

# LLM International Commercial Law (Distance Learning) Programme Specification

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Academic Year:	2025/26
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Target Degree Award:	Master of Laws (LLM) in International Commercial Law [Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 7]
Interim/exit awards:	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) [FHEQ Level 7] Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) [FHEQ Level 7]
Programme Admission:	September, January
Programme Modes of Study:	12 months full-time (September start) 15 months full-time (January start)

**Please note:** Information about this programme and its modules has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Any change which impacts the terms and conditions of an applicant's offer will be communicated to them.

## Minor Modifications Schedule

1. May 2023: Annual Changes for 2023/4 academic year.
2. July 2025: Annual Changes for the 2025 academic year, including changes to academic regulation.

## Introduction

The DL LLM in International Commercial Law provides students with knowledge of the legal dimensions of commercial transactions, focusing in particular on the international context, and the developments at both national and global levels shaping regulation and practice in this area. It will enable the student to have a thorough understanding of traditional legal subjects in global international business, as well as emerging areas, brought about by technological advances, changes in the policy environment and international relations. Students will be able to consider critical questions surrounding these issues and develop and demonstrate knowledge and recognised competences essential to effective legal and ethically aware practice within international commercial transactions; enabling them to pursue careers in a wide variety of fields, ranging from private commercial practice; in-house lawyers in various organisations; as well as policy-oriented careers in government departments, intergovernmental organisations third sector organisations or academia. The distance learning delivery aims to share these benefits with a broader audience by engaging those individuals based around the world who due to a variety of reasons are unable to join the LLM programme delivered on campus. The DL LLMs together with the LLMs delivered on

campus provide the basis for a vibrant postgraduate community as well as the framework for development of further innovative interdisciplinary postgraduate courses in the future.

The DL programme utilises a range of distance learning technologies, which ensure universal accessibility of the programme's extensive online resources while allowing students to learn at a time, place and pace that suit their individual needs. These online resources are accompanied by collaborative and participative methodologies. For each module studied in addition to pre-recorded lectures and asynchronous learning students have the opportunity to attend synchronous (live) online session and engage in further online debates and discussions with fellow students and tutors using carefully selected technologies. To ensure that all students have the requisite knowledge and skills to effectively engage with the programme and its distance learning nature, there is an intensive 20 hours introductory module taught online over the first two weeks of the academic year which provides an introduction to distance learning education and learning technologies, legal concepts, institutions and sources as well as academic writing and research skills.

The DL LLM programme will be delivered exclusively online and there will be two enrolments each academic year in September and January. Within the programme students will receive training on distance learning methods and on the software of the University of Bradford they will have to use.

There is a "standard" (Part-time) programme and an "accelerated" (Full-time) version. In the full-time version, the September programme will run for 12 months while the January programme will run for 15 months. The part-time version will have to be completed within 48 months. This version will provide students with more flexibility in module selection. Students will be allowed to select 20-60 credits per semester compared to 60-credits per semester in the full-time programme.

Students prepare for the final part of the Masters programme which is a dissertation through which they can study a particular topic of their choice in detail. The optional modules offered allow students to follow a particular interest with a focus on global legal issues. The capstone project is either a DL dissertation of 15,000 words or an advanced report pursuant to an internship. This will provide the student with the opportunity to research and prepare a substantial analysis of a specialist area of interest to them as well as demonstrate understanding of the complex policy and practical dimensions of the subject, thereby preparing them with the knowledge and skills for their chosen career.

The programme is taught by research active staff at University of Bradford School of Law and Social Sciences who have interests and expertise in the issues the student will study, therefore ensuring they have access to cutting edge research and thinking. The DL LLM International Commercial Law is aimed at preparing the student for a range of professional paths in International Commercial Law by deepening their knowledge of the subject, developing their critical thinking, research, analytical and communication skills which will help them succeed in their chosen field. The programme is also designed to be accessible not only to Law graduates who want to pursue a career in legal practice, but also students from a range of academic backgrounds who intend to apply their knowledge of international commercial law in various exciting professional contexts such as within business organisations, government departments, intergovernmental organisations, third sector organisations or academia.

## Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- Deliver a programme of study in international commercial law that is contemporary, of policy and practical relevance, and reflects the expertise of the School and Faculty.
- Ensure the accessibility of the programme to students from diverse backgrounds and various career trajectories.
- Develop subject knowledge and understanding and provide training in discipline skills to enable graduates to pursue varying careers in international commercial law or related fields.
- Encourage participative, independent and reflective learning and the development of personal and professional skills.
- Enable students to understand the complexities of international commercial law at an advanced level and in its ever-changing contexts.
- Equip students to have mastery of the subject, conduct effective research and to critically analyse and assess the specific areas of study undertaken and apply this learning in the relevant practical context.

## Programme Learning Outcomes

### **PGCert International Commercial Law, FHEQ Level 7**

To be eligible for the above award students will be able to:

1. Have a systematic and critical knowledge of the substantive concepts, values, principles and rules in International Commercial Law and their theoretical underpinnings within the framework of the wider legal environment in its historical, socio-political and economic contexts, including the role of contemporary developments such as technology and sustainability principles in the conduct and regulation of modern international business transactions.
2. Demonstrate critical knowledge of the institutions and procedures operating at the international, regional and local levels in international commercial law and their impact on the development of law and policy.
3. Conduct independent research which demonstrates the ability to evaluate approaches to legal research in this subject, develop appropriate research designs and techniques to investigate propositions/hypotheses.
4. An advanced understanding of the role of law in each sub-subject area covered and its shortcomings and limitations as well as the interrelationship between International Commercial Law and other related legal disciplines.
5. Generate clear, concise and coherent communication orally and in writing in which style, scope and depth are appropriate to task, purpose and audience, whether working independently or as a group.

## **PGDip International Commercial Law, FHEQ Level 7**

To be eligible for the above award students will additionally be able to:

6. Employ relevant competencies and strategies to engage constructively with international commercial law in various roles.
7. Identify and apply critical learning gained to current developments and debates in international commercial law.
8. Demonstrate initiative and independence in systematic academic inquiry, using relevant techniques to gather, evaluate and manage evidence, data and information from appropriate sources.
9. Reflect critically on professional and career development needs and to take action to maintain the knowledge and skills required of a practitioner in international commercial law.
10. Plan and execute a range of assignments, including essays and presentations in which style and, scope and depth are appropriate to the task.

## **LLM International Commercial Law, FHEQ Level 7**

To be eligible for the Degree award of Master students will additionally be able to:

11. Design and carry out, with appropriate ethical approval, an original and self-directed capstone research project which draws upon a comprehensive and critical review of relevant literature.
12. Exercise initiative and personal responsibility in completion of an advanced, original and self-directed capstone project using critical reflective communication to deepen understanding of the learning process, with appropriate documentation.
13. Recognise and be able to critically reflect on own values, experiences and orientation in one's own academic work

## **Learning and Teaching Strategy**

This DL LLM programme aims to integrate applied and theoretical knowledge with assessment processes that test knowledge, application and analysis of the subject. To this end, the learning, teaching and assessment strategy for this programme has been developed to help the student build their knowledge incrementally over the period of study and to develop their research, critical thinking and writing skills.

Due to the distance learning nature of the programme, all sessions are delivered online using online legal resources and appropriate learning technologies. The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) for each module is the hub of knowledge through which all module materials are accessed and where a big part of student work takes place.

Students are able to find links there to the live sessions, pre-recorded lectures, weblinks, audio and video files and other digital forms. A module manual is provided with each module to provide an

outline of the module structure, content, learning and teaching strategy and assessment format. The manual is complemented by more detailed study guides which provide guidance on the topic of the weekly study and contain the learning materials (pre-recorded lectures, slides, tutorial tasks, self-study tasks) the reading lists, and other useful information for each week.

The DL LLM International Commercial Law aims to support the students learning in a number of ways. Firstly, there is the scheduled online class time, and we expect them to attend all scheduled classes as the interaction with the tutors and the other students will be beneficial to their learning. All live sessions will be recorded, and the text will be made available to cover primarily those who miss the live sessions and those who wish to revisit them. Online classes contain a variety of activities from traditional lecture style input by the tutor to explain often complex ideas and principles, to individual and group tasks to allow them to practice the skills and knowledge they have been developing.

Learning is asynchronous (at the student's own time) and synchronous (live). The number of synchronous sessions per module varies depending on the module content and learning needs. A typical LLM module offers 4 synchronous ("live") sessions focusing on delivering content, clarifying issues on the law topics, and discussing answers to student tasks. Two additional 2-hour synchronous sessions focus on module revisions, the design of and preparation for the summative assessments and the collection of student feedback which will be used to improve module delivery.

The remaining period of the module is used for asynchronous learning. This allows students more flexibility and control of their learning as they will be able to study the module at their own time and pace.

Each 20 credits module represents approximately 200 hours of study time broken down into formal tutor-led live online sessions as well as engagement via the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and independent study. Case study analysis and discussion is used to contextualise learning and the application of techniques.

As a distance learning programme, the DL LLM is based on the expectation that students will work independently in the biggest part of their study. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and engage with the materials and ideas provided. Students must therefore prepare for all live sessions and take all opportunities offered to develop their skills and knowledge, while they have to use the period of self-study to progress on the target of achieving the learning outcomes.

Opportunities for collaborative learning will also be made available. A key element of the DL LLM involves the development of interpersonal skills and the provision of opportunities to work and learn collaboratively with fellow students and/or academics. These opportunities are available through the participation in the live sessions; various discussion forums and the provision of written feedback from module tutors on a series of formative tasks. The nature of the collaborative activities varies, though typically students may be required to engage as a group, develop and discuss a case(s)/scenario and provide solutions based on sound analysis and logical arguments using information from varying sources. Constructive feedback is provided by peers and the module leader/tutor.

Face-to-face interaction and engagement is also made possible through the opportunity to attend the Law Division Summer School in Bradford or to attend up to 40 credits of the programme in Bradford.

We therefore cater for a variety of learning styles and preferences and aim to create an inclusive and inspiring learning environment where the student can engage with the material studied in the ways most suitable to them. However, we also want them to push themselves out of their comfort zone, learn new things and develop intellectually and personally and we therefore hope they will engage in as many of the activities as possible to give the best possible chance of achieving the learning outcomes and demonstrating this through various assessments.

## **Assessment Strategy**

The assessment strategy on this programme is robust, adopting a range of assessment methods, all submitted online, thereby and aiming to be inclusive, and giving students the opportunity to play to their strengths while also developing areas of weakness. Assessment is based on the skills and knowledge developed throughout the programme and the DL LLM International Commercial Law employs a variety of assessment methods- both formative and summative. The assessments are structured in such a way as to help them demonstrate that they meet the learning outcomes of each module and the programme overall. There are no timed, closed book examinations for this programme. Instead, we use a variety of programme work assignments to develop and test their research, critical thinking, problem solving and writing skills. The student might therefore be asked to write a traditional academic essay, to create a portfolio of activities, to write a book review or develop a research plan. The type of assessment for each module will be specified in the module descriptor with more detail being available in the module handbook.

There is a balance of formative and summative assessments, including feedback during individual and group task to ensure that students are supported effectively in their learning and are able to produce their best work for the summative assessment. Formative assessment is built into specific modules but not all, the expectation being that the student develop as independent learners, they will need to rely less on this form of support and can transfer the skills learned from one module to another.

## **Curriculum**

### **Student Journey**

The DL LLM International Commercial Law comprises a taught component and a research element. The student will study 120 credits of taught modules and undertake a 60 credits independent research project which culminates in the writing of their dissertation or research report. Most students, it is expected, will enrol on the Programme with the intention of completing the entire LLM. However, there are various formal exit points should they decide that studying for the full LLM is no longer possible. Successful completion of 60 credits of taught modules will make them eligible for a Postgraduate Certificate while 120 credits of taught modules will qualify them for a Postgraduate Diploma.

There will be two cohorts of students in each academic year- a September and January intake. The two cohorts will run alongside each other, with students in January studying modules in a different order to the September intake. The January intake will commence the programme studying Semester 2 modules and complete (in the full-time version of the programme) the taught element of their programme alongside the September cohort. However, in the full-time version, the January intake will have until March of the following year to complete their dissertation/advanced research report, thereby completing their studies in 15 months. The January cohort will have the opportunity to attend the summer school. They could also secure an internship in the summer whilst the September cohort are completing their dissertation. The summer school is also available to the September intake students.

In the part-time version there are a number of options for students. Students have a longer period of up to 48 months (instead of 12-15 for the full time programme) to complete their studies. These students will have the option to select between 20 and 60 credits per semester and they have up to 36 months to complete the modules of the programme before starting their dissertation.

### Programme Structure

In the beginning of the course, students will be required to attend an intensive 20 hours non-credit bearing DL module- Foundations of Law and Skills (DL), which will provide them with the foundation necessary to study for the DL LLM through distance learning. There will be a “diagnostic test” at the end of the module to establish a baseline of knowledge to target additional support for students. Based on the results of the test, the LLM programme team will prepare additional support for students in the form of additional sessions (e.g training on learning technologies, academic skills advice sessions etc), in the identified areas from the test. The sessions will be delivered during the LLM course.

### Core content

In the main programme students will study two 20 credits of core modules (one in each of semester 1 and 2). These are Sustainable Development Law in Contemporary Business and Society (20 credits) and Regulatory Theory and Practice (20 credits).

**Table A: LLM International Commercial Law (Distance Learning) Core Taught Modules (all routes)**

Study in	Code	Module Title	Credit	Level
S1 or S2	LAW6029-Z	Foundations of Law and Skills	0	FHEQ 6
Semester 1	LAW7054-B	Sustainable development law in contemporary business and society (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Semester 2	LAW7058-B	Regulatory Theory and Practice (DL)	20	FHEQ 7

These modules will provide the student with knowledge of the broader regulatory context and the implications for human rights protection and development. Sustainable Development Law in Contemporary Business and Society explores the principle of sustainable development and its implementation, including the impacts and responsibilities of businesses in the modern context and their impacts on society and human rights. The Regulatory Theory and Practice module will introduce the student to a critical examination of the underlying theories and rationale for regulation and a critical discussion of the various approaches to and forms of regulation, with a focus on the business dimensions of this practice and the implications for human rights.

## Optional modules

In addition to the core modules, students select four optional 20 credits modules from the list of specialisms in international commercial law (these are detailed in the curriculum below). This will bring the total of the taught modules studied to 120 credits. September entry students will study the "Sem 1" modules first, January entry students will study the "Sem 2" modules first.

Please note: Module LAW7074-B starts later than other modules and is taught/studied between June and July. The list of modules available in any one year will be specified at the time of the programme being advertised for application each academic year. The curriculum may change, subject to the University's programme approval, monitoring and review procedures.

**Table B: LLM International Commercial Law Optional Taught Modules (all routes)**

Period	Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Level
Sem 1	LAW7079-B	Law and Ethics of Technology and Artificial Intelligence (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7050-B	International intellectual property law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7055-B	International commercial contracts and e-commerce (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7060-B	International Banking and Finance Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7067-B	International Trade and investment law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7049-B	International Competition Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7086-B	Data Protection and Privacy Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7087-B	International Company and Corporate Governance Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 1	LAW7090-B	Law of Financial Crime (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7059-B	International Commercial Dispute Resolution (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7064-B	Business, Human Rights and Environment (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7062-B	Cyber Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7069-B	Employment Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7072-B	International Law of Taxation (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7077-B	Regulation of Financial Technologies and Virtual Assets (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7088-B	International Insolvency Law (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 2	LAW7089-B	Legal technology (DL)	20	FHEQ 7
Sem 3	LAW7074-B	Emerging Issues in Law [Summer School]	20	FHEQ 7

## Research stage

The modules studied, in addition to a taught component of the dissertation module will provide the student with subject knowledge and skills necessary to complete the final research project- a dissertation or an advanced report following an internship. The taught component of the dissertation module will start in Semester 2 and will build on the introductory material in the non-credit bearing Foundations of Law and Skills, focusing on a variety of research methods. While the student is not expected to carry out empirical research to underpin their dissertation, they are expected to be able

to understand and evaluate empirical work undertaken by others. As such, a working knowledge of issues in social research and issues in research methodology is important.

Full-time students will be expected to commence the independent element of their dissertation in Semester 2b which starts in April for the September cohort and Semester 2 which starts in January for the January cohort. Part-time students will be expected to commence the independent element of their dissertation when they will have completed the modules and no later than 36 months after the start of their studies.

**Table C: LLM International Commercial Law Dissertation (full time or part time routes)**

Route type	Study period	Code	Module Title	Credit	Level
Full-time	NS Academic Year	LAW7056-E	Dissertation (DL)	60	FHEQ 7
Part-time	Full year	LAW7056-E	Dissertation (DL)	60	FHEQ 7

### **Achievable Awards**

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Certificate** if they have successfully completed 60 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible to exit with the award of **Postgraduate Diploma** if they have successfully completed at least 120 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

Students will be eligible for the award of **Degree of Master** if they have successfully completed at least 180 credits and achieved the award learning outcomes.

### **Assessment, Continuation and Award Regulations**

This programme follows the Assessment, Continuation and Award regulations published on the University's website (<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/media-v8/aeo/regulations/Regulation-9-Postgraduate-Taught-Assessment-Continuation-and-Award-1.0b.pdf>) for postgraduate courses (Regulation 9).

### **Admission Requirements**

We take into consideration a number of factors when assessing your application. It's not just about your grades; we take the time to understand your personal circumstances and make decisions based on your potential to thrive at university and beyond.

Students with a disability will be assessed on the same grounds as anyone else. If you want to find out more about the support available from the Disability Service you can contact them before you apply at <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/disability>.

### **Language requirements**

As the programme is taught in English, students need to demonstrate their proficiency by having GCSE English (or an equivalent national Level 2 qualification) at Grade 4 (old Grade C) or above. This requirement is only waived if you have completed a first degree in the UK or another English-

speaking country within the last 2 years. If your first language is not English, you will be subject to the University's language requirements for entry which are currently:

- IELTS requirements of 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 5.5 in each sub-test.
- TOEFL requirement of 94 overall, with sub-tests of at least 18 in Reading, 17 in Writing, 17 in Listening and 20 in Speaking.
- the equivalent score in another recognised test – we do not accept the TOEIC test.

### **Academic and study requirements**

For the LLM International Commercial Law, the student will usually have an undergraduate Bachelor's degree in Law or any other discipline classified at Lower Second Class (2:2) or above.

Due to the online nature of the programme, students must have access to a reliable internet connection and a laptop or a desktop. A limited number of laptops are available on loan from the University to students eligible for assistance or who are in need of specific support. Disabled students may be able to apply for a purchase funded by Disabled Students' Allowance.

### **Recognition of Prior Learning**

Consideration of applications will be based on a combination of formal academic qualifications and other relevant experience. Applications are welcome from students with non-standard qualifications or mature students (those over 21 years of age on entry) with significant relevant experience.

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning in order to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme.

Information in this document is for the contemporary recruitment cycle and was accurate at time of publication. The current tariff and accepted qualifications for entry onto the programme is published at the online course page: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/courses/pg/international-commercial-law-distance-learning/>

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<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/student-contract/>