

Programme specification

1.	<b>Awarding Institution:</b>	The University of Law
2.	<b>Final Award:</b>	Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies
3.	<b>Programme Title(s):</b>	Bar Professional Training Course
4.	<b>Awarded by:</b>	The University of Law (Academic Board)
5.	<b>Level</b>	Master's (level 7) within the FHEQ
6.	<b>Mode of Study:</b>	Full-time and part-time
7.	<b>Language of Study</b>	English
8.	<b>Length of Programme:</b>	1 Year (Full-time or 2 years Part-time)
9.	<b>Total Credits:</b>	150 credits
10.	<b>Date of Production/Revision:</b>	July 2014
<p><b>11. Aims and Rationale of the Programme</b></p> <p>The BPTC programme is designed for those who seek to practise as a barrister (either in England and Wales or in other jurisdictions) and/or wish to develop further their practical skills in a specialist area of legal practice. The programme will</p>		

therefore build on skills, experience and techniques initially acquired during academic study and vocational training or experience, which can then be applied in the workplace.

In particular the aims are as follows:

- To develop a systematic understanding of the law and practice on the part of students, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, at the forefront of the areas of professional practice studied.
- To enhance students' intellectual, transferable and interpersonal skills as well as developing the postgraduate skills of the exercise of initiative and autonomy in in planning and implementing tasks at a professional level.
- To develop further a comprehensive understanding of legal research techniques and methodology and their application.
- To provide students with a programme of study that enhances their prospects of legally-related professional, commercial, business or academic employment.
- To cater for a range of learning preferences through a variety of learner-centred activities and using a variety of learning media.

## **12. Programme Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of the programme students should be able to:

### *Knowledge and understanding*

- Demonstrate a high level of specialist knowledge and of conceptual understanding at the forefront of the areas of professional practice studied.
- Apply detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the relevant law and legal practice to progress transactions or matters relevant to the area of the professional practice studied to achieve the client's objectives in accordance with any rules of professional conduct or ethics

*Intellectual*

- Evaluate critically current knowledge, research and advanced scholarship in the areas of professional practice studied, including research and professional methodologies where appropriate.
- Analyse complex legal issues and client matters both systematically and creatively, making sound judgments in the absence of complete data in complex and unpredictable situations.
- Demonstrate self-direction and originality in solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing strategies to take a client matter to a resolution.

*Transferable*

Plan and implement, with a high degree of autonomy, an extended piece of work.

- Demonstrate a high level of competence in the practitioner skills appropriate to the area of professional practice studied.
- Identify and address where relevant the business, commercial and ethical aspects of the areas of professional practice studied.
- Where applicable demonstrate self-analysis and an ability to reflect on their learning and/or experience in practice.
- Assume responsibility for the continued development of their own learning.

**Relevant Subject Benchmark Statements and other reference points to inform programme outcomes**

The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ)

### 13. Programme Structure, Levels, Modules and Credits

The Postgraduate Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies award is available for students who have successfully completed the BPTC at the University, either through full-time or part-time attendance.

Advocacy * 35 Credits	Civil Litigation & Evidence * 25 Credits	Criminal Litigation & Sentencing * 20 Credits
Skills * 40 Credits	Option 1 10 Credits	Option 2 10 Credits

The taught modules marked \* form part of the compulsory 'core' of the BPTC. The remaining knowledge and skills modules comprise the following elements: Conference Skills, Drafting, Opinion Writing and Remedies, Professional Ethics, and Resolution of Disputes out of Court. The two remaining 'approved modules' are option modules and can be selected by the students from any of the approved modules listed below.

The option modules currently available, and their respective credits and level, are set out below

Module Title	Credit	Level
BPTC Advanced Criminal Practice Option	10	7
BPTC Chancery Option	10	7
BPTC International Commercial Practice Option	10	7
BPTC Employment Tribunal Practice Option	10	7
BPTC Family Practice Option	10	7
BPTC Immigration and Asylum Option	10	7

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BPTC Judicial Review Option	10	7
BPTC Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution Option	10	7
BPTC Personal Injury and Clinical Negligence Option	10	7

<b>14. Programme Outcomes, Learning &amp; Teaching and Assessment Strategies</b>	
<p><b>A. Knowledge and Understanding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate a high level of specialist knowledge and of conceptual understanding at the forefront of the areas of professional practice studied.</li> <li>• Apply detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the relevant law and legal practice to progress transactions or matters relevant to the area of the professional practice studied to achieve the client's objectives in accordance with any rules of professional conduct or ethics</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning and Teaching Methods</b></p> <p>Pure litigation sessions will be stripped out to provide a framework for developing the skills against the background of cumulative knowledge in practice and procedure.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Assessment Methods</b></p> <p>Assessment of achievement of the learning outcomes is assessed by unseen open-book examinations of 2-4hours in duration throughout the course of the year commencing in December</p> <p>Students should demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, and a practical understanding of how law and practice is used in the solution of complex legal problems.</p>

<p><b>B. Intellectual Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate critically current knowledge, research and advanced scholarship in the areas of professional practice studied, including research and professional methodologies where appropriate.</li> <li>• Analyse complex legal issues and client matters both systematically and creatively, making sound judgments in the absence of complete data in complex and unpredictable situations.</li> <li>• Demonstrate self-direction and originality in solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing strategies to take a client matter to a resolution.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning and Teaching Methods</b></p> <p>Cognitive skills are developed through the teaching and learning methods and strategies outlined above. In particular, analysis, critical judgement, evaluation and problem-solving skills are further developed through the use of case-studies which mirror transactions and matters relevant to the specialist area of professional practice for that module.</p> <p>The students will be expected to analyse the facts and technical legal issues underpinning a client's position in a case-study; to identify solutions which are specific (and therefore original) to that client's position; and to provide the client with a thorough and balanced view of the outcome and options available.</p>
	<p><b>Assessment Methods</b></p> <p>Cognitive skills are assessed in the module assessments through the tasks and activities required to be carried out. These include a range of skills assessments including formal assessment of oral skills in 3 separate Advocacy assessments and Conference Skills.</p>

<p><b>C. General Transferable Skills, Professional Skills and Attributes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and implement, with a high degree of autonomy, an extended piece of work.</li> <li>• Demonstrate a high level of competence in the practitioner skills appropriate to the area of professional practice studied.</li> <li>• Identify and address where relevant the business, commercial and ethical aspects of the areas of professional practice studied.</li> <li>• Where applicable demonstrate self-analysis and an ability to reflect on their learning and/or experience in practice.</li> <li>• Assume responsibility for the continued development of their own learning.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning and Teaching Methods</b></p> <p>As for the intellectual skills above, within the established learning model the general transferable skills will be primarily developed both in preparation for, and through the activities inherent in, the workshops (for attendance mode) or task submissions (for the online modules).</p> <p>The professional practice ethos of the course means that students will be required to demonstrate a high level of competence in the practitioner skills, particularly research, opinion writing and drafting.</p> <p>Finally, the essence of the University's student-centred approach is that from the outset students will be expected to assume responsibility for their learning and develop self-analysis and peer review to an extent.</p>
	<p><b>Assessment Methods</b></p> <p>The general transferable skills will generally be assessed within the formative and summative assessment methods outlined in paragraph B. above.</p> <p>In particular, the output of the skills (for example the product of the research, ability to formulate and communicate the results) will all feed through into the relevant</p>

	assessment points, whether formative or summative.
<b>15. Admissions Criteria</b>	<p>Applicants must have enrolled on the BPTC and have completed the Academic Stage of Training. The latter is achieved through successful completion of either a Qualifying Law Degree (at a minimum level of a lower second class honours) or, for graduates in subject disciplines other than law, the completion of the Common Professional Examination (CPE) or Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL).</p> <p>From 2014, the admissions criteria are: that a student will have achieved good A levels and minimum of a 2:1 undergraduate degree and successful completion of BCAT.</p>
<b>16. Prior Credits</b>	The University does not accept any other prior credits towards this programme.