, and the feedback will be given prior to the examination where the examination is linked to the coursework. Feedback on failed examinations is available to students prior to the occasion of the re-sit.

Summative assessment instruments and student submissions are independently judged and approved by external examiners who are experts in the area of international and commercial conflict and dispute prevention and resolution.

Formative feedback is available in one or more assessment formats for most modules.

### **Course structure**

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Postgraduate students study 180 credits per year.

1. Students are able to study for the postgraduate degree or for the postgraduate diploma or for the postgraduate certificate. No distinction is made in the delivery of modules or the expectations of students at these levels.
2. Students are required to take modules so as to obtain 180 credits at level 7 in order to be awarded the degree; 120 credits at level 7 in order to be awarded the postgraduate diploma; and 60 credits at level 7 in order to be awarded the postgraduate certificate.
3. Taught modules carry 20 credits at level 7, and the dissertation module carries 60 credits at level 7.
4. For the degree, there are three compulsory modules all of which must be taken and passed, namely:
  - a. Perspectives on Conflicts and Disputes (20 credits);
  - b. Research Theory and Practice (20 credits);
  - c. Postgraduate Dissertation (60 credits)making 100 credits in total for the compulsory modules.

The remaining 80 credits must be acquired by taking and passing four optional modules (20 credits each), usually chosen from those offered on the Course.

5. For the named postgraduate diploma, these two taught compulsory modules must be taken and passed, namely:
  - a. Perspectives on Conflicts and Disputes (20 credits);
  - b. Research Theory and Practice (20 credits)making 40 credits in total for the compulsory taught modules.

The remaining 80 credits must be acquired by taking and passing four optional modules, usually chosen from those offered on the Course.

For the unnamed award, any combination of core and optional modules is permitted in achieving 120 credits.

Exceeding the minimum number of credits is permitted.

Students who are registered for the postgraduate diploma are not permitted to take the postgraduate dissertation module.

6. For the named postgraduate certificate, these two taught compulsory modules must be taken and passed, namely:
  - a. Perspectives on Conflicts and Disputes (20 credits);
  - b. Research Theory and Practice (20 credits)making 40 credits in total for the compulsory taught modules.

The remaining 20 credits must be acquired by taking and passing any optional module, usually chosen from those offered on the Course.

For the unnamed award, any combination of core and optional modules is permitted in achieving 60 credits.

Exceeding the minimum number of credits is permitted.

Students who are registered for the postgraduate certificate are not permitted to take the postgraduate dissertation module.

7. Optional modules which are validated on the Course (see paragraph 10 below) are chosen by students from short lists of the modules which are offered and are available in each semester.
8. The choice of optional modules is made by the student, with the guidance of the Course Leader and other members of the academic staff where guidance is requested.
9. One of the required optional modules may be chosen from any level 7 course within the University with the approval of the Course Leader. Any such non-Course module must be consistent with the Course as a whole.
10. The level 7 credit modules which are validated on the Course are:

<b>Module title</b>	<b>Core/option</b>	<b>Credits</b>
<b>Core modules</b>		
Perspectives on Conflicts and Disputes	Core	20
Research Theory and Practice	Core	20
Postgraduate Dissertation	Core	60
<b>Option modules</b>		
Comparative Commercial Arbitration: Law and Practice	Option	20
Foreign Direct Investment Arbitration	Option	20
International Commercial Arbitration	Option	20
International Commercial Litigation	Option	20
Mediation: Concepts, Evolution, and Practice	Option	20
Negotiation: Theory, Contexts and Practice	Option	20
Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes	Option	20
Private International Law – Substantive Commercial	Option	20
Restorative Justice: Cultures, Integration and Law	Option	20

The list of modules for the MA differs slightly from the above (see Orientation Handbook).

Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.

### **Academic regulations**

The LLM in International and Commercial Dispute Resolution Law, the MA in Conflict Prevention, Dispute Resolution and their intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called Essential Westminster, which is available at [westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster](http://westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster). The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 18: Modular Framework for Postgraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current Handbook of Academic Regulations, which is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)

## **Award**

To qualify for the award of LLM in International and Commercial Dispute Resolution Law or the award of MA in Conflict Prevention, Dispute Resolution, a student must have:

- i) obtained a minimum of 180 credits at Level 7 (this may include a maximum of 30 credits at Level 6 where validated as part of the award);
- ii) attempted modules worth no more than 240 credits; and

**Note:** A first attempt of any module will count as an attempt, and a re-attempt of any module that a student has failed will count as a further, separate attempt. Re-assessment following referral at the first sit will not count as a further separate attempt.

- iii) satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant Course Scheme.

The University may award:

- a Masters Degree with Merit to a student whose marks average at least 60% across modules at Level 7.
- a Masters Degree with Distinction to a student whose marks average at least 70% across the modules at Level 7.

## **Support for students**

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Faculty Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at their Faculty. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books).



Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students.

[Student Affairs](#) provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The Student Affairs Hub is located at 101 New Cavendish Street, Cavendish House (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), with an additional office located at the Harrow Campus.

<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/new-students/when-you-arrive>

The [University of Westminster Students' Union](#) also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University. <http://www.uwsu.com/>

## **Reference points for the course**

### **Internally**

The Course has been based on, and has developed out of the academic research, publication, and other advanced scholarship work of current and former members of staff. The Course has also benefited considerably from the professional experience of current and former members of staff. Former students have also helped with the development of the Course.

### **Externally**

Other sources which have been used include advice from the University's Education Initiative Centre; and the University's learning and teaching policy statements, quality assurance handbook, and modular framework statements. Many of these sources have been informed by external agencies such as the Deering Committee Report.

## **Quality management and enhancement**

### **Course management**

The course is managed by a Course Leader within Westminster Law School. The Law School also offers MA and PhDs.

The Law School has one away-day per year to identify and address ways of improving the design and delivery of its courses. Staff in the Law School undergo annual appraisal and observation of their teaching by their colleagues leading to staff development through course attendance or research activity. Staff in the Law School attend events organised by the Academic Standards and the Teaching and Learning Groups around current teaching, learning and assessment issues.

Full time teaching staff on the course are encouraged to research and publish their research. This is in line with the Faculty's strategic plan and commitment to the research excellence framework.

### **Course approval, monitoring and review**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 2003. The panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic course review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers.

The course is monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the Faculty action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

### **Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together to provide a full induction to the role of the course committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback Questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty's quality assurance evidence base.

### **For more information about this course:**

Richard Earle, Course Leader

**Please note:** This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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