Aims of the programme

(a) Knowledge and Understanding

- To enable students of the highest calibre from around the world to pursue their legal studies at an advanced level.
- To provide students with opportunities to pursue courses which build on and develop in greater depth material which they have studied at undergraduate level.
- To provide students with opportunities to pursue courses of a specialist nature, in areas too advanced or too focused to be included in an undergraduate degree course.
- To enable students to advance their understanding of law as a distinctive social institution, especially in relation to matters of policy and principle.
- To provide opportunities to learn within a cosmopolitan atmosphere, thereby encouraging a comparative approach among students and staff. In particular, while the course does not aim to provide an introduction to the common law, to enable students from non-common law countries to become familiar with common law scholarship and methods.
- To enable students to engage in work which is innovative and at the leading edge of legal scholarship.

(b) Skills and other attributes

- To facilitate the growth of legal and general transferable skills already developed by students during their undergraduate studies.

Programme outcomes

The criteria for admission to the LL.M. course are very high. On this basis it is assumed that students taking the course are already appropriately knowledgeable in the law and that they possess the skills and the independence necessary to pursue a degree at master’s level. Admission for those whose native language is not English is dependent upon demonstrating a high level of proficiency in English.

By the end of the programme students should be able to demonstrate:
1. Knowledge and understanding

(a) Knowledge and understanding at an advanced level of the subject areas chosen for study, including a critical awareness of current issues and debates at the forefront of the areas concerned.

Opportunities: All students choose four subject areas for study. Opportunities are provided to specialise in a number of areas, including international law, European Union law, intellectual property and commercial law.

(b) The ability to understand and make use of a range of perspectives on legal issues, viewed from the various and complementary perspectives of legal doctrine, history, philosophy and sociology.

Opportunities: Subjects offered provide opportunities to examine legal issues from a range of perspectives, including historical, philosophical and sociological perspectives (e.g. history of English civil and criminal law, jurisprudence, family law and policy, philosophy of criminal law).

Teaching methods: (1) Seminars and lectures provide students with an overview of the whole area of each course, framing and stimulating students’ personal consideration of the material covered, and often providing a distinctive, original perspective on the subject. (2) Seminars and workshops, for which prior preparation is required, provide opportunities for discussion with lecturers and other students and for development of appropriate techniques of analysis and argument.

The precise teaching format varies depending upon the nature of the subject and the size of the class. Where possible, courses are taught by means of seminars, although for very popular courses with higher numbers, the format is lectures, usually accompanied by workshops conducted in smaller groups.

Means of assessment: The basic means of assessment is by formal, written, unseen examinations. In some courses students have the option (or may be required) to write an extended essay of up to 7,000 words in addition to taking a formal examination. Students may choose to offer a thesis of up to 18,000 words in place of one formal examination. A number of Seminar Thesis courses are assessed entirely by the submission of a thesis of up to 18,000 words. Students taking a Seminar Thesis course cannot offer a second thesis.

2. Skills and other attributes

Intellectual skills

- Ability to understand, analyse and interpret complex primary and secondary legal materials, including case-law, statutory materials and academic writings.
- Ability to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.
- Ability to apply legal rules to factual situations.
- Ability to develop a coherent argument or view out of disparate materials.
- Ability to form conclusions supported by rational argument.
- Ability to think critically and independently about legal rules and institutions.
- Ability to engage critically with emerging issues and debates.

Development: These skills are possessed at a high level by those admitted to the course. They are further developed throughout the LL.M. programme, in particular
through instruction by lecturers, through formal and informal discussion with lecturers and other students, and by students themselves in preparing for lectures, seminars and workshops, or in researching and writing extended essays or theses. Students are also encouraged to submit written work (up to three pieces for each paper they are taking) in the form of reflective essays or timed exam-practice essays. Students then benefit from specific and individual feedback and can use this to hone their legal writing skills.

Assessment: These skills are assessed summatively at an advanced level by formal written examinations, which may include both the application of legal rules to (hypothetical) factual situations and critical analysis of the rules and, as appropriate, by the submission of extended essays or theses.

Research skills

- Ability to identify and locate source material independently on a range of subjects, including reports and statutory material, both in paper form and online.
- Ability to understand and assess the reliability, currency, relevance and relative importance of, and relationships between, source materials.
- Ability to use indexes and digests, both in paper form and online, for assistance in handling large quantities of source material, and to use these skills in areas not previously studied.
- Ability to make effective and independent use of libraries and other information resources.

Development: These skills are possessed at a high level by those admitted to the course. Induction is provided for students from a non-UK or common law background, and training in the use of online resources is available from the Freshfields Legal IT Teaching and Development Officer. These skills are further developed in private study of primary sources, in preparing for lectures, seminars and workshops or in researching extended essays or theses. The Faculty has produced plagiarism guidance which it makes available to the students and there is a lecture at the start of the Michaelmas Term given to LLM students on plagiarism and on research skills.

Assessment: These skills are assessed formatively through participation in seminars and workshops and summatively through formal written examinations and the examination of extended essays and theses.

Communication and literacy skills

- Ability to marshal arguments lucidly, coherently, logically and concisely.
- Ability to make correct, accurate and effective use of written and spoken English including specialist legal terminology.
- Ability to present material in a clear and effective way, in both oral and written form, in all cases showing sensitivity to the diverse perspectives of the intended audience or readership.

Development: Students are only admitted if they have a high level of attainment in the use of English. Oral skills are further developed by participation in seminars and workshops. Written skills may be further developed by the preparation of extended essays or theses. As noted above, students are encouraged to submit written work (up to three pieces for each paper they are taking) in the form of reflective essays or
timed exam-practice essays. Students then benefit from specific and individual feedback and can use this to hone their legal writing skills.

Assessment: Oral skills are assessed formatively through participation in workshops or seminars. Written skills are assessed formatively through assessed essays for each course, and summatively through formal written examinations and through the examination of extended essays and theses.

Interpersonal skills

- Ability to work creatively, flexibly and sensitively with others.
- Ability to interact successfully on a one-to-one basis.
- Capacity to respect different viewpoints.
- Ability to learn independently and to develop appropriate mechanisms for support and feedback.

Development: These skills are developed through co-operative learning in seminars and workshops or in informal discussion and working-groups, and by taking part in the wider life of colleges, the Faculty and the University, for example through membership and officership of University and College societies (including the Cambridge University Graduate Law Society) and through participation in sport, music or drama. The cosmopolitan atmosphere of the course provides opportunities to interact with a range of viewpoints and differing legal and cultural backgrounds. The structure of the programme requires greater independence in learning. The formation of support groups is encouraged as a way of providing appropriate support for learning. The student should be able to identify learning needs, to give feedback, and to accept feedback from peers and teachers.

Assessment: These skills, and in particular the ability to learn co-operatively, are reflected in the outcome of formal assessment.

Organisational skills

- Ability to take initiatives.
- Ability to write and think under pressure and to meet deadlines.
- Ability to manage time and resources.

Development: These skills are developed through organisation of work-programmes, in particular in preparation for lectures, seminars and workshops, through management of extracurricular activities so that they complement and do not detract from course-related activities, and through membership and officership of societies.

Assessment: These skills are reflected in the outcome of formal assessment.

Programme structure

The programme is a full-time, one-year course from October to June. Admission to the programme is by application to the Faculty through the Board of Graduate Studies, followed by application to a college.

Qualification for the degree requires a pass in the LL.M. Examination held at the end of the course. Students in the LL.M. Examination are classed.
All students take four papers, chosen from a range available each year. There are no compulsory papers. The precise range of papers available varies from year to year.

**Management of teaching quality and standards**

The University ensures high standards of teaching and learning in the following ways:

- The completion of Annual Quality Updates by each Faculty and Department, to enable central overview of provision and assist in dissemination of good practice
- Scrutiny of the reports of External Examiners for all teaching programmes
- Encouraging student engagement at both the local level, through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees, and at a central level by participation in the Postgraduate Teaching Experience Survey (PTES)
- Holding reflective, centrally-coordinated, Learning and Teaching Reviews for all teaching institutions every six years to explore provision and suggest constructive courses of action
- Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

**Graduate Employability and career destinations**

The Careers Service maintains links with relevant employers and takes into account employer needs and opinions in the services which it provides for students. The Careers Service also allocates a Careers Adviser to each College, Faculty and Department to act as a point of contact.

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: [www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/camdata/archive.html)