



University of the
 West of England

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

Section 1: Basic Data

Awarding institution/body	University of the West of England, Bristol
Teaching institution	Independent Colleges Dublin
Delivery Location(s)	Independent Colleges Dublin
Faculty responsible for programme	Social Sciences and Humanities
Modular Scheme title	Law Postgraduate Modular Scheme
Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body Links (type and dates)	
Highest award title	LLM Comparative Media Law
Default award title	None
Interim award titles	Postgraduate Diploma Comparative Media Law Postgraduate Certificate Comparative Media Law
UWE progression route	
Mode(s) of delivery	FT/PT
Codes	
UCAS code	JACS code
ISIS code M1M2	HESA code
Relevant QAA subject benchmark statements	Law
On-going/valid until* (*delete as appropriate/insert end date)	
Valid from (insert date if appropriate)	September 2009
Original Validation Date: July 2009	
Latest Committee Approval...	Date:...
Version Code 1	
<p><i>For coding purposes, a numerical sequence (1, 2, 3 etc.) should be used for successive programme specifications where 2 replaces 1, and where there are no concurrent specifications. A sequential decimal numbering (1.1; 1.2, 2.1; 2.2 etc) should be used where there are different and concurrent programme specifications</i></p>	

Section 2: Educational aims of the programme

The purpose of the LLM in Comparative Media Law programme is to provide learners with the ability to:

- Integrate knowledge and handle complexity across a wide range of legal theories, concepts, principles and rules in the modules they have chosen.
- Conduct comparative legal analysis in order that they may develop a critical awareness of current problems in media law and new insights into these areas.
- Evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the area of media law.
- Show originality in the application of knowledge.
- Develop a systematic understanding and knowledge of media law from national and international perspectives.
- Demonstrate a practical understanding of how established techniques and practices of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret concepts.
- Support their development as independent, active researchers.

Section 3: Programme Outcomes and Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategies

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in the module specifications.

<p>1. Knowledge</p> <p>Breadth: A systematic understanding of knowledge at, or informed by, the forefront of a field of learning.</p> <p>Kind: A critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, generally informed by the forefront of a field of learning.</p>	<p>Teaching & Learning Strategies:</p> <p><i>Attendance at seminars / Student preparation for seminars (in which students are expected to engage in independent reading and learning) / Discussion-based seminars / Workshops.</i></p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p><i>Open book examination / assessed coursework / assessed thesis.</i></p>
<p>2. Know-how and skill</p> <p>Range: Demonstrate a range of standard and specialised research or equivalent tools and techniques of enquiry.</p> <p>Selectivity: Select from complex and advanced skills across a field of learning; develop new skills to a high level, including novel and emerging techniques.</p>	<p>Teaching & Learning Strategies:</p> <p><i>Attendance at seminars / Student preparation for seminars (in which students are expected to engage in independent reading and learning) / Discussion-based seminars / Workshops.</i></p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p><i>Open book examination / assessed coursework / assessed thesis.</i></p>

<p>3. Competence</p> <p>Context: Act in a wide and often unpredictable variety of professional levels and ill defined contexts.</p> <p>Role: Take significant responsibility for the work of individuals and groups; lead and initiate activity.</p> <p>Learning to learn: Learn to self-evaluate and take responsibility for continuing academic/professional development.</p> <p>Insight: Scrutinise and reflect on social norms and relationships and act to change them.</p>	<p>Teaching & Learning Strategies:</p> <p><i>Attendance at seminars / Student preparation for seminars (in which students are expected to engage in independent reading and learning) / Discussion-based seminars / Workshops.</i></p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p><i>Open book examination / assessed coursework / assessed thesis.</i></p>
<p>4. Progression and transfer</p> <p>Progression to programmes leading to Doctoral Degree or to another Master's Degree or to Post-Graduate Diploma.</p>	

<p>Section 4: Programme structure</p> <p><i>Use next page to provide a structural chart of the programme showing:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• Level and credit requirements</i><i>• Interim award requirements</i><i>• Module diet, including compulsory/core/optional modules</i>
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ENTRY
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Semester 1	<p>Compulsory modules</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Optional modules (full list available at www...)</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Interim Awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit requirements Postgraduate Certificate – 60 Credits. • Postgraduate Diploma – 120 Credits • Other requirements Nil <p>Prerequisite requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum credit/module requirements Nil • other Nil <p>Awards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target/highest MA Comparative Media Law, • Default title Nil <p>Credit requirements 180 credits</p>
	<p>Core modules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UJGUNL-20-M, Research Methods. • UJGUNM-20-M, Freedom of Expression: Constitutional Perspectives. • UJGUNN-20-M, Defamation and the Media 		
Semester 2	<p>Compulsory modules</p> <p>None</p>	<p>Optional modules (full list available at www...)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UJGUNT-20-M, Freedom of Information law. • UJGUNU-20-M, Intellectual Property Law and the Media. • UJGUNS-20-M, Defamation: Practice and Procedure • 	
	<p>Core modules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UJGUNP-20-M, The Law of Privacy and Publicity • UJGUNR-20-M, Media Regulation 		
Semester 3	<p>UJGUNV-60-M, Thesis</p>		

→ GRADUATION

Section 5: Entry requirements

The entry requirements will be set on an annual basis by the Programme Management Committee. The entry requirements are reviewed annually by the Programme Management Committee in consultation with the College's Admissions Officer. Any changes to the Admissions Policy will be forwarded to the Academic Council of ICD for formal approval. However, in all cases, the College would be governed by the direction provided by the University of the West of England in respect of the admissions of such students. The entry requirements will be determined on an annual basis in the light of the experience gained delivering the programme. In this way, the requirements may be varied as demand changes to ensure consistent management and delivery of the programme.

The College also sets minimum entry requirements for all its post-graduate degree programmes to ensure that students have the necessary academic strength to successfully complete the programme.

Minimum Entry Requirements

At least a lower second-class (2.2) degree in law or a related discipline or foreign equivalent or relevant work experience, including having held a position of responsibility relevant to the LL.M. Where the applicant's first language is not English, the applicant must also demonstrate proficiency in English: the minimum standard is British Council IELTS band 6.5, or TOEFL scores of 575 (paper-based), 232 (computer-based) or 89 (internet-based).

Applicants with other qualifications or experience

We welcome applications from those who do not have the entry requirements outlined here. The College will consider applications on the basis of evidence of personal, professional and educational experience which indicate an applicant's ability to meet the demands of a degree. We like to give such applicants every opportunity to show that they have the motivation and ability to succeed in their chosen programme of study.

Section 6: Assessment Regulations

Approved to University Academic Regulations and Procedures 2009

Section 7: Student learning: distinctive features and support

Learning & Teaching Methodologies:

Seminars

Delivery of the programme will be through small group session learning. Groups will be limited to 15 to 20 students per session in order to encourage greater interactivity between the lecturer and the learners. Seminars will be used to provide learners with an overview of the topic to be covered, together with an insight into current practices and theories (where relevant). Learners will be provided with pre-reading which will allow an exchange of ideas to develop during the session in order to delve deeper into the topic and aid the learner's broader understanding.

Workshops

Workshops will be used primarily in modules such as *Research Methods*, *Defamation: Practice & Procedure* and in preparing students to write the thesis. In workshops, learners will be divided into small groups and will work in teams. For example, in the *Defamation: Practice & Procedure* module learners will be presented with a defamation "problem" at the start of the semester e.g. a newspaper article, TV programme etc. They will then be required to manage the case right through until the trial of the action. Each week learners will work in groups (one side for the plaintiff, the other for the defendant) with the lecturer - learning will be facilitated by a practicing barrister and/or solicitor with experience in this area.

External Experts

Guest lectures will be delivered by external experts in many of the modules in order that the learners will receive practical knowledge as to how the theoretical aspects of the law in this area are applied in practice. Guest lectures will include editors from major newspapers particularly within (but not limited to) the Independent News & Media Group, members of the Data Protection Office, the Ombudsman's Office, Solicitor's firms with experience representing media clients and so forth.

Assessment Methodologies:

The assessment strategy adopted for the LL.M reflects the requirements of postgraduate study. At Level 'M' assessment should move away from mere knowledge retention and application to more substantive analysis, ability to synthesise information and so forth. Apart from the *Research Methods*, *Defamation: Practice & Procedure* and *Thesis* modules, the remaining modules on the LL.M will be assessed by way of an end of

semester examination. These examinations will be conducted in the "open book" format allowing students to bring in appropriate materials with them. Thus the focus will not be on knowledge retention but on the ability to synthesise and apply information. The emphasis in these papers will be on analysis and discussion.

An assessment strategy which solely assessed learners by way of written examination would, by itself, be an inappropriate method of assessment at Masters' level. The written examination cannot assess all core competencies and skills expected of a law postgraduate student. In particular, the written examination cannot adequately assess a learner's communication skills (oral and written), group work, or higher level learning competencies expected of a law postgraduate such as in-depth research, critical analysis & evaluation, the ability to construct legal arguments in a logical manner and so forth. Therefore, the assessment strategy adopted by the programme team reflects the qualities expected of the learner and in addition to written examinations learners will be expected to complete coursework in all modules.

The programme's assessment strategy is one that will concentrate heavily on providing timely feedback to learners. As such the strategy involves both formative feedback to students in seminars and workshops. Feedback will be provided mid-way through each semester following the submission of coursework and the delivery of presentations. End of semester summative feedback will be provided. Copies of all coursework will be returned to learners with written feedback and commentary. Lecturing staff will also make themselves available to learners should they wish further detailed feedback which can be provided orally, this will be offered for both coursework and examinations/Generic feedback will be supplied for both coursework and examinations.

The programme is assessed primarily through the completion of written coursework, written examinations and oral presentations.

Written Coursework & Thesis

In most of the modules learners are required to complete a written piece of coursework (word limit 3,000 words). Completion of coursework will develop the learner's research skills with the thesis acting as a final indication of the learner's research competence.

Written Examination

Most modules will also be assessed by way of an end of semester two hour examination. The purpose of these examinations is to assess the learner's knowledge, understanding and application of legal principles and concepts across a range of legal areas.

Oral Presentations

Oral presentations may be used throughout the programme. For example, as part of the *Defamation: Practice & Procedure* module, learners will be required to orally present legal argument. Learners may also be required to conduct a *viva voce* defence of their thesis.

Library:

The College already has an extensive law library located on the 2nd floor of the College's Dawson Street premises. The library contains multiple texts in all the core legal subjects, a complete hard copy set of the All England Law Reports and the Irish Law Reports. Additionally, all registered students of the College have full access to the following online legal resources; LEXIS/NEXIS; WESTLAW.IE; WESTLAW.UK; FIRSTLAW; British Journalism Review and American Journalism Review.

The library is fitted with 18 Apple Mac computers which are internet enabled and available for online research. The library is opened for seven days a week from 9am until 9pm for most of the year. For any material that students cannot access in hard copy or online the library offers an inter-library loans service.

The College has costed and committed to the purchase of multiple copies of all texts and journals referenced within this document and these resources will be in place for the commencement of the programme in September 2009 (for full list - see attached appendix

The College would like to develop its connections with UWE in order to arrange for students (of ICD on UWE programmes (LL.B and LL.M)) to have access to the UWE online services. This is a discussion that will take place between our library and IT manager and their relevant counterparts at UWE.

College Level Support:

The College provides a wide range of support facilities to students from a College-wide perspective including Induction programmes, Counselling Service, Careers' Guidance within each faculty) and Students' Union.

Programme Level Support:

Head of School - The Head of School assists the programme director in managing the programme. Learners on the programme will have ready access to all members of staff of the College including the Head of School.

Programme Manager - The programme manager is responsible for the administrative daily management of the programme. The programme manager will deal with all administrative queries.

Programme Director - The programme director is responsible for the daily academic and operational management of the programme. The College has made a full time appointment for this position with the individual in question commencing employment with the College in August 2009 prior to the programme's start.

Personal Tutor - All learners registered on the LL.M will be assigned a personal tutor. The personal tutor helps the student review and plan academic progress on the programme. The personal tutor is the first point of contact for any academic or personal problems which impact on the learner's ability to progress with their studies.

Methods for Evaluating and Improving Quality and Standards:

The LL.M is subject to a number of quality guarantees and enhancement indicators. The programme is delivered in accordance with the College's and the University's quality assurance policies and procedures.

Ongoing quality reviews are conducted with inputs from the following sources:

- Module Feedback Forms
- Delivery Assessment Forms
- Facilities Assessment Forms
- Annual Programme Review conducted by Programme Board
- Consultation with learners and staff
- Student/Staff Committee Meetings
- External Examiner Reports
- Feedback from industry

Staff Development Priorities:

- Keep up to date with current developments and academic research
- Encourage full time staff to obtain formal third level teaching qualifications
- All staff to undertake research and publication to enhance teaching
- Regular attendance at School meetings and active participation by all in core teaching and administration
- Encouraging full time staff to undertake further postgraduate study related to their teaching
- Encouraging staff to keep up to date with current teaching developments

The Role of External Examiners

External examiners are selected by the University in consultation with the Law School at ICD and appointed by the University. The role of the external examiner is to:

- Approve examination and assessment papers
- See/review examination scripts, coursework and theses
- Attend meetings of the Board of Examiners, to participate in decision making at those meetings and to advise the Board
- To report to the Academic Council of the College and to the University at the end of each examination session.

The role is more fully defined in: <http://acreg.uwe.ac.uk/externalexaminers.asp>

Section 8: Reference points/benchmarks

- Irish National Framework of Qualifications - Award-Type Descriptor 'M'
- The Framework for Higher Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- UWE's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2007 — 2010
- UWE's Vision Statement
- UWE's Policy for developing e-learning 2007 - 2010
- Independent College Dublin's Strategic Objectives

Statement of how the programme have been informed by the relevant subject benchmark statements:

The programme has been informed by analogy of the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (Level 'M'). At this level the analytical skills of graduates should be developed under the following headings: Knowledge/Know-how and skill/Competence/Progression & transfer. In particular, the skills of graduates from a Masters level programme should be developed in relation to judging and evaluating research, assessing the merits of competing theories and in synthesizing and applying theoretical and empirical arguments in the resolution of contemporary problems. Graduates at this level must also demonstrate the ability to reflect upon their knowledge and what they have learned.

The programme has also been informed by analogy with the The Framework for Higher

Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland for law degree programmes. However, because there is no benchmark framework for law at Masters' level, the law degree framework is used as a starting off point for learner's knowledge.

UWE's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2007 - 2010

We believe that the LL.M programme fulfills the University's strategic aims. Independent College Dublin's reputation and future success will depend on the quality of the student experience whether that is from a learning, teaching or resources point of view. In summary, we believe that the LL.M fulfills the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy in the following manner:

- Flexible Delivery - The programme is offered on an evening and full time basis thereby allowing greater access to adult learners who may also be pursuing a fulltime career. Other Masters' programmes in Ireland do not offer a similar opportunity to students to undertake such programmes.
- Bursaries - While a fee paying private College may mean that certain students cannot afford attendance on such programmes, the College does offer bursaries to a number of students each year which will include the full payment of fees. These bursaries are awarded on the basis of previous academic performance, the socio-economic status of the student and evidence of strong academic performance.
- Industry Links - Like many programmes delivered at ICD (LLB, MA in Journalism, BA in Journalism), the LL.M will be very much linked to industry and students on the programme will have access to guest lecturers from industry and the possibility of completing internships within the media industry.
- The LL.M has an international dimension - it involves comparative study of other jurisdictions. It is hoped that this aspect of the programme will attract students from more diverse backgrounds than would traditionally study Irish law.
- Varied Assessment - The LL.M will be assessed by way of various methods which shall include summative and formative assessment. In particular, in each module students will be required to complete written coursework - students will receive timely and detailed feedback on performance and on methods of improvement. Oral presentations and group work also feature through the programme.

UWE's Vision Statement

The College is building a strong teaching and learning reputation. In 2008 - its first full year of existence - six ICD students from the Professional Law School came 1st in Ireland in individual subjects for the Law Society of Ireland's Entrance Examinations. Amongst the winners was an ICD student who came 1st in Ireland overall (i.e. best out of eight subjects). Furthermore, on the Law School's Preparatory Programme for the New York Bar in 2008 all 13 students on the programme passed the NY State Bar at the first attempt.

This teaching excellence also extended to ICD's Accountancy School where six of its students also won national and international prizes in the ACCA examinations. The College will seek to ensure and maintain the highest teaching standards for its LL.M programme and together with the support of UWE and Independent News & Media pic hopes to become recognized nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for the study of Media Law in Ireland.

UWE's Policy for developing e-learning 2007 - 2010

E-learning as a support tool is proving to be increasingly important to all programmes delivered by the College. The College utilizes "Moodle" as its VLB. Moodle is already familiar to many students in Ireland and is very flexible in supporting the programmes that the College offers. Apart from faculty to student informal, face-to-face communications, Moodle is the essential communication tool between the College and its students. The College uses Moodle to support online videos of lecturers, tutorials, posting of teaching plans, reading lists, lecture notes and so forth. Moodle is also used to post news, timetables and so forth. On some programmes the College utilize Moodle and its "chat room" forums to facilitate and encourage debate among students registered on the programme. It is envisaged that Moodle will be developed in a similar fashion in order to support the student experience on the LL.M.

All students are referred to the *I-SkillZone* of the UWE Library website where students will receive guidance on referencing, research and so forth. Access to this information will supplement information and training provided to students on induction.

Independent College Dublin's Strategic Objectives

One of the College's strategic objectives is to develop its teaching and learning reputation into postgraduate level study. The Law School already delivers postgraduate (professional) programmes very successfully to students preparing for the Law Society of Ireland and New York Bar programmes. The development of an LL.M in Comparative Media Law will enhance the reputation of the Law School and together with current Masters programmes being delivered in the College (MA in Psychotherapy; MA in Journalism) supports the College's strategic objectives in becoming a centre of excellence for postgraduate study in core areas linked to industry.

Section 9: Rationale for the programme

The Law School has recognized that the development of postgraduate offerings in law is crucial to the growth of the School and the College. While the College may be in its infancy institutionally speaking, it has already been validated to deliver and is currently delivering postgraduate courses at Masters' level including an MA in Journalism and an MA in Psychotherapeutic Studies. Furthermore, the management team of the Law School: Philip Burke & Val Corbett (Heads of the Law School at Griffith College Dublin, 2001 - 2007), V'laura Kelly (Founder of the Law School at Portobello College Dublin, 1992 - 2000), Mr Tomas Clancy (Senior Lecturer at Portobello College Dublin, 1994 - 2009) and Ciaran Patton (Senior Lecturer at Griffith College Dublin, 1999 - to date) have great experience in managing and delivering law programmes.

The current economic climate would indicate that many more law students will seek to enroll on postgraduate courses in order to upskill and to avoid the job market for a period of time. It is anticipated that there will be a significant increase in law graduates who enroll for Masters' programmes in the coming years. The LL.M was devised following consultation with a number of experts, from academia and industry, including: Dr Neville Cox (Head of the LL.M programme, Trinity College Dublin); Ms Paula Muloolly (Partner in Media Law firm, Simon McAleese & Co.) and Ms Dearbhail McDonald (Legal Editor, The Irish Independent Newspaper).

The team believes that the LL.M is a niche programme that fits well within the College's strategic objectives. First, the College is in a unique position given its association with Independent News & Media pic to exploit contacts and opportunities in relation to the programme. The LL.M will be supported not only by the excellent academic staff available in the College but also by leading practitioners in the field of Media Law whether they be working as editors, journalists or lawyers. Access to such experience on the programme will greatly enhance the attractiveness of the programme to potential students and will ensure the quality of its delivery.

Secondly, the LL.M is the first of its kind to be provided in the Republic of Ireland. There are comparatively few LL.M programmes available in Ireland. The following is a list of the current offerings in this jurisdiction:

University College Dublin - LL.M in Commercial Law / LL.M in Competition Law / LL.M in Criminology

Trinity College Dublin - LL.M in Law (General)

University College Cork - LL.M in Law (General) / LL.M in Criminology

Dublin Institute of Technology - LL.M in Criminology

National University of Ireland Galway - LL.M in Human Rights

University of Limerick - LL.M in Human Rights in Criminal Justice / LL.M in International Commercial Law

Thus the proposed LL.M on offer by Independent College Dublin is not one which will come into direct competition with one of the more established universities.

Thirdly, in the current economic climate it is anticipated that applications for postgraduate programmes will increase. In a recent survey of the Republic of Ireland's seven universities 40% of students expected to continue their studies at postgraduate level following completion of their degree in 2009 (Source: The Irish Times, 28th April 2009).

This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of individual modules can be found in module specifications. These are available on the University Intranet.

Programme monitoring and review may lead to changes to approved programmes. There may be a time lag between approval of such changes/modifications and their incorporation into an authorised programme specification. Enquiries about any recent changes to the programme made since this specification was authorised should be made to the relevant Faculty Academic Registrar.