

International Legal Studies LLM

Distance Learning Programme Specification

Academic Year:	2026/2027
Degree Awarding Body:	The University of Bradford
Main Location:	Distance Learning
Qualifications Framework:	HE Qualifications of UK Degree Awarding Bodies (FHEQ, QAA 2024)
Target Degree Award:	Master of Laws (LLM) International Legal Studies [FHEQ Level 7]
Intermediate/exit awards:	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) or Postgraduate Certificate (PGC) [FHEQ Level 7]
Programme Admissions:	UK and international students
Programme start dates:	September, January
Programme Modes of Study:	12 months full-time (September start) 15 months full-time (January start) 24-48 months part-time

Please note: The University has a set of terms and conditions for all students accepting an offer to study on a course here at Bradford. This is called the Student Contract. This document sets out the Terms and Conditions which apply when an offer of a place on a programme of study at the University of Bradford is accepted. [View our Student Contract for further details](#). 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.

Changes schedule

1. July 2025: Annual changes for 2025/26 academic year, including changes to academic regulations.
2. September 2025: Specification reformatted and made accessible for publication.
3. June 2026: Annual changes for 2026 entry, focused curriculum, updated references and admissions.

Introduction

The LLM International Legal Studies is designed to provide a challenging and stimulating distance learning programme of study which considers law in its international social, economic and political contexts. The two core modules studied provide the student with a detailed understanding of key global issues in law and focus on developing their skills to research; analyse and discuss important issues in international law, in the context of sustainable development and regulatory theory and practice. 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 online (referred to in this

document as DL or distance learning) LLMs together with the LLMs delivered on campus provide the basis for a vibrant postgraduate law community.

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, which they will have to use. The two cohorts will run alongside each other, with students in January studying modules in a different order to the September intake.

There is a "standard" (Part-time) programme and an "accelerated" (Full-time) version. In the accelerated version, the September programme will run for 12 months while the January programme will run for 15 months. Both intakes of the part-time version will have to be completed within 48 months. Standard route students will have the option to select between 20 and 60 credits per semester and they have 1-3 years to complete the taught modules of the programme before starting their dissertation.

The January intake will commence the programme studying Semester 2 modules and complete (in the accelerated 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.

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 the University of Bradford School of Law and Social Sciences who have a particular interest and expertise in the issues students will study, and they will therefore have access to cutting edge research and thinking. The LLM International Legal Studies is not aimed at preparing students for a particular professional path, instead it seeks to develop their critical thinking, research, analytical and communication skills which will help them succeed in their chosen field. Therefore, the programme is of interest to anyone wishing to deepen their understanding of law in a global context and graduates are likely to go on to pursue a variety of paths including careers in; business, legal practice, teaching and academia.

Programme Aims

The programme is intended to:

- A1. provide students with detailed knowledge about law in its international context which enables them to evaluate research and advanced scholarship in specific aspects of legal study in its international context. This includes the capacity to evaluate existing theories and methodologies and, where appropriate, propose new hypotheses
- A2. develop their ability to work with their knowledge of legal principles and apply them to new situations in order to arrive at imaginative and innovative solutions and interpretations
- A3. develop excellent communication skills including writing skills commensurate with LLM level study and advanced scholarship
- A4. develop their advanced legal research skills, help them to gain a comprehensive understanding of research techniques available, together with the ability to employ suitable research methods and to appreciate factors relevant to research design in order to facilitate the completion of a substantial research project in their chosen area of law in an international context

Programme Learning Outcomes

Students eligible for the FHEQ Level 7 Degree of Master award will be able to:

- 1. demonstrate a detailed understanding, at a practical and theoretical level, of the international context in which law operates.
- 2. appreciate the conceptual relationship between legal provisions in any given area and their underlying theoretical and/or policy frameworks which are context specific.
- 3. analyse complex problems, both factual and theoretical, and show an ability to synthesise and critically assess the relevance of the law to a considered solution.
- 4. carry out research using primary and secondary legal and other relevant material and data.
- 5. evaluate arguments, assumptions and abstract concepts in order to formulate judgements and identify a range of solutions to a given problem.
- 6. evaluate arguments and assumptions and abstract concepts in order to use that analysis to support their own hypotheses and suggestions.

7. demonstrate the capacity to work independently and reflect on their own learning in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities for lifelong learning.
8. write to professional standards for an academic audience and be able to prepare a variety of different outputs suitable for a variety of audiences.
9. demonstrate an understanding of how the boundaries of knowledge are extended through academic research which requires an in-depth critical exposition in an agreed area, based on the examination of primary and/or secondary data.
10. demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research and advanced scholarship and use a range of research methods and research design in order to complete a substantial research project.

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 Legal Studies 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 School, Summer School in Bradford or to attend up to 40 credits of the programme in Bradford (by arrangement with the School in advance).

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

To effectively assess whether a student has achieved a module's learning outcomes, a combination of assessment approaches is typically applied. 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 Legal Studies 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 develops 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

LLM International Legal Studies is made up of two distinct parts. First, students will study six taught modules which cover Semesters 1 and 2. They will subsequently undertake a research project which culminates in the writing of their dissertation.

At the beginning of the course (usually September or January), students will be required to complete a compulsory non-credit bearing pre-Masters module Foundations of Law and Skills, 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.

Table 0: LLM International Legal Studies (Distance Learning) Induction Module (Level 6)

Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Study Period
LAW6029-Z	Foundations of Law and Skills	Exempt	Induction

In the main programme, students will study two 20 credits of core modules (one in each of semester 1 and 2). 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 rational for regulation and a critical discussion of the various approaches to and forms of regulation, with a focus on the business dimensions and the implications for human rights. In addition to the core modules, the student will also study four optional 20 credits modules.

September entry students will study the "Semester 1" group first, January entry "Semester 2" first.

In Semester 1, students study LAW7054-B and select two options from Table 1:

Table 1: LLM International Legal Studies Sem. 1 Distance Learning Modules (FHEQ Level 7):

Mod. Code	Module Title	Credit	Select
LAW7054-B	Sustainable Development Law in Contemporary Business and Society	20	Core
LAW7086-B	Data Protection and Privacy Law	20	Option
LAW7060-B	International Banking and Finance Law	20	Option
LAW7087-B	International Company and Corporate Governance Law	20	Option
LAW7049-B	International Competition Law	20	Option
LAW7094-B	International Energy Law and Just Transition	20	Option
LAW7052-B	International Environmental Law	20	Option
LAW7065-B	International Human Rights Law	20	Option
LAW7067-B	International Trade and Investment Law	20	Option
LAW7079-B	Law and Ethics of Technology and Artificial Intelligence	20	Option
LAW7090-B	Law of Financial Crime	20	Option

In Semester 2, students study LAW7058-B and select two options from Table 2:

Table 2: LLM International Legal Studies Sem. 2 Distance Learning Modules (FHEQ Level 7):

Module Code	Module Title	Credit	Selection
LAW7058-B	Regulatory Theory and Practice	20	Core
LAW7064-B	Business, Human Rights and Environment	20	Option
LAW7063-B	Climate Change Law and Policy	20	Option
LAW7062-B	Cyberlaw	20	Option
LAW7074-B	Emerging Issues in Law (Summer School)	20	Option
LAW7053-B	Immigration and Refugee Law	20	Option
LAW7059-B	International Commercial Dispute Resolution	20	Option
LAW7068-B	International Criminal Law	20	Option
LAW7088-B	International Insolvency Law	20	Option
LAW7072-B	International Law of Taxation	20	Option
LAW7089-B	Legal technology	20	Option
LAW7077-B	Regulation of Financial Technologies and Virtual Assets	20	Option

Module LAW7074-B starts later than other modules and is taught/studied between May and June.

Modules run according to availability and demand and the list of modules available in any one year will be notified to the student at the beginning of the programme - students will be notified later and asked to reselect if an option is not going to run.

LLM Dissertation

The taught modules studied provide the student with detailed subject knowledge and the skills they will need to successfully complete the final part of the LLM programme which is their dissertation. 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 3: LLM International Legal Studies Dissertation Distance Learning Module (Level 7): Assigned One

Module Code	Module Title	Module Credit	Study period	Selection
LAW7056-E	Dissertation (DL)	60	Ns Academic Year	Accelerated full-time
LAW7056-E	Dissertation (DL)	60	Full Year	Standard part-time

Assessment, Continuation and Award Regulations

This programme follows the Assessment, Continuation and Award regulations for postgraduate taught courses published on the University's Website ([Regulation 9](#)).

Admission Requirements

We are proud to be [one of the most inclusive universities in the UK](#). All our students have potential, and we believe that as many people as possible should have the chance to benefit from higher education, no matter what their background or circumstances.

We take the time to understand the background of our applicants, understand their journey to education, and make decisions based on an applicant's potential to thrive at university and beyond.

People thinking of studying with the University of Bradford don't need to wait for the start of the year to contact our Disability Service. The University can arrange for anyone to talk to this team

about what support is on offer at Bradford including an invitation to our Get Set Day. To contact the Disability Service please complete the [request support form](#).

The standard entry requirements for the LLM International Legal Studies DL programme are as follows:

- Students will typically have an undergraduate degree in a social science discipline (which may or may not be in law) classified Lower Second (2:2 or 50%) or higher. Examples of other equivalent international qualifications are provided on the [University of Bradford page for a country or region](#).
- For international students, the level of English required is listed on the [University of Bradford English language requirements website](#). Exceptionally, holders of a UK degree awarded within 2 years prior to entry to the Bradford programme may be exempt from these English test requirements. International applicants who do not meet the IELTS requirement can take a [University of Bradford pre-sessional English course](#).
- Due to the online nature of the programme, students must have access to a reliable internet connection and a laptop or a desktop computer. 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.

Applications are welcome from students with non-standard qualifications or mature students (those over 21 years of age on entry) with significant relevant experience. Applicants through this route can provide evidence of their interests and work experience and may be interviewed.

If applicants have prior certificated learning or professional experience which may be equivalent to parts of this programme, the University of Bradford has procedures to evaluate and recognise this learning to provide applicants with exemptions from specified modules or parts of the programme. Find more information about [recognition of prior learning decisions](#) on the University website.

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-legal-studies-distance-learning/>