

**University of Plymouth**

Faculty of Business

School of Law, Criminology and Government

**Programme Specification**

Graduate Diploma in Law  
3237

Final Approved Version  
August 2018

## **1. Graduate Diploma in Law**

**Final Award Title:** Graduate Diploma in Law

**Intermediate award title:** N/A

**UCAS Code:** N/A

**JACS code:** M200

## **2. Awarding Institution: University of Plymouth**

**Teaching Institution:** University of Plymouth

## **3. Accrediting body(ies)**

**Bar Standard Board/Solicitors Regulation Authority**

- The GDL is 'Common Professional Examination' (CPE) that satisfy the professional body requirements set by the Solicitors Regulation Authority and Bar Council of England and Wales, thereby enabling graduates to proceed to train to become solicitors or barristers if they wish.
- The Solicitors Regulation Authority and the Bar Standards Board jointly approve providers of CPEs and have agreed new procedures for doing so from January 2014.
- Providers of CPEs are required to self-certify, with supporting documents, compliance with the Joint Statement and QAA standards and quality assurance requirements. The SRA will act as administrators on behalf of both regulators, and will monitor the self-certification documents. A copy of the self-declaration form and a new Academic Stage Handbook are now available on the [SRA website](#).

### **Summary of specific conditions/regulations**

The professional bodies require students to complete seven core modules known as the Foundations of Legal Knowledge, together with an 'eighth area of law', in one year of full-time study. They must also pass an assessment on the English Legal System before embarking on the seven Foundations. This accounts for the unusual features of this programme.

#### 4. Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience

The programme provides a rigorous course of legal education which equips students with a sound knowledge and understanding of the foundations of legal knowledge of the jurisdiction of England and Wales. The programme of study is distinctive in that it enables graduates who do not hold a professionally recognised qualifying law degree (mainly those with degrees in disciplines other than law) to complete the academic stage of training required to become a member of the legal profession. Successful students are then able to proceed to the vocational stage of training to become a solicitor or barrister.

#### 5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)

Law:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Subject-benchmark-statement-law.pdf>

#### 6. Programme Structure

Timing	LAW1101 Introduction to Law & Practice				20 credits, Level 4			
	Pre-term							
Semester 1	LAW3114 Public Law		LAW3115 Contract law		LAW3116 Land Law		LAW3117 Criminal Law	
	20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6	
	LAW3118 Law of Tort		LAW3119 Law of EU		LAW3120 Equity & Trusts		LAW3121 Legal Research Project	
	20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6		20 credits Level 6	
Semester 2								

## **7. Programme Aims**

The programme is intended to:

1. Satisfy the academic stage of training requirements of the Solicitors Regulation Authority and Bar Standards Board, by providing an intensive and rigorous one year programme of study in the foundations of legal knowledge as required in the Joint Statement of the Law Society and General Council of the Bar.
2. Provide a solid foundation for non-law graduates to prepare for a career in legal practice.
3. Provide students with an understanding of the structure and operation of the English Legal System.
4. Provide students with a sound knowledge and understanding of the foundations of legal knowledge – contract, tort, criminal law, land law, equity and trusts, constitutional and administrative law and European Law.
5. Enable students to undertake an independent legal research project in an additional area of law.
6. Develop the key intellectual skills required to study the discipline of law.
7. Enable students to transfer skills and knowledge from one area of law to another.
8. Develop in students the skills to become life-long autonomous learners.

## **8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes**

A curriculum map of the learning outcomes and opportunities appears at the end of this document. The following referents have been used in drawing up the outcomes:

- The QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (level H)
- The 2000 QAA Benchmark Statement for Law
- The 1999 Law Society and General Council of the Bar's Joint Statement on the Completion of the Academic Stage
- The 2008 Joint Academic Stage Board Policy Statement on minimum outcomes for CPE courses

### **8.1. Knowledge and understanding**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) Knowledge and understanding of the English Legal System (sources of law, legal institutions and legal process) and its links to international institutions especially the European Union (and European Union law) and Council of Europe (and the European Convention on Human Rights).
- 2) In depth knowledge and understanding of the foundation subjects (contract, tort, criminal law, land law, equity and trusts, constitutional and administrative law and European Law) and an understanding of the relationship between them.
- 3) Through independent study, knowledge and understanding of an additional area of law outside the seven foundation subjects.

## **8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) The ability to apply legal knowledge to case study problem scenarios and provide reasoned solutions evaluating a range of possible solutions.
- 2) The ability to construct and present an argument concerning legal materials and be able to evaluate the merits of more than one point of view.
- 3) The capacity to plan and execute a major legal research project using appropriate sources of law.

## **8.3. Key and transferable skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:

- 1) The ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning development reflecting on the learning undertaken.
- 2) Communication skills so to be able to communicate clearly and accurately both on paper and orally using technical legal language where appropriate.
- 3) Appreciation of the need to become a lifelong learner.

## **8.4. Employment related skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) Knowledge of the practical operation of law and justice
- 2) The ability to listen effectively and to communicate orally and in writing
- 3) The ability to present information and arguments in a variety of forms

## **8.5. Practical skills**

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

- 1) Use of information technology to word process documents and in communication and research.
- 2) Development of the ability to work co-operatively in a team.
- 3) The ability to absorb, process and effectively apply large quantities of information.

## **9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements**

Applicants must normally have an honours degree of at least Second Class standard, or equivalent, from a UK University or University in the Republic of Ireland, or a Certificate of Academic Standing issued by the Bar Standards Board or the Solicitors Regulation Authority. The degree will normally be in a subject other than law although the programme is also suited to those who have studied law but not obtained a qualifying law degree, or whose qualifying law degree is out of date for the purposes of the professional bodies. Applicants without an English language

qualification who obtain a Certificate of Academic Standing will be required to have obtained at least 6.5 overall in the IELTS test with 6 in the writing band.

The following criteria will be applied in making decisions about admission:

- Academic merit (normally evidenced by achieving at least a second class honours degree)
- A commitment to pursuing a legal career, as evidenced by appropriate work experience
- The need to study in the region for personal reasons
- Preference may be given to students who are studying or have studied at the University of Plymouth.
- In all cases the admissions process will comply with the University of Plymouth's Equality and Diversity Policies and Schemes which state the University's commitment to providing equality for all irrespective of age, disability, ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality), gender (including gender reassignment and marital status), religion or belief, and sexual orientation.

Other qualifications may be accepted for entry; information is provided on Programme Course pages specifying what these are and the level at which they need to be achieved

#### **10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards**

Not applicable as this is a one-year programme, although students must pass the in-class test for LAW1101 in order to be allowed to progress with the Foundations of Legal Knowledge.

#### **11. Exceptions to Regulations**

N/A

#### **12. Transitional Arrangements**

N/A

### 13. Mapping and Appendices:

#### 13.1. ILO's against Modules Mapping

LEARNING OUTCOMES -	CONTRACT LAW	PUBLIC LAW	LAW OF TORT	LAND LAW	EQUITY & TRUSTS	CRIMINAL LAW	LAW of EU	INTRO TO LAW & PRACTICE	LEGAL RESEARCH PROJECT
<b>KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING</b>									
1) Knowledge and understanding of the English Legal System (sources of law, legal institutions and legal process) and its links to international institutions especially the European Union (and European Union law) and Council of Europe (and the European Convention on Human Rights).								X	
2) Knowledge and understanding in depth of the foundation subjects (contract, tort, criminal law, land law, equity and trusts, constitutional and administrative law and European Law) and an understanding of the interrelationship between them	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
3) Through independent study, knowledge and understanding of an additional area of law outside the seven foundation subjects.									X

<b>LEGAL SKILLS</b>									
1) The skills to locate, retrieve, interpret and discuss primary and secondary sources of law from both paper and electronic sources.	X	X	X	X	X	<b>X</b>	X	X	X
2) The ability to construct and present an argument concerning legal materials and be able to evaluate the merits of more than one point of view.		<b>X</b>	X	X	<b>X</b>	X	X		X
3) The capacity to plan and execute a legal research project using appropriate sources of law.									<b>X</b>
<b>KEY TRANSFERABLE SKILLS</b>									
1) The ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning development reflecting on the learning undertaken.	O	O	O	O	O	X	X		<b>X</b>
2) Communication skills so to be able to communicate clearly and accurately <b>on paper and orally</b> using technical legal language where appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X	X	O		X
3) An appreciation of the need to become a lifelong learner.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

<b>EMPLOYMENT-RELATED SKILLS</b>									
1) Knowledge of the practical operation of law and justice	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2) The ability to listen effectively and to communicate orally and in writing	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3) The ability to present information and arguments in a variety of forms	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>PRACTICAL SKILLS</b>									
1) Use information technology to word process documents and in communication and research.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
2) The ability to work co-operatively in a team.	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
3) The ability to process large quantities of information and to apply that information effectively.	X	X	X	X	X	O	O	<b>O</b>	<b>X</b>

O DENOTES MODULE DEVELOPS THIS OUTCOME BUT IT IS NOT DIRECTLY ASSESSED.

X DENOTES MODULE DEVELOPS AND ASSESSES THIS OUTCOME.

**X** INDICATES PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THIS SKILL IN THE MODULE.

### **13.2. Assessment against Modules Mapping**

All modules are assessed by 100% exam except LAW1101 Introduction to Law and Practice, where the assessment comprises an in-class test for the English Legal System element and a piece of coursework, and LAW3121, assessed by a Legal Research Project of 5,000 words.

### 13.3. Skills against Modules Mapping

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes Map			
1 Graduate Attributes and Skills	2	3	4
Core Programme Intended Learning Outcomes <i>The FHEQ requirements are given in italics</i>	Aim	Subject Benchmark & JASB	Related Core Modules
<p><b>FHEQ Knowledge/ Understanding</b></p> <p><i>i) knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study;</i></p> <p><b>From the Assessed Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Knowledge and understanding of the English Legal System (sources of law, legal institutions and legal process) and its links to international institutions especially the European Union (and European Union law) and Council of Europe (and the European Convention on Human Rights).</li> <li>2) In depth knowledge and understanding of the foundation subjects (contract, tort, criminal law, land law, equity and trusts, constitutional and administrative law and European Law) and an understanding of the relationship between them.</li> <li>3) Through independent study, knowledge and understanding of an additional area of law outside the seven foundation subjects.</li> </ol>	<p>To develop students' knowledge and understanding of law and legal systems that will enable them to satisfy the requirements set by the Joint Academic Stage Board for the academic stage of training for the legal profession</p> <p>To allow opportunities for students to develop their knowledge and understanding of law in areas not covered by the Foundations of Legal Knowledge</p> <p>To promote the understanding of law and legal systems in the context of social and legal change</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 1</p> <p><b>JASB</b> a) i, ii, iii</p>	<p>All Core Modles</p>

<p><b>FHEQ Cognitive (Intellectual) Skills</b> (generic)  <i>ii) an ability to present, evaluate, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, to develop lines of argument and make sound judgements in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study</i></p> <p><b>From the Assessed Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The ability to apply legal knowledge to case study problem scenarios and provide reasoned solutions evaluating a range of possible solutions.</li> <li>2) The ability to construct and present an argument concerning legal materials and be able to evaluate the merits of more than one point of view.</li> <li>3) The capacity to plan and execute a major legal research project using appropriate sources of law.</li> </ol>	<p>To foster the development of cognitive, personal (transferable) and practical skills, including specific legal and research skills</p> <p>To encourage students to be able to apply law to problem solving in practical 'real life' scenarios</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 2, 4</p> <p><b>JASB</b> a) iv, b) i, ii, v</p>	<p><b>All core modules</b></p>
<p><b>FHEQ Key/Transferable Skills</b> (generic) (<b>Personal skills</b>)  <i>a) evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work;</i>  <i>b) communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments;</i></p> <p><b>From the Assessed Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The ability to work independently and take responsibility for their own learning development reflecting on the learning undertaken.</li> <li>2) Communication skills so to be able to communicate clearly and accurately both on paper and orally using technical legal language where appropriate.</li> <li>3) Appreciation of the need to become a lifelong learner.</li> </ol>	<p>To foster the development of cognitive, personal (transferable) and practical skills, including specific legal and research skills</p> <p>To assist students in becoming autonomous life-long learners with a sense of study and enquiry and the skills to comprehend and contextualise developments in law</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 5, 6, 7</p> <p><b>JASB</b> a) v b) vi, viii</p>	<p><b>Legal Research Project</b></p>

<p><b>Employment-related skills</b>  <i>c) undertake further training and develop new skills within a structured and managed environment;</i>  <i>d) qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility.</i></p> <p>4) To develop graduate attributes and skills in preparation for vocational legal training and/or employment in a range of legal and other professions</p> <p><i>Although this is a separate category of skills – all of the above mentioned are skills related to employment. In particular those indicated as meeting the legal professional requirements are related to a career in the legal profession and the more generic skills (including soft skills) demonstrate FHEQ d). Careers advice and development planning are however integrated into the curriculum in the modules identified.</i></p>	<p>To develop graduate attributes and skills in preparation for vocational legal training and/or employment in a range of legal and other professions.</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 9</p> <p><b>JASB</b> n/a</p>	<p>Introduction to Law &amp; Practice</p>
<p><b>FHEQ Practical Skills</b> (subject specific)</p> <p><b>From the Assessed Learning Outcomes:</b></p> <p>1) Knowledge of the practical operation of law and justice  2) The ability to listen effectively and to communicate orally and in writing  3) The ability to present information and arguments in a variety of forms</p>	<p>To foster the development of cognitive, personal (transferable) and practical skills, including specific legal and research skills</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 3, 7, 8</p> <p><b>JASB</b> a) iv, b) iii, iv, vii</p>	<p>Introduction to Law &amp; Practice</p>

<p><b>Other</b>  <i>These are learning outcomes (opportunities) that are not assessed but which are developed in the core</i></p> <p>a) <i>using email</i>  b) <i>numeracy</i></p>	<p>To foster the development of cognitive, personal (transferable) and practical skills, including specific legal and research skills</p>	<p><b>Benchmark</b> 7</p> <p><b>JASB</b> b) vii</p>	
--	---	---	--

**13.4. Appendices**

N/A