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**MODULE SPECIFICATION**

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| **Name of Module** | **LLM Dissertation**  |
| **Parent School/Dept** | Political Science/International Relations |
| **Programmes where module is offered** | LLM in International Law |
| **Status** (compulsory, optional, free choice) | Compulsory | **Pre-Requisite Modules or Qualifications** | All modules from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd semester of the Programme successfully completed  |
| **FHEQ Level** | **7** | **Unit Value** | **38 ECTS** | **Module Code** (where applicable) | IL 520 | **Module Coordinator** | **Assigned supervisor** |
| **Semester Taught** | **Spring** | **Applicable From** | SEMESTER/YEAR 4th semester, 2nd year |
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| **Educational Aims of the Module** |
| The educational aims of the module are:* To enable students to identify a research question in the area of international and/or European law and present a research baseline for a selected area of international and/or European law
* To enable students to design and justify chosen research methods for a given area of investigation and appreciate the limitations inherent in the chosen approaches
* To enable students to extend both knowledge and skills acquired during their study and to apply some of the theories and concepts that have been taught in the LLM Programme.
* To enable students to apply acquired research methodology knowledge and practical skills, as well as other legal knowledge in the areas of international and European law.
* To enable students to enhance personal and self-management skills towards conducting live research in the area of international and/or European law.
* To enable students manage their own dissertation writing successfully, to further develop and successfully apply knowledge and skills relevant throughout the LLM Programme.
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| **Module Outline/Syllabus** |
| 1. Enhancing the research process, analysing and evaluating research data concerning the specifically selected topic
2. Application of research ethics during the research process concerning the specifically selected topic
3. Application of different legal and other research methods concerning the specifically selected topic
4. Review and supervision of student’s academic writing skills
5. Plagiarism and academic referencing
6. Time organisation concerning dissertation writing
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| **Student Engagement Hours** |
| *Type*  | ***Number per term***  | ***Duration of each***  | ***Total Time*** |
| *Consultations and supervisory meetings:* | 15 | 2 hours | 30 hours |
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| *Total Guided/Independent Learning Hours* | **730** |
| *Total Contact Hours:*  | **30** |
| **Total Engagement Hours** | **760** |
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| **Assessment Method Summary** |
| ***Type***  | ***Number required*** | ***Duration*** | ***Weighting*** | ***Timing/******Submission Deadline*** |
| Expose (Proposal) for dissertation, including proposed research methods.  | 1 | 2000 Words | 20% | End of semester 3 |
| Dissertation  | 1 | 15,000 words. The word limit excludes appendices, footnotes, tables, references and bibliography  | 70% | Week 14 |
| Oral defense of dissertation | 1 | 1 hour | 10% | End of semester |

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| **Module Outcomes** |
| ***Intended Learning Outcomes:***1. Identify a question for research work in the area of international and/or European law
2. Design and justify chosen research methods for a given area of investigation and appreciate the limitations inherent in the chosen approaches
3. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and critical understanding of a relevant area of international and/or European law, both at theoretical and practical level
4. Apply knowledge gained and skills acquired throughout the programme in the dissertation
5. Engage in current academic and practitioner debates within the chosen research topic
6. Critically analyse and evaluate data independently and engage in debates relevant to the area of study
7. Develop coherent and persuasive arguments, based on sound research evidence, leading to logical conclusions (and recommendations where appropriate).
 | → | ***Teaching/Learning Strategy:***1. Meetings and discussions with supervisor(s) will provide students with guidance (ILO 1-7)
2. The student will work under the guidance of an appropriate academic supervisor. (ILO 1-7)
3. Students will research and produce a written proposal (expose) of their chosen topic and outline their research methodologies. (ILO: 1-7)
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| → | ***Assessment Strategy:***1. Written Expose (proposal) will enable students to plan their studies and receive feedback and guidance on their proposal. (ILO:1-7)
2. Students will research and write a dissertation on their selected topic exercising their independent study skills (ILO: 1-7)
3. Students required to participate in an oral defence of thesis (ILO: 1-7)
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| ***Practical Skills:***1. Employ advanced skills to conduct independent legal research on a selected topic of International and/or European Law, collect relevant data and present the results in a coherent and clear format in the dissertation and during the oral defence of the dissertation
2. Ability to scientifically elaborate in-depth on the selected research question and the corresponding hypothesis
3. Ability to conduct a scientific analysis of the selected research question, using various legal methods
4. Ability to independently develop coherent arguments and express scientifically founded opinions on the selected topic
5. Ability to interpret and apply rules of International and/or European Law during the conduct of the analysis
6. Advanced ability and skills to search and use specialised on-line resources of jurisprudence in International and/or European Law
 | → | ***Teaching/Learning Strategy:***1. Meetings and discussions with supervisor(s) (PS: 1-6)
2. The student will work under the guidance of an appropriate academic supervisor and engage in independent study. (PS: 1-6)
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| → | ***Assessment Strategy:***1. Written expose (proposal) for dissertation (PS: 1,3)
2. Dissertation (PS: 1-6)
3. Oral defence of the dissertation (PS: 1-6)
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| ***Transferable Skills:***1. Research skills,
2. To develop an ability to access and assimilate information from a variety of sources
3. Ability to extrapolate from incomplete information
4. Communication skills: written and oral
5. Independent study skills
 | → | ***Teaching/Learning Strategy:***1. Meetings and discussions with supervisor(s) (TS 1-5)
2. The student will work under the guidance of an appropriate academic supervisor. (TS 1-5)
3. Students will discuss specific issues concerning their selected topic with their supervisor and receive comments and direction for research and the methodology to be applied (TS. 1-5)
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| → | ***Assessment Strategy:***1. Expose (proposal) for dissertation thesis (TS:1,4,5)
2. Dissertation (TS: 1-5)
3. Oral defence of the dissertation (TS: 1-5)
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| **Key Texts and/or other learning materials** |
| **Key texts:*** + - 1. Salter, M and Mason, J., 2007. *Writing Law Dissertations: An Introduction and Guide to the Conduct of Legal Research.* Philadelphia: Transatlantic Publications, Inc.
			2. Cohen, M. L., 2010. *Legal Research in a Nutshell.* 10th ed. St. Paul: West.
			3. Hanson, Sh., 2003. *Legal Method and Reasoning.* 2nd ed. London: Routledge-Cavendish*.*

**Other materials:*** + - 1. [McMillan](http://www.pearsoned.co.uk/bookshop/Results.asp?iCurPage=1&Type=1&Author=Kathleen+McMillan&Download=1&SearchTerm=Kathleen+McMillan), K. and [Weyers](http://www.pearsoned.co.uk/bookshop/Results.asp?iCurPage=1&Type=1&Author=+Jonathan+Weyers&Download=1&SearchTerm=+Jonathan+Weyers), J., 2007. *How to Write Dissertations and Project Reports,* UK: FT Prentice Hall.
			2. Bell, J., 2005. *Doing Your Research Project.* Maidenhead: Open University Press.
			3. Blaxter, L., Hughes, Ch., Tight, M., 2010. *How to Research.* 4th ed. Maidenhead: Open University Press*.*
			4. Hoffman M., 2008. *International Legal Research in a Nutshell.* St. Paul: West.
			5. Creswell, J.W., 2008. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches.* 3rd ed. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
			6. Webley, L., 2005. *Legal writing.* London: Cavendish
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| **Please note:** This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the module 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 each module and programme can be found in the departmental or programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed annually by the University of Buckingham and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency |
| **Date of Production:** |  |
| **Date approved by School Learning and Teaching Committee** |  |
| **Date approved by School Board of Study** |  |
| **Date approved by University Learning and Teaching Committee** |  |
| **Date of Annual Review:** |  |